



**THE FAST TRACK TO CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT:
STREAMLINING CREDENTIALING AND LICENSING FOR
SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS, AND THEIR SPOUSES**

Executive Office of the President

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This report was prepared by the National Economic Council and the President's Council of Economic Advisers, with assistance from the Department of Defense, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Transportation, the Domestic Policy Council, National Security Staff, and the Office of the First Lady.

Executive Summary

This report discusses the unique challenges that confront service members, military spouses and veterans in establishing their qualifications for civilian employment, and outlines the measures that the Administration and States have taken and still need to take to ensure that the skills and abilities of these individuals can be applied to meet employer needs while providing good, meaningful jobs for our military families.

- **Service members, military families and veterans face unique challenges in the labor market.**
 - Frequent moves combined with different requirements for occupational licenses across state lines can make it difficult and costly for spouses of active duty military to find a job.
 - Despite having valuable military experience, veterans frequently find it difficult to obtain formal private sector recognition of their military training, experiences, and skill sets through civilian certification and licensure. This also makes it difficult for the private sector to capitalize on the resources and time spent training and educating service members.
- **Under the leadership of First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, the Obama Administration has responded aggressively to the challenges faced by military spouses, working with the states to ensure that these individuals do not confront unnecessary obstacles when pursuing their chosen professions.**
 - Since February of 2012, 17 states have passed spousal licensing legislation, bringing the overall total to 28 states with military spouse licensure measures in place. An additional 15 states have active spouse licensure bills.
 - Through collaboration with state legislators and regulators, the Department of Defense has worked towards state adoption of best practice options that can expedite the transfer of military spouse licenses that are in good standing and are substantially equivalent: licensure through endorsement; temporary licensure; and expedited processes for issuing licenses.
- **The Obama Administration also has worked hard to ensure that separating service members and veterans have the opportunity to apply their skills in civilian employment.** The Department of Defense Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force, established last year at the direction of President Obama, has identified and created opportunities for service members to earn civilian occupational credentials and licenses. The Task Force has focused its efforts on well-paying industries and occupations that have a high demand for skilled workers, including: manufacturing; information technology; transportation and logistics; health care; and emergency medical services.

- With the help of the Task Force's efforts, hundreds of service members have earned or are in the process of earning machinist, logistics, welding, and engineering certifications for high-demand manufacturing jobs, and efforts are underway to develop similar pathways for the attainment of information technology certifications.
- **The Obama Administration is now launching the next phase of its military credentialing and licensing efforts, partnering with the states to streamline state occupational licensing for veterans.** The Task Force will continue to work with the states and institutions to streamline licensing for service members and veterans, specifically targeting the occupations of bus and truck drivers, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and licensed practical nurses.
 - A total of 34 states have already passed laws to waive the driving skills test for veterans with a record of safely operating vehicles similar to the trucks and buses for which a commercial driving license is required, and similar legislation is pending in the District of Columbia and 9 other states.
- **The Obama Administration is expanding educational opportunities available to veterans who wish to build on their military training and experience and earn degrees to become advanced practice health care providers like physician assistants.** Through its grant programs, the Department of Health and Human Services continues to provide incentives for physician assistant and nursing training programs to enroll veterans, give them credit for their military experience, and provide them with the support they need to successfully complete their education.
- **The Obama Administration has outlined a suite of best practices, including suggested legislative language, for states to use to ensure that separating service members and veterans receive appropriate licensure and academic credit for their training and experience** and do not face other unnecessary barriers to qualifying for employment in high-demand occupations that require certification or licensure.

The Fast Track to Civilian Employment



PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA GREETES HOSPITAL PERSONNEL IN THE ICU AT BAGRAM AIR FIELD, AFGHANISTAN, MAY 1, 2012.
(OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PETE SOUZA)

“But, unfortunately, a lot of returning heroes with advanced skills -- they don’t get hired simply because they don’t have the civilian licenses or certifications that a lot of companies require. At the same time, I hear from business leaders...who say they can’t find enough workers with the skills necessary to fill open positions...So think about it -- we got all these openings and all these skilled veterans looking for work, and somehow they’re missing each other. That doesn’t make any sense.”

- President Obama, June 1, 2012

Introduction

In the coming years, America will see a continued demand for skilled workers in high-growth industries from healthcare and information technology to clean energy and advanced manufacturing. Experts project that openings for jobs requiring post-secondary education, including associates’ degrees and occupational certificates, will grow faster than employment overall in the years ahead (Lockard and Wolf, 2012; Carnevale, Smith and Strohl, 2010). During the 1950s, less than 5 percent of employed persons were in occupations that required a state level license. One recent study, based on new survey data, found that nearly 30 percent of workers were licensed by some level of government in 2008 (Kleiner and Krueger, 2013). If one includes government certifications, that share rises closer to about 35 percent. Studies generally find that both occupational licenses and government certifications are associated with

higher wages, with substantial wage premiums—on the order of 15 to 18 percent—for individuals who hold an occupational license. Those without licenses often have to take jobs in different, lower-paying occupations. As employers in some industries report difficulty filling jobs that require specific technical skills, it is of the utmost importance that we streamline the process for highly skilled and trained workers to earn occupational licenses and certifications to help fill workforce needs.

The United States has the most highly trained military in the world, sustained by individuals who have skill sets with enormous breadth and depth because of their military education and experience. The members of our Armed Forces and their families make great sacrifices in the service of our Nation, and when their service is concluded, we owe it to our veterans and their families to help them accomplish a successful transition to the civilian labor market. However, these talented and dedicated individuals face barriers making it difficult to find jobs that capitalize their current skills. The Nation supports having the most effective military through its allocation of billions of hard earned tax dollars to train and equip our service members. In doing so, there are many skills that are taught while in the service that can be utilized once they transition to civilian life, especially in the fastest growing private sector industries. However, many service members are required to repeat education or training in order to receive industry certifications and state occupational licenses, even though much, and in some cases, all, of their military training and experience overlaps with credential training requirements. Additionally, frequent moves, and the resulting need to search for new employment, can be a significant problem for military spouses, especially when getting a job in a new state requires obtaining an occupational license. Leveraging the skills of our military veterans and their families will build a stronger workforce and a more competitive economy.

PUTTING OUR MILITARY SPOUSES BACK TO WORK: THE STATE OF SPOUSAL LICENSING

Overview of Military Spouse Employment

There are currently more than 860,000 military spouses, about 95 percent of whom are female. Over the past six years, the labor force participation rate for military spouses has been approximately 55 percent, with an unemployment rate of 9.7 percent. Military spouses experience a number of unique employment challenges. According to analysis from the Treasury Department, military spouses are ten times more likely to have moved across state lines in the last year compared to their civilian counterparts: Taking an average for the years 2007 through 2012, 15.4 percent of military spouses moved across state lines each year, compared to just 1.1 percent of civilian spouses.

Table 1: Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rate of Military and Civilian Spouses

	Military Spouses	Civilian Spouses
Labor Force Participation Rate	55.4%	72.6%
Unemployment Rate	9.7%	5.0%

Notes: The first two columns represent annual averages based on pooled 2007 through 2012 data from the ASEC supplement of the CPS. Civilian spouse statistics are weighted to be comparable with the gender distribution of military spouses. Data are restricted to respondents aged 18 to 45.

Table 2: Annual Percent of Adult Population Who Moved Across State Lines

	Percent Moved
Military Spouse	15.4
Civilian Spouse	1.1
Single / Unmarried	1.8
All households	1.5

Notes: Annual averages based on pooled 2007 through 2012 data from the ASEC supplement of the CPS, but reflect relocation in the year before the survey. Those who moved from overseas locations are excluded from this table.

