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[H.R. 2360, Career-Ready Student Veterans Act](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, February 9, 2016, the House will consider [H.R. 2360](#), *the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 2360 was introduced on May 15, 2015 by Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA) and was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, which ordered the bill reported, as amended, by voice vote on September 17, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 2360 improves the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) approval process for education and training programs that veterans are permitted to use their Post-9/11 GI bill benefits for in an attempt ensure veterans are not enrolled in programs that do not prepare them for the workforce in their field of study.

This legislation adds new requirements for State Approving Agencies to approve institutions' written applications for approval of accredited and non-accredited courses. A program must either meet the licensure and certification requirements of a State, or the standards developed by a board or agency of a State.¹

The VA is permitted to waive these requirements under certain circumstances, a full list of which is available in the Committee [report](#).

BACKGROUND

The federal government supports the readjustment of veterans through continued education and training, principally through programs known as GI Bills, which offer educational assistance through monetary payments to veterans and their family members.²

Under current law, in order for a veteran to use his or her education benefits for an educational training program, the program must meet certain requirements and accreditation standards provided

¹ See [House Report 114-336](#) at 2.

² See CRS Report, "[Comparison of Post-9/11 GI Bill® and Pell Grant Administration](#)," June 24, 2015.

by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). State Approving Agencies review programs accreditation and other factors to ensure that veterans attend programs of sufficient quality. There are different types of accreditation and, while national and regional accreditation bestowed on schools and training programs are sufficient for most fields of study, some professions require a higher level of accreditation to be successful or gain entry into the career field. Some schools may meet national and regional accreditation standards, while individual programs of education may not meet the programmatic standards that many States require for certain licenses and certifications.

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs found that student veterans have used their Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits for educational and training programs which have not provided them the necessary credentials to enter the workforce in their field of study.³ The Committee believes these standards are necessary so veterans are not shut out of their chosen profession because G.I. Bill benefits were used on a program that does not meet State requirements.⁴ In the 113th Congress, nearly identical language was included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 ([P.L. 113-66 127 Stat. 672](#)).

According to the bill sponsor, “[the bill] ensure[s] that career-education programs designed to prepare student veterans for entry into the workforce are actually doing so. [The bill] require[s] programs to have accreditation if required for the relevant field and to meet the curriculum and instructional requirements for state licensure or certification in order to receive GI Bill benefits. These reforms are critical for protecting servicemembers, veterans, and taxpayers from unscrupulous for-profit colleges.”⁵

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 2360 would have no additional costs, would not affect direct spending or revenues, and pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jake Vreeburg](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

³ Id. at 3.

⁴ Id. at 4.

⁵ See Rep. Mark Takano's Press Release, "[Rep. Mark Takano Statement Regarding Department of Defense Decision to Place the University of Phoenix on Probation](#)," October 9, 2015.