AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

118–10

OFFERED BY MR. NEGUSE OF COLORADO

Add at the end of subtitle C of title XVIII the following:

SEC. 18. PILOT PROGRAM TO EMPLOY VETERANS IN POSITIONS RELATING TO FEDERAL WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING ACTIVITIES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, shall jointly establish a pilot program to employ veterans in wildland firefighting activities.

(b) DUTIES.—Under such pilot program—

(1) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall be responsible for administering such pilot program; and

(2) the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior shall be responsible for—

(A) identifying vacant positions in the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, respectively, that are appropriate
for veterans selected for participation in such
pilot program; and
(B) to the extent practicable, employing
such veterans in such positions.

(c) APPLICATION OF CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—A vet-
eran employed under the pilot program under subsection
(a) shall be treated as an employee (as defined in section
2105 of title 5, United States Code).

(d) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary of Veterans
Affairs shall establish guidelines that include best prac-
tices for departments and agencies of the Federal Govern-
ment that carry out programs to employ veterans who are
transitioning from service in the Armed Forces. Such
guidelines shall include—

(1) lessons learned under the Warrior Training
Advancement Course of the Department of Veterans
Affairs; and

(2) methods to realize cost savings based on
such lessons.

(e) PARTNERSHIP.—The Secretary of Veterans Af-
fairs, the Secretaries concerned, and the Secretary of De-
fense may enter into a partnership to include the pilot pro-
gram under subsection (a) as part of the Skillbridge pro-
gram under section 1143 of title 10, United States Code.

(f) REPORTS.—
(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the pilot program under subsection (a), including—

(A) a description of how such pilot program will be carried out in a manner to reduce the unemployment of veterans; and

(B) any recommendations for legislative actions to improve such pilot program.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one year after the date on which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs commences such pilot program, such Secretary and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation of such pilot program.

(3) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which such pilot program concludes, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretaries concerned shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes—

(A) an identification of—
(i) the number of veterans who applied to participate in such pilot program;

(ii) the number of such veterans employed pursuant to such pilot program; and

(iii) the number of veterans described in clause (ii) who transitioned to full-time positions with the Federal Government after participating in such pilot program; and

(B) any other information the Secretaries determine appropriate with respect to measuring the effectiveness of such pilot program.

(g) TERMINATION DATE.—The authority to carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date on which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs commences such pilot program.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “appropriate congressional committees” means the following:

(A) The Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives.

(B) The Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(C) The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.
(D) The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(E) The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(F) The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate.

(2) The term “wildland firefighting activities” means any temporary, seasonal, or permanent position at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior, and Tribal Firefighters, that maintains group, emergency incident management, or fire qualifications, as established annually by the Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications published by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, that primarily engages in or supports wildland fire management, including forestry and rangeland technicians and positions concerning aviation, engineering heavy equipment operations, dispatch, or fire and fuels management.