

Duckworth Introduces New Legislation To Help Address Military Recruitment Crisis By Expanding Pool Of Talented Potential Recruits

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WASHINGTON DC - Combat Veteran and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)—member of the U.S. Armed Services Committee and a former Army Black Hawk pilot

who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years—is introducing new legislation to help improve military recruitment efforts by allowing highly skilled and motivated individuals to succeed in the military while still maintaining the Department of Defense’s (DoD) security requirements and high enlistment standards. The *Enlist Act* would expand the DoD’s authority to enlist individuals who have lived in the U.S. for at least five years—such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients—and meet all of the services’ qualifications for military service.

“Our military services are facing unprecedented challenges meeting their recruitment goals—in part due to a historically small pool of eligible recruits,” said Duckworth. “With my *Enlist Act*, we can start addressing this recruiting crisis by enabling the Department of Defense to expand the pool to include long-time residents—like DACA recipients, folks who have Temporary Protected Status and those who have an approved petition for an immigrant visa, subject to visa caps. Allowing highly qualified, long-time residents of our great nation the opportunity to serve the country they’ve come to love is a common-sense way to give the services better access to talented potential recruits and improve our military’s readiness in the process.”

The *Enlist Act* would aid recruitment efforts by simply expanding the DoD’s authority to enlist individuals who have lived in the U.S. for at least five years and meet all of the services’ qualifications for military service. This bill would allow enlistment of:

- DACA recipients;
- People who have Temporary Protected Status (TPS); and
- People who have an approved petition for an immigrant visa, subject to visa caps.

Throughout history, countless non-citizens have bravely served, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to our shared values and their willingness to defend our nation. Non-citizens who currently serve in the military are already allowed to naturalize under an existing process and, if signed into law, individuals who enlist under the expanded authorization created by the *Enlist Act* would be allowed to do so as well.

In June, Duckworth [met](#) with General Brown, USAF, Chief of Staff of the Air Force and nominee to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to discuss his nomination and their shared priorities. During his [confirmation hearing](#) in the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, General Brown agreed with Duckworth that the *Enlist Act* could assist with the military’s recruitment issues and that the talented, qualified individuals that would be part of the expanded pool of recruits created by the *Enlist Act* should be given the opportunity to serve.