Teaching is the most common occupation among military spouses, followed by nursing and child care services. While many of the common occupations among military spouses are not licensed, some of the most popular professions, including teaching and nursing, do require licensure. As occupational licenses carry state-specific conditions and processes, many spouses face lengthy re-employment delays when they move between states. Because of the delay, and expense involved in re-licensure, many spouses are unable to work in their chosen profession. This dilemma can affect the financial stability of military families, discourage service members

from staying in the military, and reduce hiring potential if spouses must remain out of the workforce because of these delays.

Table 3: Top 20 Occupations for Military Spouses in the Labor Force

Rank	Occupation	Percent of total
1	Teachers (Pre-Kindergarten - 12th Grade)**	5.8
2	Registered nurses**	4.7
3	Child care workers*	3.9
4	Retail salespersons	3.6
5	Secretaries and administrative assistants	3.5
6	Receptionists and information clerks	3.0
7	Waiters and waitresses	2.7
8	Cashiers	2.7
9	First-line supervisors/managers of retail sales workers	2.6
10	Customer service representatives	2.1
11	Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides*	1.7
12	First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	1.6
13	Accountants and auditors**	1.4
14	Dental assistants*	1.2
15	Managers, all other	1.2
16	Financial managers	1.2
17	Tellers	1.1
18	Other teachers and instructors	1.1
19	Postsecondary teachers	1.1
20	Teacher assistants	1.1
	Other categories	52.9

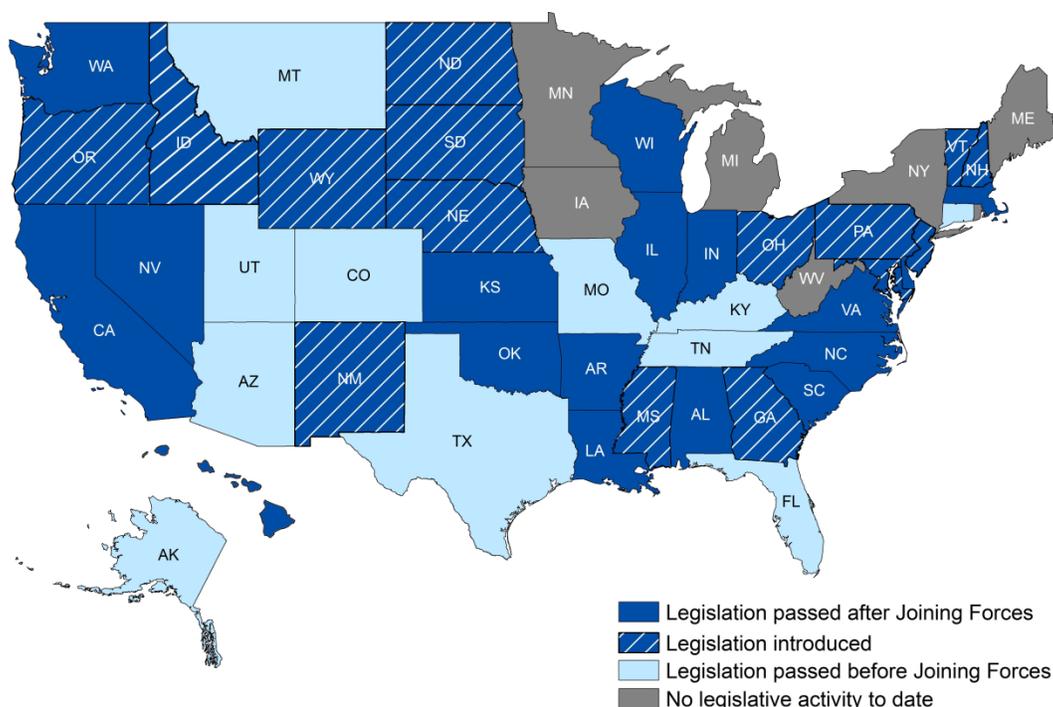
Notes: Annual averages based on pooled 2007 through 2012 data from the ASEC supplement of the CPS. Data include unemployed workers. Double asterisks (**) denote occupations that require licenses; single asterisk (*) denotes occupations that have certification.

In a 2008 Defense Manpower Data Center survey of military spouses, participants were asked what would have helped them with their employment search after their last military move. Nearly 40 percent of those respondents who had moved indicated that “easier state-to-state transfer of certification” would have helped them. This is not surprising given that a third of the respondents said they had recently been employed in an occupation with potential licensure requirements, and nearly half of the respondents suggested that they were interested in pursuing careers in licensed fields. Streamlining state licensing procedures for military spouses and increasing license portability can significantly ease some employment challenges facing these spouses.

The Joining Forces Military Spouse Licensing Initiative

At the National Governors Association meeting in February 2012, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden called upon all 50 governors to help advance legislation to expedite professional licenses or certification for military spouses when they move to a new state. At that time, as shown in Figure 1, only 11 states had legislation in place to assist military spouses seeking licenses or certifications. Since First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden's call to governors last year, states have made enormous progress. As of February 20th, an additional 17 states have passed spousal licensing legislation, bringing the overall total to 28 states with military spouse measures in place. Additionally, 15 other states have active spouse licensure bills.

Figure 1: Military Spouse Licensing Legislation -- Current Status



The Department of Defense (DoD) continues to work with all the states on ways to help military spouses move into the workforce as quickly as possible, and through collaboration with state legislators and regulators, DoD has developed three best practice options to expedite the transfer of licenses that are in good standing and are substantially equivalent: licensure through endorsement; temporary licensure; and expedited processes for issuing licenses.

- **Licensure through endorsement.** Many military spouses, especially those recently stationed overseas, have difficulty accessing endorsements if they had to comply with experience requirements to show competency. For example, **North Carolina** has developed a best practice that allows spouses to “*demonstrate competency in the occupation through methods as determined by the Board, such as having completed continuing education units or having had recent experience for at least two of the five*

years preceding the date of the application under this section. All relevant experience, including full-time and part-time experience, regardless of whether in a paid or volunteer capacity, shall be credited in the calculation of years of practice in an occupation." To date, 19 states have passed legislation supporting endorsement processes for military spouses, and 11 states have active bills.

- **Temporary licensure.** Many states provide temporary licenses to allow a military spouse to secure employment while completing state requirements that may be different from what was required by the previous licensing state or while awaiting verification of current license, certification and/or employment history for an endorsement. For example, **Tennessee** authorizes *"the person to perform professional services regulated by the board in this state by issuing the person a temporary permit for a limited period of time to allow the person to perform professional services while completing any specific requirements that may be required in this state that were not required in the state in which the person was licensed or certified."* To date, 22 states have passed legislation supporting temporary licensure, and 13 states have active bills.
- **Expedited processes for issuing licenses.** Additionally, some states have expedited procedures for regulatory department or board approval of endorsements or temporary licenses. For example, **Montana, Kansas and Washington** allow boards to approve a license based on an application certified by affidavit as being accurate and where verification documentation has been requested. **Colorado** allows the director of the overseeing agency authority to approve applications on behalf of the licensing boards. **Utah** offers a unique opportunity to military spouses by allowing them to *"engage in the practice of their occupation or profession, subject to the stated circumstances and limitations, without being licensed under this title"* while the individual's spouse is stationed within the state. To date, 13 states have established processes that expedite licensure, and 13 states have active bills.

