



Shimkus: Our military and our veterans are better off now

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MARYVILLE – While traveling the 15th Congressional District during the August District Work Period, Congressman John Shimkus (R, Illinois-15) touted legislation supported by President Donald Trump to strengthen our military and keep our promises to those who served.

"We live in dangerous, unpredictable times," said Shimkus, a graduate of West Point and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel. "The threats we face are not just the terror networks and plots we've been disrupting for more than a decade, but also major powers like Russia, China, and North Korea who wield a range of nuclear, conventional, and cyber weapons."

To ensure our military remains the greatest fighting force in the history of the world, Shimkus supported legislation this Congress to add 20,000 troops, give them a 2.6 percent pay raise (the largest in nine years), and invest in our missile defense capabilities, combat vehicles, as well as new aircraft (including F/A-18s built in St. Louis) and submarines. Detailed summaries of the current and past National Defense Authorization Acts that Shimkus voted for can be found at armedservices.house.gov/ndaa

"Providing the resources and training our troops need doesn't end when they leave active duty," Shimkus added. "And it's no exaggeration to say that this Congress and this president have enacted the most sweeping reforms to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in a generation."

Major VA reforms signed into law this Congress include:

- The [Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act](#), which created a streamlined and efficient process to remove, demote or suspend any VA employee for poor performance or misconduct.

- The [*VA MISSION Act*](#), which consolidated the VA's multiple community care programs and authorities and provides further funding to sustain the Choice Program so veterans can get the care they earned and deserve.
- The [*Forever GI Bill*](#), which removed restrictions so eligible veterans can use their education benefits throughout their lives, instead of the current 15-year deadline.

"Our military and our veterans are better off now because of these bipartisan bills I supported and that President Trump signed into law," Shimkus said. "Veterans, or any constituent, having issues with the VA or any federal government agency are always welcome to contact my office for assistance."

Congressman Shimkus also regularly sends a veteran-specific newsletter with information and updates. Constituents can sign up for that, as well as more general email updates, at shimkus.house.gov