

BUILDING AMERICA'S SKILLED TECHNICAL WORKFORCE

# The Military Pathway to Skills

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# A Key Resource for Growing the Skilled Technical Workforce

- The military community includes
  - 1.3M DoD active duty military personnel
  - 40K DHS active duty Coast Guard members
- Four fifths are enlisted
  - Many in technical skills that could transfer to civilian jobs in maintenance, health care, or IT
  - Most (92%) have a high school diploma and/or some college experience but less than a bachelor's degree

# A Pathway to Education & Training for the Civilian Workforce

- Many Americans join the armed forces as a pathway to education, training, and preparation for life and careers
- Military personnel receive training associated with skilled technical work
- Annually, about 200,000 enlisted members and officers leave active military duty and return to civilian life

# Transition Challenges Facing Veterans and Retiring Service Members Include...

- Matching/recognition of military training and experience with requirements of educators, regulators, and employers
- Shifting field/sector on entering the civilian workforce
- Coping with a new environment

# Some Results of these Transition Challenges

- Veterans confront a difficult search process, but one mediated by federal support
- Veterans participating in the GI Bill complete programs at a rate comparable to that of traditional postsecondary students but take longer to do so

# Existing Actions Supporting Veterans' Transitions

- Special access to unemployment insurance
- GI Bill
- United Service Military Apprenticeship Program
- Federal hiring preference
- VOW to Hire Heroes Act
- US Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes Program

# Additional Actions Could...

- Streamline state occupational licensing,
  - Focusing on skills that overlap civilian occupational requirements
  - Focusing on spouses of returning veterans
- Assist with general job search skills and the norms of the civilian workplace

# Unemployment Benefit or Transition Assistance?

- DoD has been spending \$1 billion per year on unemployment benefits for transitioning service members, but does not track utilization or outcomes
- Tracking data could improve the transition process and strengthen outcomes for veterans, to the benefit of the national labor force



# Current DOD Transition Initiatives

- The Military Life Cycle (MLC) Transition Model starts preparation for service members' transitions early in their military careers
- The Skills Bridge Program offers service members an opportunity to participate in civilian job and employment training activities, including apprenticeships and internships

# Towards a More Integrated Process

- Our Committee convened a December 2016 Workshop on the DOD Transition Challenge
- Workshop highlighted a need to shift to a more integrated approach to transitioning service members with technical skills
- Achieving this shift will require embracing the Military Life Cycle mindset

# The Committee Recommends That DoD...

- Further integrate skills transition into military training
- Coordinate with civilian policy makers, regulators, and educators to improve the transferability of military education, training and certification
- Track post-service employment and career outcomes

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# Thank You!