



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25, 2013

Contact: Sean Neary/Meaghan Smith

(202) 224-4515

## BAUCUS BILL FIGHTS VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT

*Senator's Veteran Employment Transition Act Makes it Easier for Businesses to Get Tax Credit for Hiring Veterans*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) yesterday unveiled the Veteran Employment Transition Act of 2013, legislation he authored to fight unemployment among America's veterans. The legislation, co-sponsored by Senator Jon Tester (D-Mont.), expands an existing tax credit to help more veterans and makes it even easier for businesses to claim. It allows employers to claim a \$2,400 tax credit when hiring any recently-discharged veteran and streamlines the certification process for those veterans and businesses.

**"After defending our nation on the battlefield, all too many veterans are facing a new battle when they come home — the battle to find good paying jobs,"** Senator Baucus said. **"This bill will be a big boost for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, making it easier for business owners in Montana and across the country to fill job openings with hard-working vets. Our veterans are intelligent, qualified and proven leaders, and this is our chance to fight for them on the home front."**

The national unemployment rate among post-9/11 veterans was 10.8 percent in December – far higher than the overall rate of 7.8 percent. In Montana, which has the second-highest population of veterans per capita of any state, the post-9/11 vet unemployment rate was a startling 17.5 percent.

The legislation Senator Baucus introduced today improves the existing Work Opportunity Tax Credit for employers by allowing them to claim a \$2,400 credit when they hire any veteran discharged within the last five years. The bill also makes the process for employers to qualify for the tax credit even simpler; veterans would only have to show their discharge papers to demonstrate they were discharged no more than five years before being hired. Under the current rules, employers have to verify a set of criteria with their individual states' employment agencies before they can claim the credit.

Senator Baucus [authored the original credit](#) for hiring unemployed vets in early 2009, as well [as its 2011 expansion](#) and its [extension earlier this year](#). When the original tax credit was enacted, [Senator Baucus promised to continue working](#) to cut red tape and make the process simpler, which this bill does.

Senator Baucus' bill also helps veterans earn certifications and licenses when they return home for skills they learned while serving in the military. The legislation calls for better coordination between the six different veteran unemployment programs in the Departments of Veterans' Affairs and Labor, and it compels executive agencies to award contracts to small businesses owned by disabled veterans. Baucus' fellow Montana Senator Jon Tester, who is a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, is co-sponsoring the bill.

###