

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 12, 2017

The Honorable James Mattis  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Mattis:

We write to urge you to implement and publish guidance related to direct hiring authorities pursuant to the S. 2943, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law No: 114-328). These new authorities were signed into law in order to provide relief to the Department so that it could recruit and hire quality civilian talent while competing with the private sector for a limited pool of technical talent.

Although the federal government always has difficulty competing with the private sector when it comes to hiring civilians, particularly on a monetary level, we believe that recent graduates still want to serve their country and they should not have to wait months or years before they receive a job offer. Defense laboratories and major test ranges have struggled to compete with the private sector to hire the best talent due to bureaucratic delays, and it is time that we help level the playing field.

Specifically, we request that the military services move quickly to publish guidance related to the following sections:

***Section 1106: Direct hire authority for the Department of Defense (DoD) for post-secondary students and recent graduates.***

*This section establishes a DoD civilian on-campus recruiting authority under title 10 as an alternative to the federal government-wide Pathways program (established by Executive Order 13562) and other Title 5 hiring authorities. This proposal would facilitate DoD recruitment efforts to recruit students directly to civilian positions using a new hiring authority expressly designed for this purpose. Hiring managers and recruiters, who already travel to specific schools with programs they want to target, would be able to involve candidates in a rigorous interview process, and now make conditional offers on the spot. This would allow DoD to compete for highly qualified students and recent graduates.*

***Section 1110: Direct hire authority for financial management experts in the Department of Defense workforce.***

*Under this new authority, each secretary of a military department has authority to appoint qualified candidates possessing a finance, accounting, management, or actuarial science degree to financial management, accounting, auditing, and actuarial positions within the Department of Defense workforce. The authority would be limited to 10 percent of the total number of finance, accounting, management, actuarial science, or financial management positions within each military department that are filled as of the close of the fiscal year last ending before the start of such calendar year.*

**Section 1125:** *Temporary direct hire authority for domestic defense industrial base facilities, the Major Range and Test Facilities Base, and the Office of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation.*

*Under this new authority, during fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the Secretary of Defense may directly hire qualified candidates to positions in the competitive service at any defense industrial base facility (including depots, arsenals, and shipyards) or the Major Range and Test Facilities Base, and in the office of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation.*

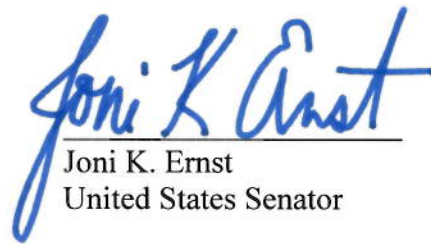
We believe these new authorities, as well as other direct hire flexibilities authorized in previous Defense Authorization Acts, will expedite the federal hiring process for the DoD and allow the Department to better compete for a limited supply of technical talent to fill important vacancies related to research, development, testing, and evaluation to improve military innovation and readiness. We urge your swift implementation of these authorities.

Thank you for your service and leadership.

Sincerely,



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



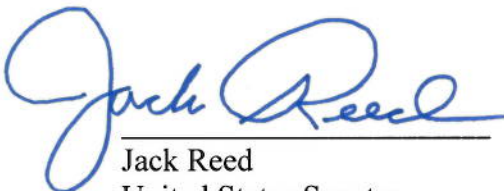
Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator



Orrin Hatch  
United States Senator



James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator



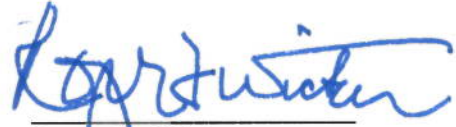
Jack Reed  
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Bill Nelson  
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United States Senator



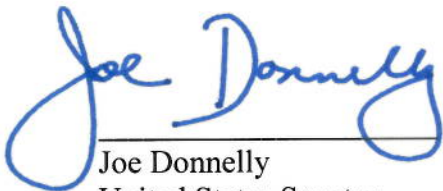
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



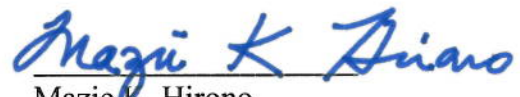
Rob Portman  
United States Senator



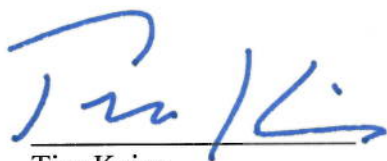
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



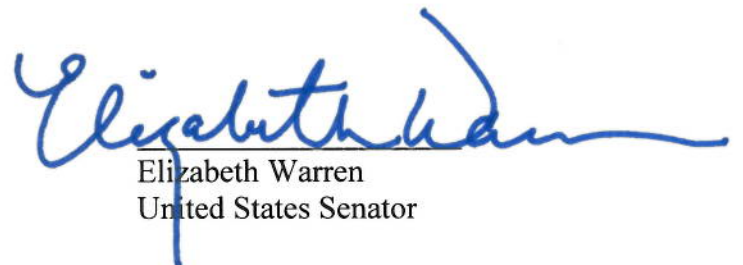
Joe Donnelly  
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

*Mark R Warner*

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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

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Gary C. Peters  
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*David A. Perdue*

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David A. Perdue  
United States Senator

*Thom Tillis*

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Thom Tillis  
United States Senator

*Todd Young*

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Todd Young  
United States Senator