PUTTING OUR VETERANS BACK TO WORK: TRANSLATING MILITARY EXPERIENCE INTO CIVILIAN CREDENTIALS

Leveraging Veterans' Skills into Civilian Jobs

As of January 2013, roughly 844,000 veterans were unemployed and looking for work, including 252,000 post-9/11 veterans. Each year the military separates between 240,000 and 360,000 service members, and as we drawdown from the war in Afghanistan, the military is expected to separate a million service members over the next several years. President Obama is committed to doing everything in his power to assist these veterans in re-entering civilian life and finding employment. Administration policies to help veterans transition to private-sector employment include the first re-design of the military's transition assistance program in twenty years; expanded reemployment services, such as the Veterans Job Bank and the Veterans Gold Card; initiatives to expand the number of veterans that get jobs in healthcare and first responder fields; supporting tailored training programs to enable veterans to qualify for advanced professional opportunities; and expanding hiring and training partnerships with the private sector. Moreover, through the leadership of the First Lady and Dr. Biden, the Administration has committed to supporting military families, and has called upon the Federal government and private employers to play a prominent role in helping veterans and military spouses find jobs.

To ensure that service members leave the military with the skills to meet the needs of civilian employers and able to demonstrate that they have those skills, the President created the Department of Defense Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force, charged with (1) identifying military specialties that readily transfer to high-demand jobs; (2) working with civilian credentialing and licensing associations to address gaps between military training programs and credentialing and licensing requirements; and (3) providing service members with greater access to necessary certification and licensing exams. The Task Force has been charged with focusing its efforts on well-paying industries and occupations that have a high demand for skilled workers, including: health care; first responders; manufacturing; information technology; and transportation and logistics.

In addition to the work of the DoD Task Force, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act and the National Defense Authorization Act have prescribed that the Administration take additional steps to streamline credentialing and licensing for military members. These include:

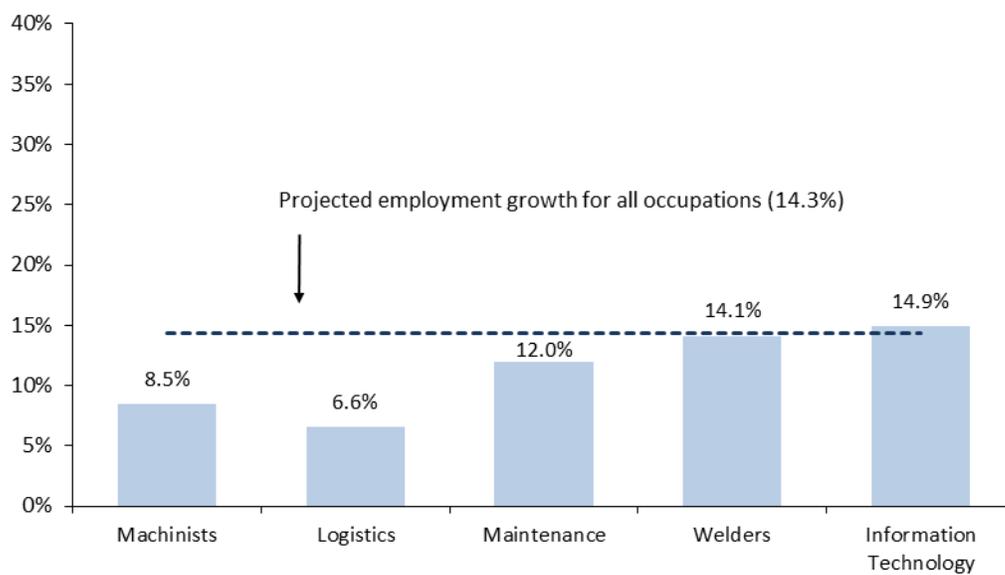
- **A Department of Labor (DOL) pilot program to help states determine the best practice options to translate military training and experience into credit towards civilian licenses.** Additionally, DOL will be conducting an in-depth study to strengthen their existing military skills to civilian skills crosswalk, currently available through its online tools, including *My Next Move for Veterans*.

- **A DoD pilot program to conduct credentialing and licensing pilots in five career fields: aircraft mechanic, automotive mechanic, truck driver, healthcare, and logistics and supply.** The certifications chosen by the Services represent the nationally-recognized commercial certification in each chosen career category, a federal license, or set of representative State licenses. More than 2,000 service members are pursuing credentialing and licensing in 16 military occupational codes.

The President’s Military Credentialing and Licensing Initiative: National Certification

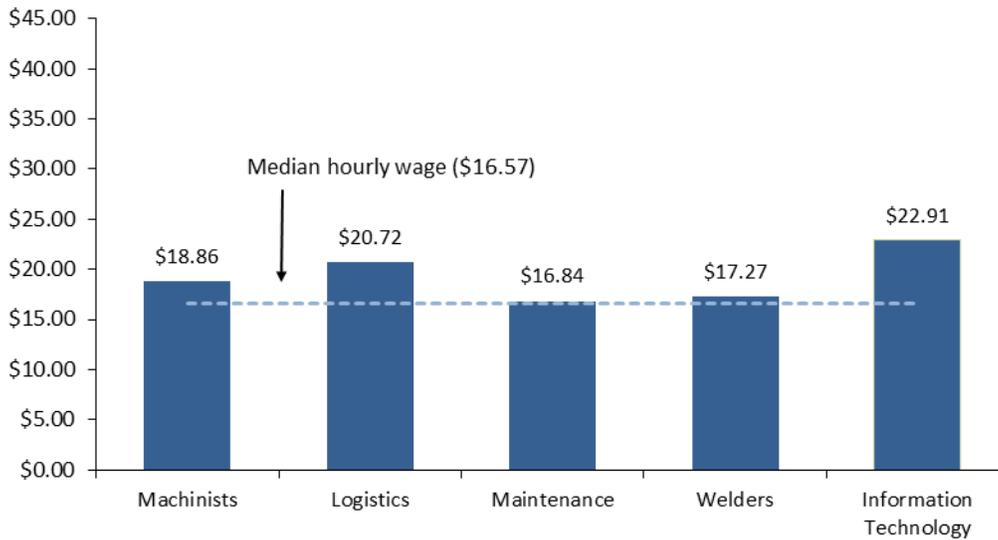
Since its establishment, the DoD Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force’s efforts have been focused on industries that utilize nationally-recognized, highly portable industry certifications. In June 2012, as its initial action, the Task Force forged partnerships with the five largest manufacturing credentialing bodies to provide opportunities for service members to gain industry-recognized, nationally-portable certifications for high-demand manufacturing jobs. These certifications cover occupations including welding, machining, maintenance, and logistics. In addition to projected growth in the number of available jobs (Figure 2a), there will be a significant need for skilled workers in these occupations to replace those who will be retiring in the years ahead. Among machinists, for example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the need for replacement workers over the decade ending in 2020 will total 18.4 percent of 2010 employment. All of the targeted occupations have median hourly wages above the national average (Figure 2b). The Task Force is also engaged with the information technology industry to form similar partnerships.

Figure 2a: Projected Employment Growth by Occupation, 2010–2020



Source: CEA calculations based on BLS employment projections

Figure 2b: Median Hourly Wages by Occupation, 2011



Source: CEA calculations based on Occupational Employment Statistics. Wages reported for maintenance, welders and information technology are weighted medians across a set of more detailed occupations.

