

Senate Passes Several Duckworth Provisions as Part of 2021 Defense Bill

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Duckworth's provisions will help support military personnel and their families, strengthen transportation infrastructure and logistics systems and focus DoD attention on the importance of Southeast Asia

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Combat Veteran and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), a Purple Heart recipient and member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee,

highlighted several key priorities she authored and successfully included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that passed the U.S. Senate on a bipartisan, veto-proof vote of 84-13 today. The U.S. House of Representatives also passed this bill by a veto-proof vote of 335-78, and it now heads to the President's desk to be signed into law or vetoed. The NDAA authorizes funding for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), sets our nation's defense policy and ensures that our servicemembers have the tools they need to defend our nation. Duckworth's priorities in the Senate-passed version of the FY2021 NDAA include provisions to make sure our female servicemembers are properly equipped for combat, bolster transportation infrastructure and logistics systems, accelerate rotary wing modernization efforts and invest more DoD resources into emerging regions like Southeast Asia. The Senate-passed NDAA also includes a 3% pay raise for our troops.

"The brave men and women in uniform who are deployed across the globe deserve to know that our country stands behind them as they risk their lives to defend our country and our Constitution—especially during volatile times like these when their fellow servicemembers are being so blatantly politicized by their own Commander in Chief," Duckworth said. "Though I do not support several of this bill's provisions, I'm proud that a well-deserved pay raise for our troops and several of my provisions were included in this compromise to support our service members and military families, enhance our military's transportation and logistics systems and invest in emerging regions like Southeast Asia. I'm also pleased that the Senate included Senator Warren's amendment to help our nation heal by removing all Confederate monuments from DoD assets. Bypassing this bipartisan NDAA, Congress is sending a message to President Trump that we have our troops' backs despite his veto threats, and I'm proud to have worked with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this critical legislation."

Duckworth was one of the first handful of Army women to fly combat missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom. She served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years before retiring from military service in 2014 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. She served on the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) during her four years serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, where she authored numerous provisions aimed at improving servicemember quality of life, reducing government waste and promoting job creation. Last year, Duckworth also [authored several amendments](#) that were included in the FY2020 NDAA to help protect servicemembers from toxic chemicals, support Illinois jobs and shield Veterans from deportation.

Key Duckworth provisions included in this year's NDAA will:

- **Strengthen Transportation Infrastructure and Logistics Systems:**
 - A Duckworth-authored provision would require DoD to begin research and development of advanced technologies that support water sustainment with

technologies that capture ambient humidity and harvest, recycle and reuse water to help develop water systems that reduce weight and logistics support, including with modular and trailer mounted systems.

- A Duckworth-authored provision would direct the Comptroller General to submit a report on the Department's progress in reaching net zero goals within one year of enactment of the act. It will include lessons learned from its Net Zero Initiative Pilot Program.
- Permanently authorizes EUCOM to engage in their multilateral Surface Exchange of Services (SEOS) exchange of transportation services with European Allies.
- Permanently authorizes EUCOM to engage in their multilateral Air Transport and Air-to-Air Refueling and other Exchange of Services (ATARES) exchange of transportation services with European allies.

- Accelerate Rotary Wing Modernization:

- o Duckworth championed an increase to Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) funding for advanced development of the Future Long Range Assault Aircraft (FLRAA) by \$5 million.

- Better Support Military Personnel, Families and Retirees:

- o A Duckworth-authored provision to make it easier for DoD and the National Guard to begin clean-up of PFAS based on the drinking water standards set in each state, providing states and DoD the flexibility they need to create an action plan.

- o A Duckworth-authored amendment to include her [*Equality in Leadership and Inclusion in Top Elements \(ELITE\) Act*](#), which would require an independent study identifying barriers to minority participation in the military's accession, assessment and training process. The study will also include recommendations to increase minority participation in special operations units and in the officer corps of our Armed Forces.

- o A provision authored by Senator Ernst and Senator Duckworth to include the Ernst-Duckworth [*Female Body Armor Modernization Act*](#), which would ensure proper-fitting body armor and protective equipment is available for female Servicemembers.

- “When I was serving overseas, I experienced firsthand how our military's body armor and protective equipment hasn't always been constructed with the health and comfort of female servicemembers in mind,” Duckworth said regarding this provision. “That's one reason why I'm proud my bill to enhance troop readiness by helping make sure our female servicemembers are properly equipped for combat was included this bill, and I look forward to it becoming law.”

o A provision based on an amendment authored by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and cosponsored by Senator Duckworth to direct the removal of all confederate names, symbols, monuments, displays and paraphernalia from DoD assets, including installations within three years of enactment. Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened to veto this critical defense legislation if it includes this provision and does not repeal Section 230, leading Senator Duckworth to issue the following [statement](#):

- “It’s bad enough that Trump threatened to veto a pay raise for our troops in order to protect the legacies of Confederate traitors, but to threaten our troops to achieve completely unrelated policy issues is wrong,” Duckworth said. “By putting himself, his fragile ego and his political interests first, it shows—yet again—that he doesn’t really care about our troops or our national security.”

o A Duckworth-authored provision to require the Secretary of Defense to standardize policy across DoD installations for dangerous animal regulations to be consistent with professional veterinary expertise.