

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1606

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21, 2023

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Small Business and
Entrepreneurship

AN ACT

To amend the Small Business Act to codify the Boots to
Business Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Veteran Entrepreneur-
3 ship Training Act of 2023”.

4 **SEC. 2. BOOTS TO BUSINESS PROGRAM.**

5 Section 32 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
6 657b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

7 “(h) BOOTS TO BUSINESS PROGRAM.—

8 “(1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this
9 subsection, the term ‘covered individual’ means—

10 “(A) a member of the Armed Forces, in-
11 cluding the National Guard or Reserves;

12 “(B) an individual who is participating in
13 the Transition Assistance Program established
14 under section 1144 of title 10, United States
15 Code;

16 “(C) an individual who—

17 “(i) served on active duty in any
18 branch of the Armed Forces, including the
19 National Guard or Reserves; and

20 “(ii) was discharged or released from
21 such service under conditions other than
22 dishonorable; and

23 “(D) a spouse or dependent of an indi-
24 vidual described in subparagraph (A), (B), or
25 (C).

1 “(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—During the period be-
2 ginning on the date of enactment of this subsection
3 and ending on September 30, 2028, the Adminis-
4 trator shall carry out a program to be known as the
5 ‘Boots to Business Program’ to provide entrepre-
6 neurship training to covered individuals.

7 “(3) GOALS.—The goals of the Boots to Busi-
8 ness Program are to—

9 “(A) provide assistance and in-depth train-
10 ing to covered individuals interested in business
11 ownership; and

12 “(B) provide covered individuals with the
13 tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to identify
14 a business opportunity, draft a business plan,
15 identify sources of capital, connect with local
16 resources for small business concerns, and start
17 up a small business concern.

18 “(4) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Boots to Busi-
20 ness Program may include—

21 “(i) a presentation providing exposure
22 to the considerations involved in self-em-
23 ployment and ownership of a small busi-
24 ness concern;

1 “(ii) an online, self-study course fo-
2 cused on the basic skills of entrepreneur-
3 ship, the language of business, and the
4 considerations involved in self-employment
5 and ownership of a small business concern;

6 “(iii) an in-person classroom instruc-
7 tion component providing an introduction
8 to the foundations of self employment and
9 ownership of a small business concern; and

10 “(iv) in-depth training delivered
11 through online instruction, including an
12 online course that leads to the creation of
13 a business plan.

14 “(B) COLLABORATION.—The Adminis-
15 trator may—

16 “(i) collaborate with public and pri-
17 vate entities to develop course curricula for
18 the Boots to Business Program; and

19 “(ii) modify program components in
20 coordination with entities participating in a
21 Warriors in Transition program, as defined
22 in section 738(e) of the National Defense
23 Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013
24 (10 U.S.C. 1071 note).

1 “(C) USE OF RESOURCE PARTNERS AND
2 DISTRICT OFFICES.—

3 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
4 shall—

5 “(I) ensure that Veteran Busi-
6 ness Outreach Centers regularly par-
7 ticipate, on a nationwide basis, in the
8 Boots to Business Program; and

9 “(II) to the maximum extent
10 practicable, use district offices of the
11 Administration and a variety of other
12 resource partners and entities in ad-
13 ministering the Boots to Business
14 Program.

15 “(ii) GRANT AUTHORITY.—In carrying
16 out clause (i), the Administrator may make
17 grants, subject to the availability of appro-
18 priations in advance, to Veteran Business
19 Outreach Centers, other resource partners,
20 or other entities to carry out components
21 of the Boots to Business Program.

22 “(D) AVAILABILITY TO DEPARTMENT OF
23 DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.—
24 The Administrator shall make available to the
25 Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of

1 Labor information regarding the Boots to Busi-
2 ness Program, including all course materials
3 and outreach materials related to the Boots to
4 Business Program, for inclusion on the websites
5 of the Department of Defense and the Depart-
6 ment of Labor relating to the Transition Assist-
7 ance Program, in the Transition Assistance
8 Program manual, and in other relevant mate-
9 rials available for distribution from the Sec-
10 retary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor.

11 “(E) AVAILABILITY TO DEPARTMENT OF
12 VETERANS AFFAIRS.—In consultation with the
13 Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Adminis-
14 trator shall make available for distribution and
15 display on the website of the Department of
16 Veterans Affairs and at local facilities of the
17 Department of Veterans Affairs outreach mate-
18 rials regarding the Boots to Business Program,
19 which shall, at a minimum—

20 “(i) describe the Boots to Business
21 Program and the services provided; and

22 “(ii) include eligibility requirements
23 for participating in the Boots to Business
24 Program.

1 “(F) AVAILABILITY TO OTHER PARTICI-
2 PATING AGENCIES.—The Administrator shall
3 ensure information regarding the Boots to
4 Business program, including all course mate-
5 rials and outreach materials related to the
6 Boots to Business Program, is made available
7 to other participating agencies in the Transition
8 Assistance Program and upon request of other
9 agencies.

10 “(5) COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCEDURES.—
11 The Administration shall use relevant competitive
12 bidding procedures with respect to any contract or
13 cooperative agreement executed by the Administra-
14 tion under the Boots to Business Program.

15 “(6) PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF FUNDING OP-
16 PORTUNITY.—Not later than 30 days before the
17 deadline for submitting applications for any funding
18 opportunity under the Boots to Business Program,
19 the Administration shall publish a notice of the
20 funding opportunity.

21 “(7) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after
22 the date of enactment of this subsection, and not
23 less frequently than annually thereafter, the Admin-
24 istrator shall submit to the Committee on Small
25 Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and

1 the Committee on Small Business of the House of
2 Representatives a report on the performance and ef-
3 fectiveness of the Boots to Business Program,
4 which—

5 “(A) may be included as part of another
6 report submitted to such committees by the Ad-
7 ministrator related to the Office of Veterans
8 Business Development; and

9 “(B) shall summarize available information
10 relating to—

11 “(i) grants awarded under paragraph
12 (4)(C);

13 “(ii) the total cost of the Boots to
14 Business Program;

15 “(iii) the number of program partici-
16 pants using each component of the Boots
17 to Business Program;

18 “(iv) the completion rates for each
19 component of the Boots to Business Pro-
20 gram;

21 “(v) to the extent possible—

22 “(I) the demographics of pro-
23 gram participants, to include gender,
24 age, race, ethnicity, and relationship
25 to military;

1 “(II) the number of program
2 participants that connect with a dis-
3 trict office of the Administration, a
4 Veteran Business Outreach Center, or
5 another resource partner of the Ad-
6 ministration;

7 “(III) the number of program
8 participants that start a small busi-
9 ness concern;

10 “(IV) the results of the Boots to
11 Business and Boots to Business
12 Reboot course quality surveys con-
13 ducted by the Office of Veterans Busi-
14 ness Development before and after at-
15 tending each of those courses, includ-
16 ing a summary of any comments re-
17 ceived from program participants;

18 “(V) the results of the Boots to
19 Business Program outcome surveys
20 conducted by the Office of Veterans
21 Business Development, including a
22 summary of any comments received
23 from program participants; and

24 “(VI) the results of other ger-
25 mane participant satisfaction surveys;

Attest: CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.