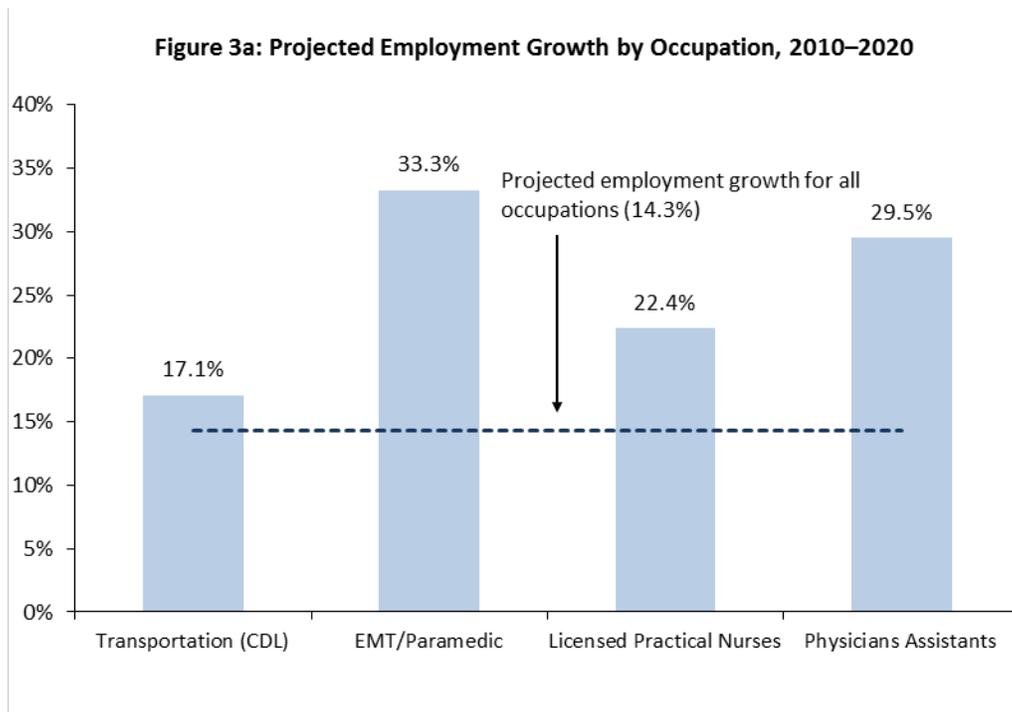
Since last summer, the manufacturing partnerships that were announced have been put into action at bases across the country:

- **Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC):** MSSC is partnering with all military services to promote attainment of the Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) and Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) credentials. Approximately 400 service members have taken the MSSC CLA and/or CLT exams at no cost to the service member. An additional 400 service members have been identified to take these exams in the near future. MSSC is offering a substantial discount on training costs to service members and is paying for the credentialing exams.
- **Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME):** SME offers advanced manufacturing certifications as well as a Lean certification similar to the American Society for Quality's Lean Six Sigma and Green/Black Belt certifications. Warrant Officer Advanced Course students at the Army's Engineer School at Ft. Leonard Wood are eligible for the SME Certified Manufacturing Technologist program. The Engineer School credentialing program is currently in development and the first class of participants will take their SME test in 2013.
- **National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS):** NIMS offers 52 different certifications focused on machining and metalworking. Thus far, 87 service members have earned a Level One Machinist certification. NIMS is also working closely with the Navy's Center for Naval Engineering to train proctors for the Machinery Repairman schools in the Great Lakes so that the Navy can proctor its own NIMS exams.

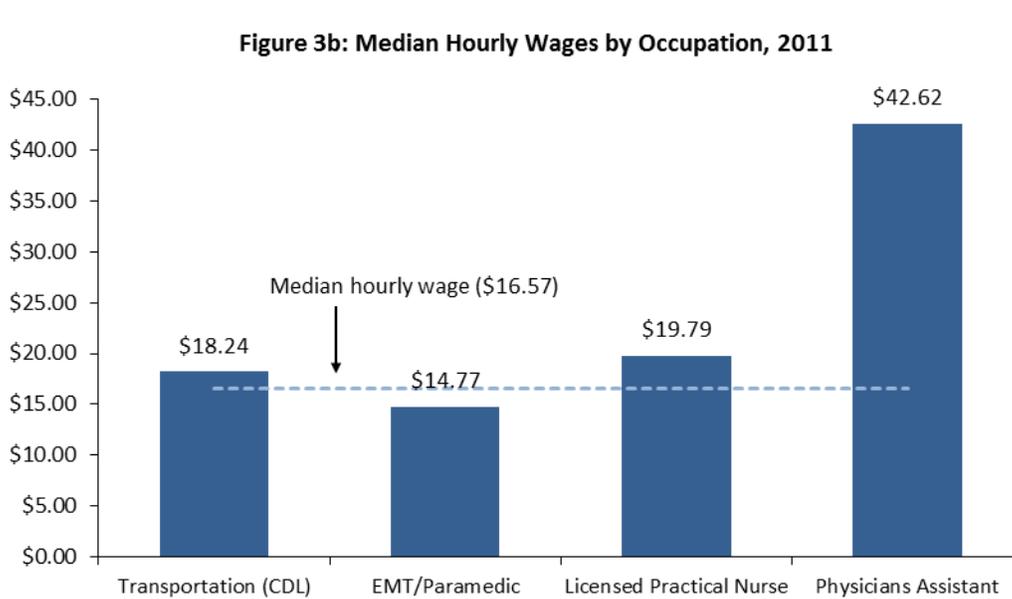
- **American Welding Society (AWS):** Certified Welder and Certified Welding Inspector are the credentials offered by the AWS. As a result of AWS partnership with the Army's Ordnance Center and School, the approximately 540 Soldiers and 140 Marines who graduate each year from the Allied Trades Specialist Advanced Individual Training course will earn the Basic Welder certification upon course completion. The first class to participate in this program began their training on December 1, 2012.
- **Tooling University (Tooling U):** Another key component of the manufacturing initiative is coordination with Tooling University. Tooling U provides assessment and gap training for NIMS, SME, and AWS certifications personalized to the individual student. As part of the Administration's efforts, Tooling U is working with the Air Force to provide training at no cost to participants. Tooling U also donated 50 seats of training for the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment.

The President's Military Credentialing and Licensing Initiative: State Licenses

Military education, training, and experience are not always recognized by state licensing agencies or by the organizations that administer the related certifications or exams, making it difficult for service members and veterans to qualify for the credentials they need for professional positions. Challenges include the absence of common standards for service credentialing programs, inconsistent state laws, and a lack of understanding about how military training and experience translates into licensing and academic credits. Many state licensing agencies and institutions do not or cannot assess military training and experience. The next phase of the Administration's Military Credentialing and Licensing Initiative will be to work with the states and industry leaders to assist states in translating military training and experience into credit towards professional licensure, especially in the healthcare and transportation industries. All of these targeted occupations have strong projected employment growth (Figure 3a). Wages for first responders are slightly below the overall national median wage, but are close to the median wage for civilian workers with some college; wages for truck and bus drivers and for LPNs are well above, and wages for PAs more than two and a half times, the overall national median (Figure 3b).



