SEC. __. EXPEDITED HIRING AUTHORITY FOR COLLEGE GRADUATES AND POST SECONDARY STUDENTS.

(a) COLLEGE GRADUATES.—Subchapter I of chapter 31 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 3115. Expedited hiring authority for college graduates; competitive service

"(a) APPOINTMENT.—In accordance with regulations prescribed by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (in this section referred to as the 'Director'), and subject to subsection (b), the head of an agency may appoint, without regard to the provisions of sections 3309 through 3319 and 3330, a qualified college graduate to a position in the competitive service classified in a professional or administrative occupational category in accordance with the standards prescribed by the Director, at the GS-11 level and below (or equivalent).

"(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT.—An appointment under subsection (a) may be made only if the individual so appointed—

"(1)(A) except as provided in subsection (b)(1)(B), applied for the position not more than 2 years after the date the individual received a baccalaureate or graduate degree from an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))); or

"(B) in the case of an individual who has completed a period of obligated service in a uniformed service of 4 years or more, the individual must have applied for the position not more than 2 years after the date of the discharge or release of such individual from such service; and

"(2) meets the minimum qualification standards as prescribed by the Director for the position to which the individual is being appointed.

"(c) PUBLIC NOTIFICATION.—In accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Director under subsection (e), the head of an agency making an appointment under subsection (a) shall determine to what extent, and in what manner notification shall be provided of opportunities to apply for positions being filled under this section.

"(d) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENTS.—The total number of employees that an agency may appoint under this section during a fiscal year shall not exceed the number equal to 15 percent of the number of hires that such agency made during the previous fiscal year into professional and administrative occupations, at the GS-11 and below (or equivalent), under competitive examining procedures. Under regulations prescribed in subsection (e), the Director may adjust the limit on the number of individuals appointable under subsection (a) during a fiscal year than is otherwise provided for under this subsection based on such factors as the Director considers appropriate.

"(e) REGULATIONS.—No later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall issue interim final regulations, with an opportunity for comment, for the administration of this section.

"(f) SPECIAL PROVISION REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Nothing in this section shall preclude the Secretary of Defense from exercising authorities to appoint recent graduates pursuant section 1106 of Public Law 114-328, and any regulations prescribed by the Director for the administration of this section shall not apply to the Department of Defense until such time that the Department of Defense ceases to retain the authority under section 1106 of Public Law 114-328 or any applicable successor statute.".

(b) STUDENTS.—Such subchapter is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 3116. Expedited hiring authority for post-secondary students; competitive service

"(a) APPOINTMENT.—In accordance with regulations prescribed by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (in this section referred to as the "Director"), the head of an agency may make a time-limited appointment of a student, without regard to the provisions of sections 3309 through 3319 and 3330 to any position in the competitive service at the GS-11 level and below (or equivalent) for which the student is qualified.

"(b) LIMITATION ON APPOINTMENTS.—The total number of students that an agency may appoint under this section during a fiscal year shall not exceed the number equal to 15 percent of the number of student hires that such agency made during the previous fiscal year. Under regulations prescribed in subsection (f), the Director may adjust the limit on the number of individuals appointable under subsection (a) during a fiscal year than is otherwise provided for under this subsection based on such factors as the Director considers appropriate.

"(c) PUBLIC NOTIFICATION.—In accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Director under subsection (f), each agency making an appointment under subsection (a) shall determine to what extent, and in what manner notification shall be provided of opportunities to apply for positions being filled under this section.

"(d) CONVERSION.—The head of an agency may, without regard to provisions of chapter 33 or any other provision of law relating to the examination, certification, and appointment of individuals in the competitive service, convert a student serving on an

appointment under subsection (a) to a permanent appointment in the competitive service within that same agency without further competition if the student—

"(1) has completed the course of study leading to the baccalaureate or graduate degree;

"(2) has completed at least 640 hours of current continuous employment under subsection (a); and

"(3) meets the qualification standards for the position to which the student will be converted.

"(e) TERMINATION.—The head of an agency shall, without regard to the provisions of chapters 35 and 75, terminate the appointment of an individual appointed under subsection (a) upon completion of the designated academic course of study unless the individual is selected for conversion under subsection (d).

"(f) REGULATIONS.—No later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall issue interim final regulations, with an opportunity for comment, for the administration of this section.

"(g) SPECIAL PROVISION REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Nothing in this section shall preclude the Secretary of Defense from exercising authorities to appoint post-secondary students pursuant section 1106 of Public Law 114-328, and any regulations prescribed by the Director for the administration of this section shall not apply to the Department of Defense until such time that the Department of Defense ceases to retain the authority under section 1106 of Public Law 114-328 or any applicable successor statute.

"(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

"(2) The term 'student' means a person enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a post-secondary institution of higher education who is pursuing a baccalaureate or graduate degree on at least a part-time basis as determined by the accredited college or university.".

(c) TABLE OF SECTIONS AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3114 the following new items:

"3115. Expedited Hiring Authority for College Graduates; competitive service."
"3116. Appointment of Post-Secondary Students; competitive service.".

Section-by-Section Analysis

This proposal would modify the recruitment and hiring process to provide additional flexibility in how college graduates and students are hired. Under this proposal, Federal agencies would determine recruitment sources and processes for the solicitation of applications, and would be held responsible for merit-based selections. Because this recent graduate authority is not intended to replace competitive hiring and other entry-level hiring programs, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management would have the authority to cap the number of hires made under this authority.

Budget Implications: OPM does not believe this proposal has any significant government-wide cost implications. A budget table is inapplicable and has not been provided.