

# ***Defense Workforce Integration Act***

*This bill creates new pathways for medically disqualified military applicants to serve in national defense through civilian careers. It directs the Department of Defense to connect these individuals—including entry-level recruits—with employment, training, and apprenticeship opportunities across the defense industrial base and other critical sectors.*

## **Key Legislative Provisions**

- Directs DoD to establish a program to inform and refer medically disqualified individuals to civilian careers supporting national security.
- Includes opportunities in the defense industrial base, cybersecurity, intelligence, disaster preparedness, and defense R&D.
- Recognizes the Air Force's DRIVE program as a model for early-career redirection.
- Requires the Navy to share Military Sealift Command career information during Transition Assistance.
- Mandates a report to Congress within one year outlining the implementation plan.

## **Background**

- As defense workforce shortages rise in fields like manufacturing and cybersecurity, many young Americans—especially those ineligible for military service—are unaware of civilian roles supporting national security.
- The submarine industrial base alone will need ~100,000 new workers over the next decade.
- 77% of 17–24-year-olds are ineligible for military service without a waiver, and over 62,000 were medically disqualified in 2024.
- The Air Force's DRIVE program shows how disqualified applicants can be redirected into vital civilian roles.
- This bill creates a formal pathway for those individuals to contribute to defense readiness and support an expanding industrial base..