Source: CEA calculations based on BLS employment projections



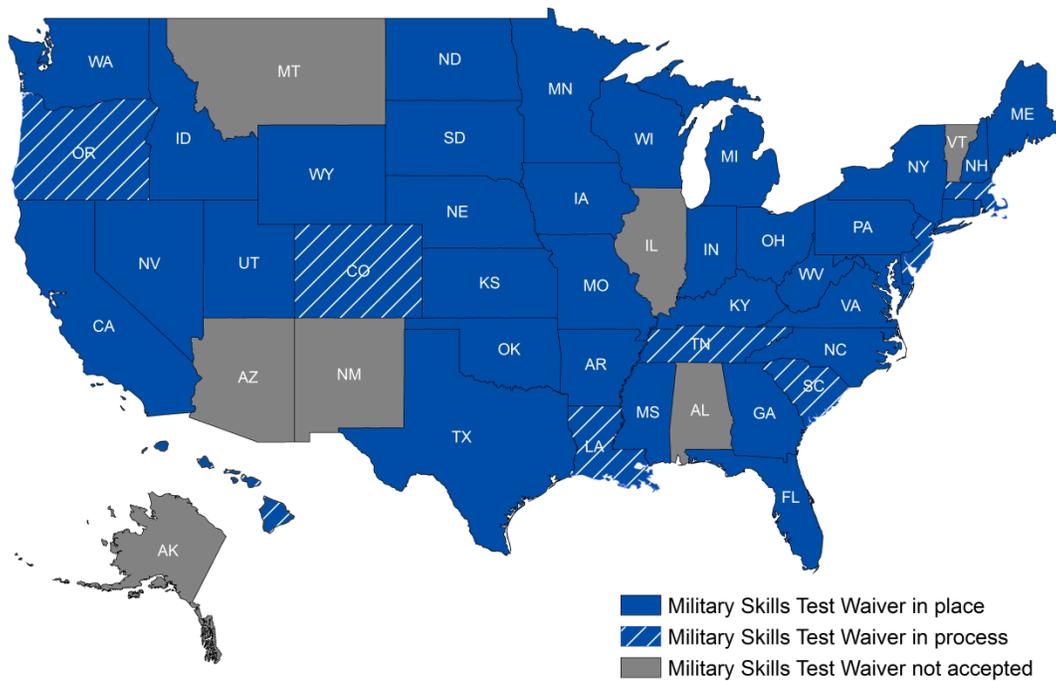
Source: CEA calculations based on Occupational Employment Statistics. Wage reported for transportation is a weighted median across a set of more detailed occupations.

The objectives of this *State Initiative* will be to accelerate states' occupational licensing processes; to explore the feasibility of establishing national approaches for assessing the equivalency of military training and experience in specific occupations; to equip state and local licensing agencies with the ability to better assess the equivalency of military training and experience; to partner with academic institutions to document military training and experience and determine academic equivalency; to ensure that documented military training and

experience are identified as considerations for eligibility for professional licenses and when pursuing additional education; and finally, to establish an ongoing process to work with the states and institutions to analyze the gaps between military training and experience and state licensing requirements and develop bridge programs to address these gaps. Some fields that provide an example of the importance of this work include:

- **Commercial Drivers Licenses for Bus and Truck Drivers (CDLs):** In 2012, there were more than 22,000 active duty, guard, and reserve members in truck driving military occupations, and last year nearly 10,000 separated from the military. By 2020, the Department of Labor estimates that the demand for bus and truck drivers will increase 17.1 percent. At \$18.24, the median hourly wage for a truck driver is well above the national median wage. Service members who drive trucks and other forms of heavy equipment while serving on active duty have conquered some of the most challenging driving conditions, but they are not required to obtain a commercial drivers' license (CDLs) while on active duty. However, two recent developments have begun to make it easier for active duty service members, as well as for recently separated veterans, to obtain CDLs in preparation for their civilian employment. First, many states now offer a waiver of the skills test (the "behind the wheel" test) for service members (or veterans separated within the past 90 days) who provide military documentation of two years of "safe driving" experience operating military vehicles comparable to the buses and trucks that require CDLs in the civilian sector. To date, 34 states have adopted legislation waiving the driver's skills test for qualified service members and veterans. An additional nine states plus the District of Columbia are strongly considering similar legislation (Figure 4). Second, recently-enacted Federal legislation created a special exception for military personnel from the restriction that formerly prevented state licensing agencies from issuing CDLs to any individual whose "domicile" (legal residence) was in another state. While lifting the domicile requirement may involve different procedures from state to state, it is expected to make CDLs more accessible, especially for active duty service members. As a result, the *State Initiative* will focus on: a) recently separated veterans in all states that waive the CDL skills test; and, b) service members in states that include military bases with sufficient numbers of service members who would qualify for the skills test waiver.

Figure 4: Military CDL Skills Test Waiver -- Current Status



- **Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics:** Military medics have extensive experience with administering care in high pressure situations. This experience can serve them well in civilian jobs in emergency medical response. In 2012, there were slightly more than 75,000 Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve members in healthcare support occupations, and last year nearly 10,000 separated from the military. The Department of Labor estimates that, by 2020, the demand for EMT/Paramedics will increase 33 percent. At \$14.77, the median hourly wage for an EMT/Paramedic is somewhat below the overall national median, but at about the median for high school graduates with some college education—the level of education of 44 percent of post 9/11 veterans in 2012. Currently, medics in the Army are required to pass the EMT national certification at the conclusion of their technical training in the health sciences and maintain the certification while they remain in that military occupational specialty. Air Force medics may take the exam but are not required to pass it. States generally recognize this national EMT certification as one of the prerequisites for state licensure as an EMT, but most states also have additional requirements for state licensure and these requirements vary widely from state to state. Additionally, advanced EMT and EMT Paramedics' licensure requires an additional level of training and experience beyond that of an EMT, and that training may need to be provided to medics and corpsman through bridge training. There are initiatives in the Army to convert the EMT Flight Medic to Flight Paramedic, which is the industry standard and the Army continues to present more avenues for its medics to train at an advanced level. Therefore, for this occupational area, the *State Initiative* will focus on: a) identifying medics who are veterans of the Army and Air Force and have an existing EMT-Basic certification; b) assisting Navy Corpsmen to achieve EMT-Basic certification, c) working to streamline

medic training across services and d) identifying legislative or administrative ways for states to reduce state-specific barriers to EMT and paramedic licensure for veterans.

- **Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs):** By 2020, the Department of Labor projects that the demand for licensed practical nurses will grow 22.4 percent. Additionally, at \$19.79, the median hourly wages for a licensed practical nurse is well above the national median wage. The Army trains limited number of medics as LPNs. However, as of October 1, 2013, Army LPNs will be a standalone Military Occupational Code. Army LPNs are required to pass the National Council Licensure Exam – Practical Nurse. The training and experience of Navy Hospital Corpsmen is very akin to the training required for a LPN license, and many of the veterans with that background will only require limited bridge training to be prepared to obtain the LPN license. Additionally, some states, like California, allow veterans with certain levels of military training and experience to sit for the LPN exam without the need for additional training. In 2012, there were more than 20,000 corpsmen on active duty and in the Navy reserves, with nearly 4,000 separating from the military last year. Therefore, for this occupational area, the *State Initiative* will focus on: a) developing bridge training programs for Navy Corpsmen and medics who are veterans of the Army and Air Force, and b) identifying legislative or administrative ways for states to reduce state-specific barriers to LPN licensure for veterans.

In some cases, military training and experience alone is not generally sufficient to qualify for more advanced licensures. Army, Navy, and Air Force medics receive in-depth initial training in the health sciences and, especially for those who go into combat situations, acquire experience that simply cannot be duplicated elsewhere. However, these skills do not full translate for advanced healthcare occupations. In these cases, tailored training and education programs could help these veterans build on their valuable military experience to become advanced practice health care providers. Efforts to better translate military training and experience into the academic credit needed to pursue advanced medical professions are critical in this arena. Competency-based skills and knowledge assessments for veterans offer promise, and interest in this approach has grown in recent years.

