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By IKE MGBATOGU
Contributing Writer

COLUMBUS - It always sounds inconceivable but, apparently, it's true.

The rate of unemployment among recent war veterans is by far outpacing that of the civilian population and, in some places, reaching as high as "48 percent."

For Democratic State Rep. Connie Pillich from Montgomery, that's just unacceptable. But even more than that, in her view, something has to be done without delay to begin to fix it and start helping the nation's deserving veterans.

That's why, last week, she announced plans to introduce a House Resolution urging Congress to "immediately pass the Veterans Jobs Corps Act."

Pillich is embarking on this move knowing that the same bill was defeated in the U.S. Senate by Republicans last week.

But for her, this is an important issue that calls for resolve to keep pushing until it is approved.

"As the men and women who have proudly served this nation return home, it is our duty to make sure they can find good paying secure jobs," said Pillich. "There is a lot of talk about how important job creation is but there has been little action. Now is the time to act. The Veterans Jobs Corps Act will work to ensure our veterans can make a living and provide for their families once they return home."

In Pillich's eyes, there's convincingly nothing to impede the approval of this proposal given the fact that it would not amount to additional spending.

All that the Veterans Jobs Corps Act does, she explained in a statement, is "create new job training programs to help veterans utilize their military skills and find work in targeted fields including police and firefighting, historic preservation, and national park conservation."

"This bill was fully paid for and did not initiate any new spending," she added.

And speaking of "new," there's nothing novel about this issue. Actually, Pillich is tackling an issue that has become quite common and attracting the attention of government leaders at all levels.

A while back, Franklin County Commissioners expressed a similar concern about veterans

returning to the county, hoping that as more and more Ohio veterans come home from the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq, their transition into civilian life won't take them to a different kind of battlefield: the job battlefield

The three commissioners, Paula Brooks, John O'Grady, and Marilyn Brown, all Democrats, expressed the view that the brave men and women who fought to protect the freedom of the nation should not have to fight for jobs they richly deserve.

In an effort to help, The 'Hiring Our Heroes' event was held in Columbus, a two-day job fair involving Franklin County government, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Columbus Chamber of Commerce
, the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission, Battelle Memorial Institute, the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation and several private and public sector entities.

With 116 public and private employers participating, the job fair included several training workshops that addressed the challenges of making transition from military duties to the world of civilian jobs.

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