

JON TESTER  
MONTANA

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
BANKING  
COMMERCE  
INDIAN AFFAIRS  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SENATE HART BUILDING  
SUITE 311  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
202-224-2644

[tester.senate.gov/contact](http://tester.senate.gov/contact)

## United States Senate

July 26, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary, Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20528

Mr. Troy Miller  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the  
Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Mr. Miller:

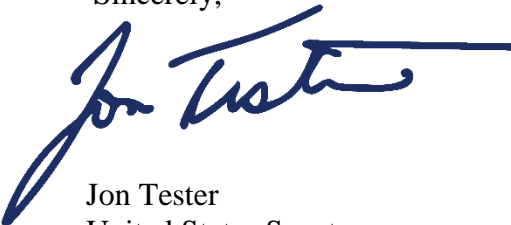
I write to you today to urge you to lead the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in expanded participation in the Department of Defense's (DOD) SkillBridge program. In addition to the important opportunities it would provide for transitioning servicemembers, I believe that the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in particular would benefit from this program.

SkillBridge is a program that enables transitioning servicemembers to gain valuable work experience through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships during the last 180 days of their service. This program provides participating agencies with access to the finest work force in America, then men and women of our armed forces, and ensures that those servicemembers have a meaningful career even before they leave the service. Each year, over 200,000 servicemembers transition out of the military and SkillBridge connects them with incredible training opportunities and real-world job experiences.

Currently, the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) is successfully utilizing the Skillbridge program under a signed DHS Memorandum of Understanding with DOD. This MOU could be applied to many agencies overseen by DHS, but CBP is uniquely suited to offer meaningful employment to transitioning veterans, and the savings associated with training new employees who are still on DOD payroll would be an added benefit. There are currently thousands of troops on the southwest border. This should not be an enduring DOD mission. Skillbridge can help CBP recruit the workforce in needs to carry out this mission while providing a valuable transition opportunity for our nation's servicemembers.

I urge you to do everything in your power to extend Skillbridge opportunities at DHS in order to grow your workforce and facilitate servicemember transition. Thank you in advance for your attention to this request. I stand ready to work with you to strengthen your workforce.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester  
United States Senator