- **Physician Assistants (PAs):** PAs originated with the Vietnam War, as returning veterans demonstrated valuable skills that could be readily applied to civilian settings, and Army, Air Force and Navy currently participate in the Inter-Service Physician Assistant program at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The Department of Labor currently forecasts that demand for physician assistants will grow 29.5 percent by 2020, and the median hourly wage for a physician assistant, \$42.62, is more than two and a half times the national median. In the civilian sector, the career preparation to become a physician assistant generally involves graduate level education, training, and clinical experience. This required advanced training could be provided to service members and veterans by DoD, by civilian academic institutions, or through partnerships between the two.

The Department of Health and Human Service (HHS) has supported a variety of efforts to incentivize health professions training programs to support veterans. For example, in 2012, HHS' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded additional points during the review process for physician assistant and advanced practice nurse training program grant

applications that proposed practices to support veterans' entry and retention into training programs. Through this initiative, 13 physician assistant training programs and 56 advanced practice nursing training programs have specific activities underway to support veterans, including recruitment, retention, support groups, and mentoring services. In 2013, HRSA will support a *Veteran to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN)* funding opportunity announcement for training programs that target military veterans who aspire to professional nursing careers. The goals of the program are to equip participating veterans with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed in passing the National Council Licensing Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and to provide innovative means of awarding nursing academic credit to those veterans for prior military medical training and experience.

Program Spotlight: Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi "eLine Military (ELM) Program"

With support from the Department of Health and Human Services, Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi is working to develop and implement the "eLine Military Program" for Texas residents who are members of the military or veterans with previous medical experience. ELM is a distance learning program designed to help participants earn a bachelor's of nursing degree (BSN), prepare to take the NCLEX-RN exam, and enter the RN workforce.

As part of this effort, the university has worked in partnership to with DoD's Medical Education and Training Campus in San Antonio to develop strategies for granting academic credit for military training, including development of a series of exams to assess content mastery among program enrollees. The university also identified a range of additional barriers to successful enrollment and retention in their program and formed a "Vets To Nurses Working Group" comprised of key stakeholders (military and academic) in Texas and other states who are prepared to assist in scaling up the Texas efforts.

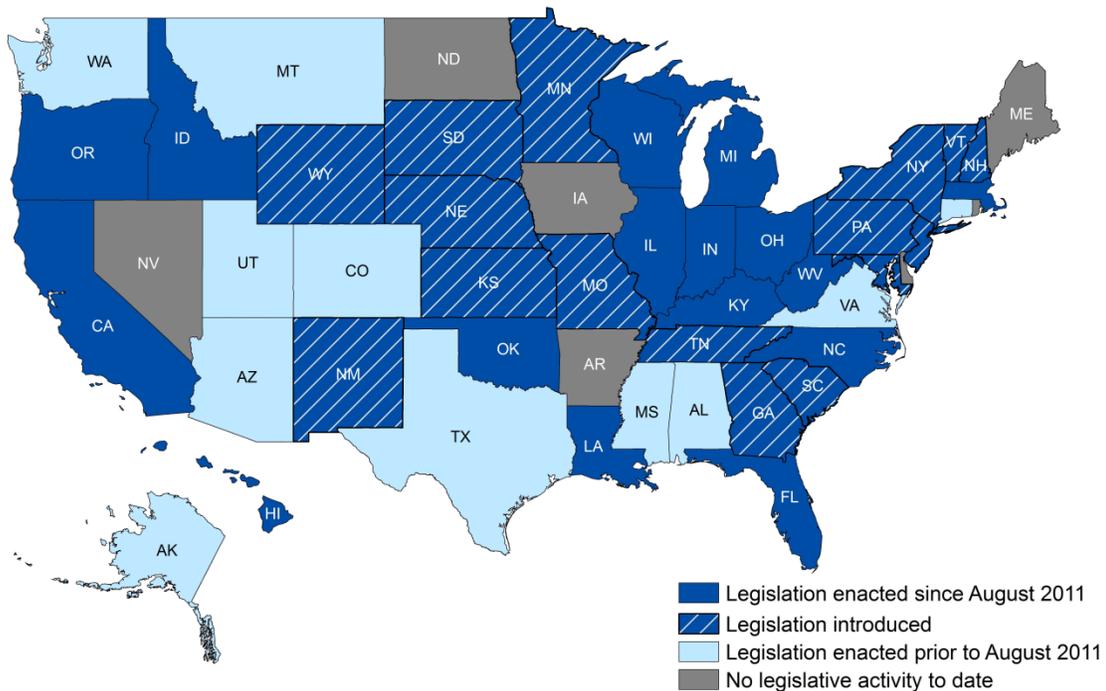
In the past two-and-a-half years since its inception, 427 military service members (60% veterans and 40% active duty) have been enrolled in the eLine Military program. About one quarter of them are currently engaged in coursework, and the remainder are being evaluated/advised on the individual course of study. On average the academic credit evaluation process employed at the university has resulted in a one-year reduction in their time in the program.

In 2013, Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi and the Working Group will undertake a broad dissemination program, including identifying institutions that will adapt and implement the program. The Working Group will develop recommendations for building a career pathway from military training to professional nursing that will be broadly shared and develop a work plan to implement its recommendations.

THE PRESIDENT'S MILITARY CREDENTIALING AND LICENSING INITIATIVE: BEST PRACTICES

Separating service members frequently experience delays in obtaining post-service employment even though they have applicable military education, training, and experience that will qualify them for licenses and help meet academic requirements for degrees. Since the inception of the Veterans Employment Initiative (VEI) in August 2011, the Department of Defense has worked with state governments to develop policies and practices to improve the recognition of military education, training and experience, as well as assist service members who have a license or credential when transitioning from active duty. Prior to the launch of VEI, as shown in Figure 5, only 11 states had any such legislation. As of February 20th, an additional 16 states have passed legislation, bringing the total to 27 states, and another 16 states have active legislation pending.

Figure 5: Separating Service Members Licensing Legislation -- Current Status



There are a number of “Best Practices” that states and industry can adopt to streamline the certification and licensing for service members and veterans (for full model legislation text see *Appendix A*):

- **Supporting separating service members who seek to qualify for occupational licenses based on their military education, training, and experience:** There are a variety of legislative and regulatory approaches available to states with regard to facilitating the use of military education, training, and experience to qualify for occupational licenses. One approach is to implement legislation that covers multiple occupations. For example, in 2011, **Colorado** passed a bill that requires each of its state licensing boards to establish rules stating that, upon presentation of satisfactory evidence by an applicant for certification or licensure, the board must accept education, training, or service completed by a member of the Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard toward the qualifications to receive the license or certification. **Oklahoma** passed similar legislation in the spring of 2012, specifying that evidence of education, training or experience submitted by a member of the Armed Forces, Reserves or National Guard shall be applied in the “manner most favorable toward satisfying the qualifications for issuance of the required license or certification or approval for license examination.” Other states have legislated separate legal provisions that apply to different occupations. For example, in 2011, the state of **Washington** passed a bill that modified the statutory chapters applicable to 14 different healthcare-related occupations where military training and experience is determined to be substantially equivalent to state requirements so that an applicant with military training and experience may use it to satisfy the training and experience requirements for the occupational license. To date, 16 states have enacted and additional 20 states are considering legislation that, like Washington’s, broadly applies to health care, engineering/construction, and business occupations.
- **Supporting separating service members who seek to transfer a current license by endorsement or obtain a temporary license when separating in a state other than the state that approved the current license:** Similar to portability legislation for military spousal licensing, states can take action to streamline license portability for service members and veterans, especially as some service members may earn their license on a military base in one state and then move to another state upon transition. Small modifications to existing spousal portability legislation can make the same provisions applicable to these separating service members and veterans. To date, five states provide endorsement to service members separating active duty with a current license in good standing and an additional eight states are considering legislation.

