

Washington, D.C. – The House of Representatives today passed legislation introduced by Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) that will support the Veterans Curation Project, part of which is located in the 12th District of Georgia in Augusta. Barrow's bill, H.R. 5282, had the support of the CSRA Wounded Warrior Care Project and passed by voice vote.

"Our commitment to our veterans can't end when they return home," said Barrow. "Giving them the skills that can lead to good jobs is a big part of that commitment. This is something I take very seriously, and it's why I've been so involved in veterans issues since coming to Congress."

H.R. 5282 will authorize funding for the Army Corps of Engineers Veterans Curation Project. The project was originally funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It was launched in Augusta, and hires veterans to curate artifacts that have been dug up by the Army Corps of Engineers and need to be catalogued. In the process, they learn valuable technical skills in computer, photographic, and scanning technology.

Currently, the Veterans Curation Project employs 50 veterans per year in Augusta, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C, but the funding is set to run out. This bill would make funding for the project permanent, would increase the funding available, and would allow the program to double in size.

"The Veterans Curation Project focuses on education and training and employs veterans, giving them valuable skills and making them competitive in the civilian workforce. It also provides veterans with the camaraderie and sense of purpose that helps them heal," said Laurie Ott, executive director of the Wounded Warrior Care Project when Congressman Barrow introduced the legislation in May of this year. "We are very excited to have this kind of support from Congressman Barrow. This kind of partnership helps our troops reintegrate back into our community after their service has ended, and the fact that it could be expanded is a tremendous help to allow us to reach even more veterans here."

Congressman Barrow delivered the following remarks on the floor of the House of Representatives in support of his bill:

"In October 2009 the Army Corps of Engineers used temporary funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to begin the Veterans Curation Project – to employ and train wounded Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in archaeological processing. The project gives these

veterans an opportunity to learn transferable job skills and earn a fair wage while cataloging artifacts that the Corps has discovered and is required to preserve. The project now employs about 50 veterans in Augusta, GA, St. Louis, MO, and Washington, DC.

"Unfortunately, temporary funding for the Veterans Curation Project is set to run out just when our returning veterans – and our economy – need it most. H.R. 5282 provides long term authorization for the program that will preserve the program and allow it to grow.

"The Veterans Curation Project not only helps educate, train, and employ veterans, but it allows them to heal through the power of meaningful work. Since the Army Corps of Engineers has to catalogue these artifacts anyway, there can be no better qualified or more deserving group than our veterans to help get the job done.

"We owe no greater debt as citizens than the debt we owe to the veterans who've fought for our freedoms. We literally owe them everything. That's why I urge my colleagues to support this worthy program to help our wounded veterans heal and get good job skills at the same time. It's not only the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do."

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