

Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Act

U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Joni Ernst (R-IA)

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) launched the Boots to Business (B2B) program to provide entrepreneurship education and training to U.S. servicemembers, Veterans, National Guard and Reserve Members and military spouses transitioning from military service to civilian life.

The SBA offers the B2B program through the U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) Transition Assistance Program. It features a foundational "Introduction to Entrepreneurship" two-day, in-person course offered at approximately 180 DoD installations.

Participants learn to develop business plans, identify sources of capital and navigate new business and contracting opportunities. A version of this course, B2B: Reboot, is also provided at non-installation locations, to expand access to Veterans of all ages, additional members of the National Guard and Reserve and more military spouses.

Following completion of the two-day course, participants have the option to enroll in additional courses of study. This includes an eight-week, online course, "B2B Revenue Readiness," which is delivered through a partnership with Mississippi State University.

BILL SUMMARY:

The bipartisan Duckworth-Ernst "Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Act" would build on the success of this proven SBA initiative, which served more than 21,000 servicemembers, Veterans and military spouses in 2020 alone, by amending the Small Business Act to authorize the B2B program through 2028 and requiring that SBA continue administering this valuable training initiative for years to come.

There is broad, bipartisan support for authorizing the B2B program under the Small Business Act. In May 2022, this legislation was successfully passed out of the Senate Small Business Committee by a near unanimous vote. In November 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a House companion measure – introduced by Representatives Brad Schneider (D-IL-10) and Roger Williams (R-TX-25) – by a vote of 418 to 2.