



# Duckworth Provides Highlights Of Her First Term In U.S. Senate

January 1 2023 8:00 AM

– U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today released her first [Term in Review](#), highlighting her work and accomplishments for the people of Illinois throughout the past six years. The new report outlines Duckworth’s efforts to champion and pass legislation to help working families get ahead and keep more of their hard-earned money, protect our communities from crime and gun violence, defend women’s rights, create good-paying jobs across the state, help bring environmental justice to overlooked communities in Illinois, support our allies in Ukraine and improve the lives of servicemembers, Veterans and military families.



“It has been a true honor to serve the great state of Illinois for the past six years, and I’m so proud of everything we’ve accomplished for hardworking Illinoisans from Chicago to Cahokia Heights, Peoria and beyond,” Duckworth said. “As I look forward to the years ahead, I know there’s still much work to do to help save working families money,

protect and defend women's rights, safeguard our communities from gun violence, invest in communities that have been ignored for too long, support our troops and make sure we keep the promises we've made to our Veterans."

Throughout her first six years in the U.S. Senate, Duckworth focused on being an effective, pragmatic and caring leader for all Illinoisans. Her dedication to the working families of Illinois helped make her one of the most effective members of the U.S. Senate according to the Center for Effective Lawmaking, which ranked her as one of the top five most effective Democratic Senators overall in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress and the most effective freshman Democratic Senator in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. In her first term, 10 Duckworth bills were signed into law, and she authored dozens of critical provisions in larger legislative packages like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the American Rescue Plan, the yearly *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) and the *Water Resources and Development Act*. Duckworth also co-founded the Senate's first-ever [Environmental Justice Caucus](#) in 2019.

In Senator Duckworth's first term, her office assisted thousands of Illinoisans experiencing difficulties navigating the federal bureaucracy, dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 or receiving federal benefits they were owed. These efforts helped Illinois families recover approximately \$8 million they were owed in Social Security payments, Veterans' benefits, tax refunds and more. Her office responded to more than 5.5 million emails and other messages.

**Some highlights of Duckworth's accomplishments in her first Senate term follow, and a full report can be found [here](#).**

## **Saving Working Families Money**

Senator Duckworth championed and secured key provisions in the *Inflation Reduction Act*, a law that is helping thousands of Illinoisans by lowering costs for life-saving prescription drugs, capping out-of-pocket costs of insulin for Medicare beneficiaries at \$35 per month and \$2,000 per year for other medications. She is also leading the charge to help lower costs at the pump for working Illinoisans by authoring the [Gas Price Gouging Prevention Act](#) that would help prevent the oil industry from price gouging on gas and pushing to allow year-round sales of E15 fuel, which reduces the United States' reliance on foreign sources of energy and lowers costs. The Senator also led several provisions in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that are [helping save families money on their water bills as well as saving them on gas and auto maintenance costs](#) by helping reduce traffic congestion. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Duckworth also supported and helped pass the *American Rescue Plan* (ARP), which sent additional \$1,200 stimulus checks to working families to help them pay their bills.

## Keeping Our Communities Safe from Gun Violence and Supporting First Responders

Senator Duckworth worked to pass one of the most significant commonsense gun safety reforms to become law in a generation, the [\*Bipartisan Safer Communities Act\*](#) which provides \$1 billion for community-based violence prevention programs and efforts to keep deadly weapons out of the hands of dangerous people to help curb our nation's gun violence epidemic and stop gun crimes before they can happen. In the aftermath of the preventable, horrific July 4th massacre in Highland Park, Duckworth immediately went to the city, [spoke out](#) and later delivered [impassioned](#) opening remarks at a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee calling for more to be done to protect our communities from mass shootings. She also helped introduce the [\*Background Check Expansion Act\*](#) to ensure federal background checks for all gun sales, as well as the [\*Assault Weapons Ban of 2019\*](#), which would ban the sale of military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. The Senator also voted to send critical resources to communities during the pandemic to help prevent police officers and other first responders from being laid off. As part of her work to support police officers, firefighters and emergency responders, Duckworth got her bipartisan *Public Safety Officer Support Act* [signed into law](#) to support the families of officers who struggle with mental health or who are lost to trauma-linked suicides.

## Protecting Women's Rights

Senator Duckworth is a champion and staunch defender of a woman's right to choose and worked to ensure that all women—no matter their income or zip code—have equal access to full reproductive healthcare. She is working to reverse the Supreme Court's dangerous ruling that struck down *Roe v. Wade* and enshrine its protections into law, and she introduced the [\*Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance \(EACH\) Woman Act\*](#) as well as supported the *Women's Health Protection Act*, which she [vocally criticized](#) Republicans for blocking. After she [urged](#) Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin to proactively protect servicemembers' abortion rights, the Department of Defense announced several new protections and services to ensure our female troops can access the healthcare they need. Duckworth also [pushed back](#) against Republican attacks against the Biden Administration's efforts to protect female Veterans' access to care.

