AMENDMENT TO THE RULES COMMITTEE PRINT
FOR H.R. 4435
OFFERED BY MRS. McMORRIS RODGERS OF WASHINGTON

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following new section:

SEC. 548. ROLE OF MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ADDRESSING UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT OF SPOUSES OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND CLOSING THE WAGE GAP BETWEEN MILITARY SPOUSES AND THEIR CIVILIAN COUNTERPARTS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Members of the Armed Forces and their families make enormous sacrifices in defense of the United States.

(2) Military spouses face a unique lifestyle marked by frequent moves, increased family responsibility during deployments, and limited career opportunities in certain geographic locations.
(3) These circumstances present significant challenges to military spouses who desire to build a portable career commensurate with their skills, including education and experience.

(4) According to a recent Department of Defense survey, the unemployment rate for civilians married to a military member is 25 percent, but the unemployment rate is 33 percent for spouses of junior enlisted members. The same survey revealed that 85 percent of military spouses want or need to work.

(5) A recent Military Officers Association of American (MOAA)/Institute for Veterans and Military Families’ (IVMF) Military Spouse Employment Report revealed that an overwhelming ninety percent of female military spouses are underemployed.

(6) The Department of Defense has demonstrated its commitment to helping military spouses obtain employment by creating the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP), the Military Spouse Career Center, and the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA). More than 61,000 military spouses have been hired as part of the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) since the MSEP launch in June 2011.
(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Secretary of Defense should continue to work to reduce the unemployment and underemployment of spouses of members of the Armed Forces (in this section referred to as “military spouses”) and support closing the wage gap between military spouses and their civilian counterparts;

(2) in this process, the Secretary should prioritize efforts that assist military spouses in pursuing portable careers that match their skill set, including education and experience; and

(3) in evaluating the effectiveness of military spouse employment programs, the Secretary should collect information that provides a comprehensive assessment of the program, including whether program goals are being achieved.

(c) DATA COLLECTION RELATED TO EFFORTS TO ADDRESS UNDEREMPLOYMENT OF MILITARY SPOUSES.—

(1) DATA COLLECTION REQUIRED.—In addition to monitoring the number of military spouses who obtain employment through military spouse employment programs, the Secretary of Defense shall collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of military spouse employment programs in addressing the
underemployment of military spouses and in closing
the wage gap between military spouses and their ci-

civilian counterparts. Information collected shall in-
clude whether positions obtained by military spouses
through military spouse employment programs
match their education and experience.

(2) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one
year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congress-

ional defense committees a report evaluating the
progress of military spouse employment programs in
reducing military spouse unemployment, reducing
the wage gap between military spouses and their ci-


civilian counterparts, and addressing the under-
employment of military spouses.

(d) MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS DE-
FINED.—In this section, the term “military spouse em-
ployment programs” means the Military Spouse Employ-
ment Partnership (MSEP).