



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

March 1, 2019

Dear Representative:

We are writing on behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Veterans Task Force to **request support** in your fiscal year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations request letter **for funding to establish a Disabled Veteran Program at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**.

CCD is a coalition of national disability rights, advocacy, consumer, and provider organizations that promote the independence, empowerment, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities, including veterans. The Veterans Task Force advocates for policies and follows issues of concern to veterans with disabilities. The Veterans Task Force is especially committed to improving the employment situation of veterans with disabilities.

Despite the drop in overall veterans' unemployment, many veterans with a service-connected disability struggle to find jobs or are no longer participating in the labor force, according to DOL's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). In every age category, veterans with a service-connected disability were less likely to participate in the labor force than veterans without a service connected disability. For example, only 7 in 10 veterans, ages 35 to 44, with a service-connected disability were in the labor force compared to more than 9 in 10 veterans, ages 35 to 44, without a service-connected disability. In addition, BLS found that veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 60 percent or higher were less likely to participate in the labor force (only 6 in 10 Gulf War II-era veterans) compared to Gulf War II-era veterans with a service-connected disability rating of less than 30 percent (9 in 10).<sup>1</sup>

**The CCD Veterans Task Force seeks funding for DOL VETS to establish within DOL's current authorization authority a Disabled Veteran Program, modeled after DOL's successful Women Veteran Program (which focuses on employment opportunities and challenges of women veterans).<sup>2</sup> The creation of a Disabled Veteran Program is supported by 13 national veteran and disability organizations, including Air Force Sergeants Association, AMVETS, National Disability Rights Network, National Military Family Association, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.**

The Disabled Veteran Program would focus on the employment challenges of veterans with disabilities by working with businesses and the workforce development system to promote hiring

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<sup>1</sup> Employment Situation of Veterans, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Title 38, Chapter 41 United States Code, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III/chapter-41>

and retention of veterans with disabilities through technical assistance and collaboration. **As a Member of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, we ask that you request \$300,000, above DOL VETS current levels, to fund a full-time Director for the Disabled Veteran Program and for associated operational costs.**

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please find additional information below to assist you in your submission to the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee. Thank you.

Sincerely

### **Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Veterans Task Force Co-Chairs**

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### **Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations Request Information**

- **Subcommittee:** Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
- **Department/Agency:** U.S. Department of Labor
- **Account:** Veterans' Employment and Training Service
- **Description:** To help address the employment challenges of veterans with service-connected and non service-connected disabilities, the new Disabled Veteran Program (DVP) at the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) would help increase employment and advancement opportunities for veterans with disabilities by working with federal, state, and private partners to promote the hiring of veterans with disabilities, improve coordination of available employment services and supports, and to identify and share employment best practices for hiring, retaining, and advancing veterans with disabilities in the workforce. The proposed Disabled Veteran Program would be modeled after DOL VETS' successful Women Veteran Program.
- **Request Type:** Programmatic & Report Language Request
- **FY 2020 Request:** No less than \$300,000 above current DOL VETS levels and the following report language:

*"The Committee provides an additional \$300,000 above fiscal year 2020 to establish a Disabled Veteran Program at the Veterans' Employment and Training Service to address the high unemployment and low labor force participation rate of veterans with disabilities."*
- **FY 2020 President's Budget Request:** N/A
- **FY 2019 Enacted:** \$0
- **Authorization Authority:** [Title 38, Chapter 41 United States Code](#)