## Advocating for Parents and Children

Senator Duckworth secured the most significant expansion of [paid parental leave for American troops](#) in our nation's history, writing the law that allows them to take up to 12 weeks to care for their child in the year following a birth or adoption, or placement of a minor child for foster care. With far too many Americans still having to choose between their careers and caring for newborns or ailing loved ones, Duckworth is also

pushing to ensure all working families [have access to](#) 12 weeks of paid leave and to help more families [afford childcare](#). Duckworth's bipartisan [Friendly Airports for Mother's \(FAM\) Act](#) and [FAM Improvement Act](#) were signed into law to make traveling easier for nursing mothers by requiring airports to provide clean, accessible, private rooms in every terminal for the first time, and President Biden also signed her bipartisan [Safe Cribs Act](#) to protect infants' lives by banning the sale of padded crib bumpers. During the infant formula shortage in 2022, Duckworth led numerous efforts—including helping introduce the bipartisan [Access to Baby Formula Act](#) that was signed into law—to help get formula back on the shelves as quickly as possible and make sure our nation took the measures necessary to ensure a similar shortage doesn't leave parents and infants at risk ever again.

## **Bringing Jobs, Business and Funding**

Senator Duckworth secured [multiple provisions](#) in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that are helping our state rebuild roads and bridges, improve public transportation systems, expand broadband and grow our electric vehicle charging networks. With Chicago drivers each [losing 104 hours](#) sitting in traffic last year alone, her provision to [decrease traffic congestion](#) in major metropolitan areas will save Illinoisans both time and money spent on gas and auto maintenance while reducing air pollution. The Senator strongly supported the [CHIPS and Science Act](#) that is supporting local manufacturing, growing our economy and strengthening our nation's science and manufacturing competitiveness with China, and she championed the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), which provides \$500 million to expand the number of service stations that offer low-carbon ethanol and biodiesel, made from Illinois corn and soybeans.

Duckworth [led a Congressional delegation to Asia](#) to bring foreign investment to our state, which helped lead to a joint venture between Illinois's ADM and South Korea's LG Chem, as well as a [commitment from Taiwan](#) to purchase an estimated \$2.6 billion of our state's corn and soybeans. Together with Senator Dick Durbin, Duckworth also [secured \\$211 million in Congressionally-directed spending for Illinois projects](#) that will help clean up our water, improve our state's infrastructure, expand healthcare access, create jobs and tackle environmental injustice issues facing communities across Illinois. [The first Senate bill Duckworth introduced became law just four months into her term as Senator](#), marking the fastest time any current Senator had passed a bill after being sworn in. Her bipartisan law supports Illinois jobs and prevents infrastructure projects from becoming ensnared in needless bureaucratic delays by rolling back a misguided U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rule that enabled governors of neighboring states to delay or block infrastructure improvements in Illinois. A DOT analysis estimated the law will save taxpayers \$86.3 million annually.

## **Promoting Environmental Justice and Clean Water**



As founding Co-Chair of the Senate's first-ever [Environmental Justice Caucus](#), Senator Duckworth wrote the *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act* (DWWIA), which was [signed into law](#) and is putting Americans back to work fixing and upgrading our nation's crumbling, dangerous water infrastructure. Through her leadership, Illinois—which has the most known lead service lines of any state—is dramatically accelerating projects to remove lead pipes and protect children against permanent, irreversible brain damage. Duckworth's DWWIA is also enabling communities like [Cahokia Heights](#) to repair and modernize failing wastewater systems that flood raw sewage onto residents' properties whenever there's a heavy rain and better protect families from forever chemicals like PFAS while creating good-paying, local jobs. Duckworth also led efforts to ensure the air our children and families breathe is free of dangerous pollutants like cancer-causing [ethylene oxide \(EtO\)](#) in [Waukegan](#) and [Willowbrook](#) as well as toxic pollutants from RMG facilities on [Chicago's Southeast Side](#). She wrote the *STRANDED Act* to help communities like Zion that are struggling with the impacts of stranded nuclear waste by incentivizing economic development and providing federal assistance to offset the economic hardships caused by stranded nuclear waste.

## **Pursuing Civil Rights, Equity and Equality**

In honor of the legacy of John Lewis—one of America's greatest civil rights heroes—Senator Duckworth helped introduce the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) to restore the full protections of the landmark Voting Rights Act and end the scourge of voter suppression. To restore trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, Duckworth introduced the [Police Training and Independent Review Act](#) to prevent police-involved deaths and encourage independent and impartial investigations into law enforcement officials' use of deadly force. Her legislation was included as a main pillar in the [Justice in Policing Act of 2020](#) comprehensive police reform proposal, which she was a lead sponsor of as well. Because no family member should ever have to choose between staying in touch with an incarcerated loved one and paying their bills, Duckworth also introduced the bipartisan *Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act* to strengthen the nation's criminal justice system, is expected to be signed into law shortly. She also helped introduce the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which President Biden [signed](#) into law, and the [Equality Act of 2019](#), a comprehensive and bipartisan bill to ban discrimination against LGBTQ Americans.