- **Supporting deactivating Reserve Component members who seek to practice in the state of origin for a temporary period with a license that would have otherwise expired while on active duty:** To ensure a seamless transition from active duty service to demobilized Reserve service, states can pass legislation that extends the period for which licenses are valid. For example, in 2011, **Kentucky** passed a law that provides for an automatic extension of a Reserve member’s occupational license until deactivation plus a period of time after service is completed. To date, 18 states provide automatic extension to licenses that would otherwise expire while servicing on active duty and an additional ten states are considering legislation.
- **Supporting separating service members who seek to obtain academic credit for their military education, training, and experience:** Many service members and veterans could be on a “fast track” to receive an occupational license or educational credential if they were able to obtain academic credit for their military education, training, and experience. States could pass legislation like that passed by **Louisiana** in 2011, which directs state academic institutions to write policies to award educational credits to any veteran enrolled as a student for courses that were part of the student's military training and that meet the standards of the American Council on Education for awarding academic credit. To take another example, the state of **Washington** passed a law in 2010 that directs representatives from the state board for community and technical colleges; the higher education coordinating board; workforce education and training organizations; two and four-year faculty; private career schools; business; and labor to develop policies for awarding academic credit for learning from work and military experience, military and law enforcement training, and other training. Additionally, DOD can work with accrediting bodies, academic training programs, and the military services to improve coordination between DOD training and civilian professional training requirements in order to streamline the process for service members and veterans to receive academic credit for their military service. To date, 15 states have established the requirement in statute and an additional 11 states are considering legislation requiring institutions of higher learning to consider a service member’s education, training and experience for the award of credit.
- **Supporting separating service members and veterans who seek to obtain Commercial Driver’s Licenses:** The Department of Defense and Department of Transportation have been working with state Departments of Motor Vehicles and state legislatures to facilitate service members earning a CDL. States like **Virginia** have created the *Troops to Trucks Program* that requires qualified military personnel applying for a Virginia CDL to pass only one DMV-issued test and waives the roads skills test. In addition the state DMV assists military personnel by targeting those applicants with less than two years’ experience with a commercial motor vehicle, and has certified Marine Corps Base Quantico and Fort Lee as third-party testers for CDL training.

- **Supporting separating service members and veterans who seek to obtain Emergency Medical Services licensure:** State legislation for emergency medical services could include a set of provisions that complement the efforts currently underway by the Department of Defense to assist service members in preparing for their civilian careers. Model legislation would have the following features:
 - A bill including the three commonly identified levels of emergency medical service providers: EMT-Basic; EMT Intermediate or Advanced; and Paramedic.
 - A bill that specifies the type, length, and time limit to be applied in considering military experience for licensure, and potentially waiving attaining a certification or passing an exam.
 - A bill that explicitly recognizes individuals who currently hold an active National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) certification, a qualification commonly held by service members doing this type of work, particularly Army and Air Force medics.

- **Supporting separating service members and veterans through bridge programs in nursing and for physician assistants:** Both states and medical educational institutions can help create career ladders to help veterans advance their training and become baccalaureate degree nurses, advanced practical nurses, or physician assistants. Schools and universities can provide bridge training and career pathway programs specifically tailored to military members. For example, the Ohio University School of Nursing is working with its regional VA Medical Center and the state workforce investment board to identify unemployed veterans and provide education and career counseling to promote career pathways into professional nursing. Similarly, the Marywood University PA Program has a strong history with veterans and military members. The program accepts healthcare hours performed while in the military as healthcare hours for admission.

- **Supporting separating service members and veterans by streamlining licensure for Licensed Practical Nurses:** States can pass legislation to streamline the application of military medical experience and training to satisfy the requirements of LPN licenses. Model legislation for LPNs would recognize individuals who have passed the National Council Licensure Exam.

APPENDIX A: MODEL LEGISLATION

1. Colorado HB 1100 (2011): Concerning exemptions from professional regulation for active duty military personnel.

SECTION 1. Article 70 of title 12, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

12-70-102. Active military personnel - exemptions from licensing requirements. Each board or division, except the division of real estate, that regulates persons licensed, certified, or registered pursuant to this title shall exempt licensed, certified, or registered military personnel who have been called to federally funded active duty for more than one hundred twenty days for the purpose of serving in a war, emergency, or contingency from the payment of any professional or occupational license, certification, or registration fees, including renewal fees, and from any continuing education or professional competency requirements pursuant to this title for a renewal cycle that falls within the period of service or within the six months following the completion of service in the war, emergency, or contingency.

2. Washington HB 1418 (2011): Relating to evaluating military training and experience toward meeting licensing requirements.

Sec. 1-21. A new section is added to chapter XX RCW to read as follows: An applicant with military training or experience satisfies the training or experience requirements of this chapter unless the board determines that the military training or experience is not substantially equivalent to the standards of this state.

3. Washington SB 5307 (2011): Relating to evaluating military training and experience toward meeting licensing requirements in medical professions.

Sec. 1-14. A new section is added to chapter XX RCW to read as follows: An applicant with military training or experience satisfies the training or experience requirements of this chapter unless the secretary determines that the military training or experience is not substantially equivalent to the standards of the state.

4. Tennessee HB 968 (2011): Expediting the issuance of a license to military spouses who are already licensed in another state and who are stationed in Tennessee.

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-1-101, is amended by designating the existing language as subsection (a) and by adding the following language to be designated as subsection (b):

(1) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, each health related board shall establish a procedure to expedite the issuance of a license, certification or permit to perform professional services regulated by each such board to a person:

- (A) Who is certified or licensed in another state to perform professional services in a state other than Tennessee;
- (B) Whose spouse is a member of the armed forces of the United States;
- (C) Whose spouse is the subject of a military transfer to Tennessee; and
- (D) Who left employment to accompany the person's spouse to Tennessee.

(2) The procedure shall include:

- (A) Issuing the person a license, certificate or permit, if, in the opinion of the board, the requirements for certification or licensure of such other state are substantially equivalent to that required in this state; or
- (B) Developing a method to authorize the person to perform professional services regulated by the board in this state by issuing the person a temporary permit for a limited period of time to allow the person to perform professional services while completing any specific requirements that may be required in this state that were not required in the state in which the person was licensed or certified.

5. Kentucky HB 301 (2011): Relating to professional licensure and certification.

SECTION 1. The General Assembly recognizes the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces and their families in the service of this Commonwealth and the nation as a whole. In recognition of their sacrifice, the General Assembly finds that active duty members of the military or their spouses, who are engaged in professions which require professional licensure or certification, shall be allowed considerations in their licensure or certification requirements as set out in Sections 2 and 3 of this Act in order that they may continue to serve this Commonwealth and the nation as a whole while maintaining their professional licensure or certification.

SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 12 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

(1) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, any member of the Armed Forces of the United States on active duty who, at the time of activation, was:

- (a) A member in good standing with any administrative body of the state; and
- (b) Was duly licensed or certified to engage in his or her profession or vocation in the Commonwealth, shall be kept in good standing by the administrative body with which he or she is licensed or certified.

(2) While a licensee or certificate holder is an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the license or certificate referenced in subsection (1) of this section shall be renewed without:

- (a) The payment of dues or fees;
- (b) Obtaining continuing education credits; when

1. Circumstances associated with military duty prevent obtaining training and a waiver request has been submitted to the appropriate administrative body; or
 2. The active duty military member performs the licensed or certified occupation as part of his or her military duties as annotated in Defense Department form 214 (DD 214); or
- (c) Performing any other act typically required for the renewal of the license or certificate.

