

## AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 108-375 substituted “Government Accountability Office” for “General Accounting Office”.

1999—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 106-65 substituted “and the Committee on Armed Services” for “and the Committee on National Security”.

**§ 2015. Payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials**

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security, with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, may pay for—

- (1) expenses for members of the armed forces to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and
- (2) examinations to obtain such credentials.

(b) **LIMITATION.**—The authority under subsection (a) may not be used to pay the expenses of a member to obtain professional credentials that are a prerequisite for appointment in the armed forces.

(Added Pub. L. 109-163, div. A, title V, § 538(a), Jan. 6, 2006, 119 Stat. 3250.)

**PILOT PROGRAM ON RECEIPT OF CIVILIAN CREDENTIALING FOR SKILLS REQUIRED FOR MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTIES**

Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title V, § 558, Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1418, provided that:

“(a) **PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—Commencing not later than nine months after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 31, 2011], the Secretary of Defense shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of permitting enlisted members of the Armed Forces to obtain civilian credentialing or licensing for skills required for military occupational specialties (MOS) or qualification for duty specialty codes.

“(b) **ELEMENTS.**—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary shall—

“(1) designate not less than three or more than five military occupational specialties or duty specialty codes for coverage under the pilot program; and

“(2) permit enlisted members of the Armed Forces to obtain the credentials or licenses required for the specialties or codes so designated through civilian credentialing or licensing entities, institutions, or bodies selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program, whether concurrently with military training, at the completion of military training, or both.

“(c) **DURATION.**—The Secretary shall complete the pilot program by not later than five years after the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

“(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after commencement of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program. The report shall set forth the following:

“(1) The number of enlisted members who participated in the pilot program.

“(2) A description of the costs incurred by the Department of Defense in connection with the receipt by members of credentialing or licensing under the pilot program.

“(3) A comparison of the cost associated with receipt by members of credentialing or licensing under the pilot program with the cost of receipt of similar credentialing or licensing by recently-discharged veterans of the Armed Forces under programs currently operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Labor.

“(4) The recommendation of the Secretary as to the feasibility and advisability of expanding the pilot

program to additional military occupational specialties or duty specialty codes, and, if such expansion is considered feasible and advisable, a list of the military occupational specialties and duty specialty codes recommended for inclusion in the expansion.”

**§ 2016. Undergraduate nurse training program: establishment through agreement with academic institution**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT AUTHORIZED.**—(1) To increase the number of nurses in the armed forces, the Secretary of Defense may enter into an agreement with one or more academic institutions to establish and operate an undergraduate program (in this section referred to as a “undergraduate nurse training program”) under which participants will earn a bachelor of science degree in nursing and serve as a member of the armed forces.

(2) The Secretary of Defense may authorize the participation of members of the other uniformed services in the undergraduate nurse training program if the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services jointly determine the participation of such members in the program will facilitate an increase in the number of nurses in the other uniformed services.

(b) **GRADUATION RATES.**—An undergraduate nurse training program shall have the capacity to graduate 25 students with a bachelor of science degree in nursing in the first class of the program, 50 in the second class, and 100 annually thereafter.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—An undergraduate nurse training program shall have the following elements:

(1) It shall involve an academic partnership with one or more academic institutions with existing accredited schools of nursing.

(2) It shall recruit as participants qualified individuals with at least two years of appropriate academic preparation, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(d) **LOCATION OF PROGRAMS.**—(1) An academic institution selected to operate an undergraduate nurse training program shall establish the program at or near a military installation that has a medical center with inpatient capability and multiple graduate medical education programs located on the installation or within reasonable proximity to the installation.

(2) Before approving a location as the site of an undergraduate nurse training program, the Secretary of Defense shall conduct an assessment to ensure that the establishment of the program at that location will not adversely impact or displace existing nurse training programs, either conducted by the Department of Defense or by a civilian entity, at the location.

(e) **LIMITATION ON FACULTY.**—An agreement entered into under subsection (a) shall not require members of the armed forces who are nurses to serve as faculty members for an undergraduate nurse training program.

(f) **MILITARY SERVICE COMMITMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense shall encourage members of the armed forces to apply to participate in an undergraduate nurse training program. Graduates of the program shall incur a military service obligation in a regular or reserve component, as determined by the Secretary.