

GAO Accepts Duckworth Request for an Independent Review of “Less-Lethal” Weapons

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WASHINGTON, DC – Combat Veteran and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), a member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years, released the following statement after the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) officially accepted her [request](#) to have the congressional watchdog conduct an independent review of how federal agencies assess the safety, appropriateness and effectiveness of so-called ‘less-lethal’ weapons intended for crowd control purposes. These weapons include rubber bullets, electronic control weapons, tear gas and heat rays—which the military reportedly considered using against D.C. protestors in June.

“I was deeply troubled to see ‘less lethal’ weapons used against peaceful protestors and journalists this past summer, which is why I’m thankful that the GAO is acting on my

request for independent review. These weapons can cause significant injury, including deep bruises, broken bones and respiratory damage even though they are intended to only cause minimal harm. Use of these weapons should be appropriate, effective and humane, and I look forward to working with the GAO on this vital oversight to help make sure deficiencies in the training and use of these weapons in real-life situations by federal law enforcement are identified.”

U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Kamala D. Harris (D-CA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Cory A. Booker (D-NJ), Jeffrey A. Merkley (D-OR), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Edward Markey (D-MA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Tom Carper (D-DE) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) also joined as co-requesters of this GAO review.