



a program of United Spinal Association

July 13, 2011

The Honorable Jeff Miller
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association, wishes to express our support for the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011 (H.R. 2433). This legislation would help to ensure that veterans receive the training, transition, and placement assistance they need to allow them to gain meaningful employment opportunities.

VetsFirst believes that the opportunity to participate in the workforce is critical because employment provides people with both financial and social benefits that contribute to an enhanced sense of one's life's purpose. For veterans who have acquired disabilities due to their service, employment helps to ensure successful reintegrate into their communities.

The VOW Act makes critical advances in helping veterans gain employment by requiring servicemembers to participate in the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and ensuring that disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives are fully devoted to the employment needs of veterans. The legislation also requires the development of performance matrices for TAP and the services veterans receive through the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service. VetsFirst recommends, however, that these performance matrices also include an emphasis on the employment outcomes for veterans with disabilities.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and urge swift passage of the VOW Act. If you have any questions, please contact Heather Ansley, Director of Veterans Policy, at (202) 556-2076, ext. 7702 or by e-mail at hansley@vetsfirst.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather L. Ansley".

Heather L. Ansley, Esq., MSW
Director of Veterans Policy
VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association

