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HOUSE BILL NO. 533**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**

(Proposed by the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions
on February 6, 2018)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Freitas)

A BILL to amend and reenact § 2.2-2001.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to professions and occupations; qualifications for licensure; acceptance of substantially equivalent military training, education, and experience.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 2.2-2001.2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 2.2-2001.2. Initiatives to reduce unemployment among veterans.

A. The Department shall develop a comprehensive program to reduce unemployment among veterans by assisting businesses to attract, hire, train, and retain veterans. Such program shall promote strategies for connecting employers to qualified veterans and include (i) a workforce assessment and training program for participating employers and (ii) a certification process for participating employers with the objective of setting measurable goals for hiring and retaining veterans.

B. All agencies in the executive branch of state government and all public institutions of higher education shall, to the maximum extent possible, be certified in accordance with this section. Such agencies and institutions may request a certification waiver from the Governor if they can demonstrate that (i) the certification is in conflict with the organization's operating directives or (ii) they have in place an alternative program that meets the requirements of this section.

C. The Department shall take steps to promote awareness among veterans of the acceptance by the regulatory boards within the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, the Department of Health Professions, or any board named in Title 54.1 pursuant to § 54.1-118 of the military training, education, or experience of a service member honorably discharged from active military service in the Armed Forces of the United States, to the extent that such training, education, or experience is substantially equivalent to the requirements established by law and regulations of the respective board for the issuance of any license, permit, certificate, or other document, however styled or denominated, required for the practice of any business, profession, or occupation in the Commonwealth.

**HOUSE
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