Senator Duckworth also strengthened the SBA Microloan Program by passing legislation to leverage approximately \$64 million in support of minority-owned small businesses and other underserved small business interests. And she led multiple efforts to help ensure our national monuments tell the full story of our nation's history,

including her [Springfield Race Riot National Monument Act](#) to designate the 1908 Race Riot Sites in Springfield as a national monument and [pushing for the site of Emmett Till's memorial service to be designated as part of the National Park System](#).

## **Fighting for Our Troops and Veterans**

As a combat Veteran who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years, Senator Duckworth has always been a fierce advocate for our national security, troops and military families. In addition to securing the most significant expansion of [paid parental leave for American troops](#) in our nation's history, the Senator is leading the effort to end military hunger caused by unintended barriers that make military families ineligible for essential nutrition assistance programs, [introducing a bipartisan bill](#), portions of which were signed into law and [building upon that success](#) to ensure more military families become eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Senator Duckworth was also able to [safeguard the mission of Peoria's 182nd Airlift Wing](#) and protect the jobs of 1,250 Airmen and approximately 370 full-time employees, as well as [help secure](#) \$120 million for the Rock Island Arsenal, which employs more than 6,000 military, civilian and contractor personnel.

Senator Duckworth has also remained a staunch advocate for our Veterans. Because too many Veterans discover years later that their service to our nation resulted in health issues tied to exposure to burn pits or other toxic materials, the Senator proudly [supported](#) the *PACT Act* that is now law and the VA's processes for toxic-exposed Veterans so these brave warriors can get the care they need for service-connected illnesses. She also led the successful effort to [help Chicagoan and U.S. combat Veteran Miguel Perez, Jr.](#) return to the United States after he was failed multiple times by our nation and cruelly deported by the Trump Administration, and she is pushing [for legislative changes](#) to prevent Veterans from being deported as well as help them access the healthcare benefits they earned through their service. And the Senator was successful in getting her bipartisan [Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act](#) to help entrepreneurs who served launch and grow their businesses signed into law.

## **Supporting Our Allies**

In [response](#) to Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine, Senator Duckworth worked to ensure our allies there had the support necessary to beat back Russian troops and to help the Ukrainian people, including [calling for](#) accelerated sales of U.S. M1A2 SEPv3 tanks to Poland, [supporting](#) significant aid packages, [requesting](#) and [securing](#) Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Ukrainians in the United States, [meeting](#) with members of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) Illinois Division, speaking out on the Senate floor [in support of Ukraine and the Ukrainian community in Illinois](#), helping [quickly reunite with her family in Chicago a woman who had been inappropriately](#)

[detained by U.S. authorities for months after fleeing Ukraine](#) and hosting [a discussion](#) that brought together members of Chicago's Ukrainian community with officials from the U.S. National Security Council to help provide residents with updates from the Biden Administration on its efforts in Ukraine. With our nation's withdrawal from Afghanistan, Duckworth led [efforts](#) to help keep our word to Afghan allies who supported our mission there—often at [great danger, cost and sacrifice to themselves and their loved ones](#). The Senator also [wrote the law](#) that created an independent, nonpartisan commission to examine every aspect of the war and produce actionable recommendations for reforms that ensure our nation not only learns the right lessons from our 20 years in Afghanistan, but ensure the same mistakes are never made again.

## **Supporting Americans with Disabilities**

Understanding that everyone is just one accident away from having a disability and that each of us who lives long enough will eventually develop a disability, Senator Duckworth worked hard since arriving in the Senate to support Americans with disabilities and protect their rights. She wrote the [All Stations Accessibility Program \(ASAP\) Act](#) that's now law and will provide \$1.75 billion over the next five years to help build ramps, install elevators and make other improvements to ensure that all of America's public transit stations are finally usable for everyone. As a result of a [law](#) she wrote to ensure American travelers with disabilities are able to make informed decisions about which airlines to fly on and which to avoid, the U.S. Department of Transportation released data for the first time [revealing just how many wheelchairs and motorized scooters passenger airlines damage each month](#). After the then-Republican House of Representatives passed a bill to gut the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) and reward businesses that failed to make their facilities accessible to people with disabilities, Duckworth assembled a coalition of Senators to successfully [block the bill](#) from becoming law—and then introduced the [Disabled Access Credit Expansion Act](#) to incentivize small businesses to comply with the ADA as well as [legislation to help break down barriers](#) that Americans with disabilities still face with websites and applications, which all Americans rely on for employment, commerce, education, public services and all other aspects of society.

**Duckworth's full First Term in Review report can be found [here](#).**