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## [S. 136, Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015](#)

### FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, September 28, 2015, the House will consider [S. 136](#), the *Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015*, under suspension of the rules. S. 136 was introduced on January 08, 2015 by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and passed the Senate by unanimous consent on May 11, 2015.

### SUMMARY

S. 136 extends to fathers hiring preferences for federal civil service positions currently available only to mothers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans. The bill also extends such appointment preferences to parents who never married and to those that are widowed, divorced or legally separated.

### BACKGROUND

Under current law, “mothers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans receive preference in appointments for civil service positions if such mothers are widowed, divorced, or separated or if the husband of such mother is totally or permanently disabled.”<sup>1</sup> In practice, these so-called Gold Star mothers receive a 10-point hiring preference when they apply for federal jobs.

The term Gold Star Family (or Parents) is a modern reference that comes from service flags or banners that were flown by families during World War I. “The flag included a blue star for every immediate family member serving in the armed forces of the United States, during any period of war or hostilities in which the armed forces of the United States were engaged. If that loved one died, the blue star was replaced by a gold star. This allowed members of the community to know the price that the family had paid in the cause of freedom.”<sup>2</sup>

According to the bill sponsor, “every American killed or disabled in combat represents a sacrifice made by his or her family. Nobody can end this grief, but what we can—and must—do is ensure that

<sup>1</sup> [House Report 114-263](#) at 2.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.army.mil/goldstar>

the federal government recognizes these mothers and fathers who have given so much for this country.”<sup>3</sup>

## **COST**

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing the legislation would not have a significant budgetary effect because, while it would expand the pool of people eligible for federal job preferences, it would not change the total number of federal jobs available or the salaries paid to federal employees. Enacting S. 136 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

## **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-5539.

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<sup>3</sup> See Press Release—[“Wyden and Brown Reintroduce ‘Gold Star Fathers’ Act,”](#) January 8, 2015.