

Opening Statement of Chairman Steve Chabot (R-OH)
House Small Business Committee
“Hiring More Heroes: A Review of SBA’s Office of Veterans Business Development”
November 8, 2017

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Good morning. I call this hearing to order.

As Veterans Day approaches this Saturday, this Committee is reminded of the incredible contributions those who have served have made to our country. Our nation’s veterans have made extraordinary sacrifices, put their lives on the line, and kept our country safe. Not only are they our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, and friends – they are our heroes.

Today, we will examine the Small Business Administration’s Office of Veterans Business Development and ask ourselves: what can we do better for them? America’s military men and women defend and protect our country, and they also learn many real world skills needed to operate a successful business. Leadership and discipline are instilled in every soldier from the day they start basic training. That is why many veterans choose to start a small business when they return home from service.

However, veteran employment levels have historically fallen behind those of their nonveteran counterparts. This is often due to the difficulties veterans face when transitioning from the military to the workforce. Research shows that veterans face many barriers to employment that their peers do not, such as potential employers’ difficulty in understanding a military resume or the result of a service-connected disability. We can, and must, do better for them.

The SBA’s Office of Veterans Business Development was established to help bridge this gap. They offer training and counseling programs, monitor federal procurement for veteran-owned small businesses and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and assist with access to capital. However, as we know, there is always room for improvement, especially when it comes to our men and women in uniform. Today, I hope that this hearing will reveal some of the ways we can get our veterans back into the workforce.

Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to recognize some of my fellow colleagues who have served, or are still serving in our military. Mr. Knight, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Bacon, and Dr. Marshall, thank you for your service to our country.

I now yield to the Ranking Member, Ms. Velázquez, for her opening statement.

