

I wanted to highlight three bills the House passed last week to improve services to our nation's veterans and help ensure they receive the care they deserve. I am pleased that they passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, and I hope my colleagues in the Senate will also pass them swiftly.

[H.R. 2433](#) , the Veterans Opportunity to Work Act of 2011

This legislation would provide retraining assistance for unemployed veterans ages 35 to 60 who are ineligible for educational assistance, helping them learn skills to find employment in the current job market. It also strengthens the [Transition Assistance Program](#) for departing service members who will reenter the civilian workforce and coordinates with the Department of Labor to help service members use their skills from the military to earn credentials usable for civilian jobs. It is unfortunate that many veterans are unemployed, and I am proud to support this effort to assist them in finding jobs. You can read more about the legislation [here](#)

[H.R. 1263](#) , To protect surviving spouses against foreclosure

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) postpones certain obligations, such as mortgage payments, for deployed service members and their families, allowing them to focus on their duty without stress from circumstances at home. H.R. 1263 would extend SCRA's mortgage and foreclosure protections to service members' surviving spouses, shielding them from foreclosures on a residence for 12 months. It is important that surviving spouses have adequate time to adjust to the unspeakably difficult changes in their life.

[H.R. 2349](#) , the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2011

This bill would create an annual assessment for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) employees, providing training for those with deficient skills in processing claims. I believe this change is especially important for the North State, where our veterans have been struggling to work with the VBA's regional office in Oakland and its inability to process claims in a timely

manner.