



**WASHINGTON WIRE**

## February 2026

### House Subcommittee Examines VET Act

The House Veterans Affairs subcommittee on Economic Opportunity recently held a hearing on several legislative items, including the VET Act, which would provide an industry-centered grant program designed to encourage military veterans and their spouses to secure employment in electrical manufacturing, distribution, and contracting.

The bill sponsor, Rep. Jennifer Kiggans (R-VA) spoke in favor of the bill, stating:

“I introduced this bill to help our nation's service members transition into meaningful, sustainable careers in the fast-growing energy sector. It's very simple. We know that we need more energy and energy producers, and our veterans need jobs. So, it's a great marriage for sure....

When service members transition out of the military, it can be challenging to find a mission-driven career beyond the service, and that can make this period difficult for them...

While our national energy demand continues to steadily increase around the country, we must maintain a reliable workforce that secures our energy dominance on the world stage...

The VET Act creates a hiring pathway for veterans through a grant program to assist separating members of the armed forces and their spouses in obtaining employment in the energy industry—an industry that's vital to our nation's future and economy...

The VET Act is a practical, targeted step towards helping those who have served our country find stable careers and contribute to our national energy goals. It bridges military experience with civilian opportunity, supports families, and strengthens our workforce...”

While the discussion about the bill was largely positive, an administration official with the Department of Labor, the agency that would administer the program, raised concerns with the structure of the bill, and it remains to be seen if Congress will advance the bill as written or seek changes by amending the bill through a legislative markup.

NAED will continue to work with our coalition partners to advance the bill by educating members of Congress on the need to shore up our workforce with qualified military veterans and help meet the national demand for a robust energy infrastructure.

## **Rep. Barrett Visits WESCO**

Congressman Tom Barrett (R-MI) [visited a Wesco branch](#) in Lansing, Michigan on January 29.

The Congressman sits on the House Veterans Affairs Committee and is a cosponsor of NAED's endorsed VET Act. He is also a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which oversees spending on highways, mass transit, and other major infrastructure projects.

During the visit, the Congressman met with team members in a range of roles, and the Wesco team introduced him to the critical role distributors play in design and execution of the electrical infrastructure buildout.

Immediately following the Wesco tour, the Congressman crossed the street to visit a major contractor, Superior Electric Great Lakes Company (SEGLC), which is also a NECA member.

Visits like this not only highlight the work of our member companies; but they also build long-term relationships that build trust with lawmakers whose decisions can have significant impact on our industry.

If your company would like to host a member of Congress, please reach out to Bud DeFlaviis, at [bud@naed.org](mailto:bud@naed.org).

## **Patriot Industries Highlights Congressional Wins; NAED asked for Additional Testimonials**

Tom Click, President and CEO of Patriot Industries, recently traveled to Washington to cut [several videos](#) highlighting some of the beneficial policies passed in the reconciliation bill signed into law in July 2025.

Tom's trip was in response to a request from Congresswoman Lisa McClain (R-MI), who serves as the Conference Chair and is responsible for communications and messaging for House Republicans. Congresswoman McClain has requested testimonials from our members on how tax provisions in the reconciliation bill are having a positive impact on NAED businesses.

Some examples of provisions that may benefit your company include:

- 199A - Qualified Business Income (QBI) deduction for S-Corporations
- 100% expensing for new factories
- 100% expensing (bonus depreciation)
- Estate tax extension and expansion

If you have a story to share, we would love to hear it and can work with your team to create a video testimonial.

To learn more, please contact Bud DeFlaviis at [bud@naed.org](mailto:bud@naed.org).

## Climate Provision Advances

Congress quietly advanced a long-debated carbon trade proposal by incorporating language from the bipartisan PROVE IT Act into a fiscal 2026 spending package signed into law by President Donald Trump.

The measure was embedded in committee report language accompanying a multi-agency funding package. While report language is not legally binding, agencies typically follow it.

The PROVE IT Act directs the Department of Energy (DOE) to study and compare the carbon intensity of U.S.-made goods with those produced abroad, aiming to demonstrate that American manufacturing is cleaner than many foreign competitors. Supporters, including Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-ND), argue the data could help protect U.S. manufacturers from foreign trade measures such as the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which began implementation this month. Congressional appropriators echoed concerns that EU methodologies could disadvantage U.S. products without reliable, U.S.-generated data.

The DOE study, which will be led by the National Energy Technology Laboratory, will examine goods affected by the EU's CBAM, and report back to Congress next year. Environmental advocates view the move as a notable step in a Congress reluctant to legislate on climate-related issues. Critics, however, warn the study could pave the way for carbon tariffs or taxes, drawing opposition from conservative energy groups.

## State Update – Tax Changes Proposed in Missouri and Washington

In Missouri, lawmakers introduced the [Missouri Worker Dues Tax Fairness Act](#) which would allow Missouri taxpayers to deduct up to \$2,000 annually (\$4,000 for joint filers) in union dues from their state taxable income, starting in 2027. The deduction only covers regular dues, initiation fees, and assessments, and excludes political contributions and lobbying costs.

Policymakers in Washington state have filed two major tax-related bills at the beginning of the 2026 session. [HB 2097](#) would allow counties to levy business and occupation tax (also known as a gross receipts tax) designed to give local governments a new revenue option beyond sales, property, and federal grant sources.

As currently drafted, the tax rate ceiling is .2%. Any proposed increase requires a majority vote from county voters.

Evergreen state lawmakers have also introduced [HB 2100](#), a bill that would create a new state payroll expense tax on large employers (with more than 20 employees and over \$5 million in gross receipts). Employers would be required to pay a 5 percent tax on each employee's annual wages above the Social Security wage limit, unless total wages are at or below \$7 million.

Employers cannot deduct the tax from employee pay. The bill establishes a state-administered Well Washington Fund, receiving 51 percent of revenues for higher education, health care, cash assistance, energy, and housing, plus an oversight board. If signed into law, levies would begin on July 1, 2026.