

EXPANSION OF VETS FIRST TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE // “CONTRACT OUR VETS” (HR-7401)

Understanding the Legislation

Recognizing the ongoing need to assist returning veterans from the War on Terror, Congress enacted "Vets First" (P.L. 109-461) in 2006. This directed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to prioritize contracts for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs).

Building upon the success of the VA's model, in March 2024, Representatives Mike Waltz and Jimmy Panetta introduced HR 7401 – Contract Our Vets to expand Vets First to the Department of Defense (DOD).

Why HR 7401 Matters for America and Its Veterans

The DOD and Small Business Administration (SBA) both claim a recent drop in small business participation in federal government contracts by over 50% in the last 10 years.

With the successful passage of this bill, we anticipate the following improvements:

- **Increased Number of Small Businesses:** This legislation is estimated to create 30-50,000 new SDVOSBs.
- **Job Creation:** Expands Vets First to the Department of Defense, creating over 200,000 new jobs for veterans, thus, reducing unemployment rates in this demographic.
- **Veteran Employment:** Increased veteran hiring by veteran-owned businesses, providing meaningful employment and aiding in their transition to civilian life, therefore, reducing veteran suicides.
- **Positive Financial Impact:** Increased #s of small businesses fosters competition, leading to government cost savings.
- **Readiness:** By promoting veteran entrepreneurship, this policy enhances military readiness, attracting motivated individuals who envision success beyond their military careers.

Take Action

Contact members of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), and House Small Business Committee (HSBC), urging them to support and co-sponsor HR 7401 TODAY! Please contact Chase Neuhausen (chase@gpsfederal.com) or Roger Mahar (roger@gpsfederal.com) for assistance and contact information.