(3) The license or certificate issued under this section shall be continued as long as the licensee or certificate holder is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States on active duty and for a period of at least six (6) months after discharge from active duty.

SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 12 IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

(1) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, an administrative body shall issue a temporary or regular license or certificate within thirty (30) days to the spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States if the spouse of the active duty member meets the statutory requirements of the administrative body and applies to the administrative body in a format promulgated in administrative regulation by the administrative body.

(2) An application for temporary or regular licensure of the spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (a) Proof that the applicant is married to an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States;
- (b) Proof that the applicant holds a valid license or certificate for the profession issued by another state, the District of Columbia, or any possession or territory of the United States;
- (c) Proof that the applicant's spouse is assigned to a duty station in this state and that the applicant is also assigned to a duty station in this state pursuant to the spouse's official active duty military orders; and
- (d) An application fee to be established by the administrative body in an amount that is no more than is necessary to offset the cost of issuing the temporary or regular license.

(3) A temporary license issued pursuant this section shall expire six (6) months after the date of issuance and is not renewable.

6. Louisiana HB 500 (2011): Provides certain educational benefits for veterans who are students at La. public colleges and universities.

SECTION 1. R.S. 17:3351(E) is hereby enacted to read as follows: §3351. General powers, duties, and functions of college and university boards.

(1) In addition to any other power, duty, or function authorized by this Section, each board shall adopt, by not later than January 1, 2012, a policy requiring each institution under the board's supervision and management to award educational credits to a student enrolled in the institution, who is also a veteran, for courses that are part of the student's military training or service and that meet the standards of the American Council on Education or equivalent standards for awarding academic credit if the award of educational credit is based upon the institution's admission standards and its role, scope, and mission.

(2) Each board shall adopt necessary rules, regulations, and procedures to implement the provisions of this Subsection, effective beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year and continuing thereafter.

7. Washington SB 6357 (2010): Requiring policies for academic recognition of certain life and learning experiences.

SECTION 2.

(1) The state board for community and technical colleges, in consultation with the higher education coordinating board, the workforce training and education coordinating board, the council of presidents, representatives from Washington institutions of higher education, representatives from two and four- year faculty, representatives from private career schools, and representatives from business and labor, shall develop policies for awarding academic credit for learning from work and military experience, military and law enforcement training, career college training, internships and externships, and apprenticeships.

(2) The policies shall address, but are not limited to, issues regarding verification, accreditation, transfer of academic credit, licensing and profession recognition, and financial aid. To the greatest extent possible, the policies shall provide for consistent application by all institutions of higher education and basis for accurate and complete academic counseling.

8. Draft Model EMS Legislation for Licensure of Military Trained Applicants

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "military service applicant" means an applicant for licensure or certification under this article who has performed service as an active member of any of the following:

- (1) The armed forces of the United States.
- (2) A reserve component of the armed forces of the United States.
- (3) The National Guard.

Sec. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the commission shall issue a license or certificate to a military service applicant to allow the applicant to provide emergency medical services in [STATE] if, upon application to the commission, the applicant satisfies the following conditions:

- (1) Has:

- (A) completed a military program of training;
 - (B) been awarded a military occupational specialty; and
 - (C) performed in that occupational specialty; at a level that is substantially equivalent to or exceeds the academic or experience requirements for the license or certificate the applicant is seeking from the commission; or
 - (D) currently holds an active National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) certification at the level of the license or certificate the applicant is seeking from the commission.
- (2) Has engaged in the active practice of the occupation for which the applicant is seeking licensure or certification for at least two (2) of the five (5) years preceding the date of the application under this section.
- (3) Has not committed any act in any jurisdiction that would have constituted grounds for refusal, suspension, or revocation of a license or certificate to provide emergency medical services in [STATE] at the time the act was committed.
- (4) Has paid any fees required by the commission for the license or certificate the applicant is seeking from the commission.

Sec. 3. (a) All relevant experience of a military service applicant in the discharge of the applicant's official duties while performing service described in section 1 of this chapter must be credited in the calculation of the number of years the applicant has provided emergency medical services for purposes of section 2 of this chapter.

(b) In determining if a military service applicant substantially meets the academic requirements for a license or certificate issued by the commission, the commission may consider the recommendations in the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services published by the American Council on Education or the council's successor organization.

Sec. 4. A nonresident who is issued a license or certificate under this chapter is entitled to the same rights and subject to the same obligations as required of a resident who is issued a license or certificate by the commission.

Sec. 5. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the commission may issue a temporary practice certificate or provisional license to a military service applicant while the military service applicant is satisfying certain requirements, as determined by the commission, for a license or certificate under section 2 of this chapter.

(b) The military service applicant may practice under a temporary practice certificate or provisional license issued under subsection (a) until:

- (1) a license or certification is granted or denied by the commission;
- (2) the temporary certificate expires; or
- (3) the military service applicant fails to comply with the terms of the provisional license.

Sec. 6. This chapter does not prohibit a military service applicant from proceeding under the licensure or certification requirements established by the commission under the other provisions of this article.

9. Draft Model LPN Legislation for Licensure of Individuals with Military Training

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "military service applicant" means an applicant for licensure or certification under this article who has performed service as an active member of any of the following:

- (1) The armed forces of the United States.
- (2) A reserve component of the armed forces of the United States.
- (3) The National Guard.

Sec. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the commission shall issue a license or certificate to a military service applicant to allow the applicant to provide licensed practical nurse services in [STATE] if, upon application to the commission, the applicant satisfies the following conditions:

- (1) Has:
 - (A) completed a military program of training;
 - (B) been awarded a military occupational specialty; and
 - (C) performed in that occupational specialty; at a level that is substantially equivalent to or exceeds the academic or experience requirements for the LPN; or
 - (D) Has successfully passed the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) – Practical Nurse (PN);
- (2) Has engaged in the active practice of the occupation for which the applicant is seeking licensure or certification for at least two (2) of the five (5) years preceding the date of the application under this section.
- (3) Has not committed any act in any jurisdiction that would have constituted grounds for refusal, suspension, or revocation of a license or certificate to provide emergency medical services in [STATE] at the time the act was committed.
- (4) Has paid any fees required by the commission for the license or certificate the applicant is seeking from the commission.

Sec. 3. (a) All relevant experience of a military service applicant in the discharge of the applicant's official duties while performing service described in section 1 of this chapter must be credited in the calculation of the number of years the applicant has provided emergency medical services for purposes of section 2 of this chapter.

(b) In determining if a military service applicant substantially meets the academic requirements for a license or certificate issued by the commission, the commission may consider the recommendations in the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services published by the American Council on Education or the council's successor organization.

Sec. 4. A nonresident who is issued a license or certificate under this chapter is entitled to the same rights and subject to the same obligations as required of a resident who is issued a license or certificate by the commission.

Sec. 5. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the commission may issue a temporary practice certificate or provisional license to a military service applicant while the military

service applicant is satisfying certain requirements, as determined by the commission, for a license or certificate under section 2 of this chapter.

(b) The military service applicant may practice under a temporary practice certificate or provisional license issued under subsection (a) until:

- (1) a license or certification is granted or denied by the commission;
- (2) the temporary certificate expires; or
- (3) the military service applicant fails to comply with the terms of the provisional license.

Sec. 6. This chapter does not prohibit a military service applicant from proceeding under the licensure or certification requirements established by the commission under the other provisions of this article.

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