

Written by Sen. Charles Grassley
Monday, 21 June 2010 08:36

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WASHINGTON - (June 16, 2010) – Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa, ranking member of the Committee on Finance, with exclusive Senate jurisdiction over taxes, today released new numbers from the Internal Revenue Service, showing the agency has hired more than 1,000 military veterans each of the last three years.

“The IRS deserves credit for recognizing the value of military veterans,” Grassley said. “By seeking out these men and women, the agency is getting capable employees to serve the taxpayers and the country in a new capacity from their military service.”

Beginning in 2008, Grassley succeeded in persuading the IRS to increase its hiring of veterans. At Grassley’s urging, the agency hired more than 1,000 veterans in 2008 and 2009, per a verbal commitment Grassley secured from the IRS commissioner during his Senate Finance Committee confirmation hearing. Today, the IRS gave Grassley a full accounting for Fiscal Year 2009 and the first eight months of Fiscal Year 2010 (the fiscal year ends Sept. 30):

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FY 2008: 1,203 or 7 percent of new hires (364 were disabled veterans)

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FY 2009: 1,669 or 9 percent of new hires (528 were disabled veterans)

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FY 2010 to date: 1,109 or 10 percent of new hires (398 were disabled veterans)

The text of the IRS' update is available [here](#). Grassley initiated the veterans hiring' effort after realizing that the Treasury Department, including the IRS, lagged behind other federal agencies in hiring newly returned veterans, even though the department had significant vacancies.

Beyond IRS hiring, Grassley in May joined the Finance Committee chairman to introduce tax legislation that would create job opportunities for veterans returning home from military service and help businesses create jobs. The bipartisan Veterans Employment Transition Act will reward employers who hire qualified veterans who have recently completed their service in the military with up to a \$4,800 tax credit for disabled veterans and up to a \$2,400 tax credit for other qualifying veterans. The bill eliminates the administrative burdens that make the current Work Opportunity Tax Credit provision directed toward unemployed veterans difficult for small businesses to use. As a result, servicemen and women who have been recently discharged will be able to provide documentation from the Department of Defense without having to go through the tax credit's current certification process, which can be lengthy.

In 2008, Congress made permanent several provisions to provide tax relief for American troops and their families that Grassley helped to advance. The Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008, the HEART Act, was a bipartisan effort that incorporated most of the provisions in the Defenders of Freedom Tax Relief Act of 2007, which Grassley co-sponsored and promoted. The HEART Act also made permanent and expanded upon some of the tax relief measures that Grassley coauthored in 2003, while chairman of the Finance Committee.

"Military service makes taxes complicated and sometimes unfair," Grassley said. "People shouldn't suffer a tax hit to serve our country. Military men and women should have fair treatment under the tax code. It's a no-brainer."

Last year, Grassley welcomed the enactment of legislation he cosponsored to help members of the military benefit from the first-time homebuyer tax credit. Before this correction, members of the military were penalized by the credit's structure. The correction gave military personnel

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serving outside of the United States more time to qualify for the credit. It also eliminated the repayment requirement for military personnel forced to sell as a result of official service. The legislation also excluded from tax any payment to military personnel to compensate them for loss in home value resulting from base closure.

Apart from tax work, Grassley recently has worked to address the ongoing and growing backlog of veterans' claims at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He also cosponsored successful legislation that will ensure timely, sufficient and reliable funding for the VA health care system. This legislation was supported by all major veterans' organizations as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. Grassley also has worked to include several beneficial provisions in the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act. This new law corrects a number of deficiencies in how the U.S. cares for veterans with traumatic brain injuries, enhances VA support for family caregivers, and expands mental health services. In 2009, Grassley received the American Legion's Distinguished Public Service Award for his work on issues important to veterans.

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