

Duckworth Highlights 2023 Accomplishments In Year-End Round Up

December 28 2023 8:55 AM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – As 2023 comes to a close, U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) highlighted several key accomplishments she secured over the last year:

“From helping almost 4,000 Illinoisans recover more than \$2 million the Federal Government owed them to bringing home hundreds of millions of dollars to get the lead out of children’s drinking water, and from protecting hundreds of jobs in Peoria to

helping bring home Illinois hostages held abroad, I'm so proud of everything we've accomplished this year," Duckworth said. "It's a true honor to continue serving Illinoisans in the United States Senate and as I look forward to the year ahead, I know there's still much work to do to help save working families money, protect and defend women's rights, end preventable gun violence, invest in communities that have been ignored for too long, advocate for Illinois on a global stage, support our troops and make sure we keep the promises we've made to our Veterans. I'm eager to get back to work for Illinois in 2024."

Over the past year, Duckworth and her office responded to nearly 600,000 emails and other messages as well as assisted more than 3,500 Illinoisans who were experiencing difficulties navigating the federal bureaucracy, helping recover more than \$2 million in Social Security payments, Veterans' benefits, tax refunds and more. A select list of Duckworth's accomplishments from the past year is below, and a comprehensive review of her first full term in the U.S. Senate, which ended on January 2, 2023, is available on the Senator's website using the link [here](#).

Key Accomplishments:

Helping get the lead out of our children's water

Thanks in part to Duckworth's *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act*, this year Illinois received significant federal [support](#) for water infrastructure upgrades. Duckworth helped announce \$332 million for Illinois's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund while in [Rockford](#), and another \$336 million in *Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act* (WIFIA) loans for [Chicago](#).

Safeguarding hundreds of jobs in Peoria

After years of sustained effort from Duckworth to establish a minimum inventory of C-130 aircraft, Duckworth this year [celebrated](#) the Air National Guard's decision in selecting Peoria's 182nd Airlift Wing as one of four preferred locations for new C-130J aircraft to replace the aging C-130H models. This announcement ensures the mission of the 182nd Airlift Wing is safeguarded, protecting the jobs of 1,200 Airmen and approximately 370 full-time employees.

Pushing for Illinois's leadership in future technology

Duckworth advocated for and championed Illinois in its selection for [Tech Hub](#) and [hydrogen production and distribution hub](#) initiatives. The [Chicago Quantum Exchange's](#) The Bloch: End-to-end Quantum Solutions at Scale and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Central Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing

Hub were selected and are now eligible to apply for between \$40-\$75 million in *CHIPS and Science Act* funding to help Chicagoland remain at the cutting edge of technological innovation. The Midwest Alliance for Clean Hydrogen's (MachH2) regional clean hydrogen production and distribution hub was awarded \$1 billion in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Energy's Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs program, funded under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Honoring our state and nation's history

After introducing her *Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley, and Roberts Temple National Historic Site Act* in [2021](#) and [2023](#), this year the Biden Administration [designated](#) the church that held Emmett Till's pivotal open-casket wake in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood as a [national monument](#). Duckworth also continues to push her *Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument Act* closer to becoming law and establishing the site as a national monument. This year the bill was [reported favorably](#) out of committee and sent to the full Senate after the National Park Service [declared](#) strong support for passing the legislation.

Protecting reproductive rights

Duckworth has made protecting and expanding access to essential reproductive healthcare a top priority. With the U.S. Supreme Court agreeing to consider a case that could determine the future of widespread access to [Mifepristone](#), Duckworth introduced a resolution in support of equitable, science-based policies governing access to medication abortion. Earlier this year Duckworth [joined](#) more than 250 members of Congress in submitting an [amicus brief](#) to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA* and [also helped introduce](#) the *Women's Health Protection Act of 2023*, which would guarantee access to abortion everywhere across the country. On the one-year anniversary of the disastrous *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* Supreme Court decision, Duckworth [visited](#) Southern Illinois's CHOICES Center for Reproductive Health to learn more about the clinic's work as one of the closest clinics for Americans in states across the South. And Duckworth [hosted](#) Dr. Erin King of the Metro East's Hope Clinic as her guest at this year's State of the Union address.

Helping bring Illinois hostages home and pushing for humanitarian aid to Gaza

Following negotiations, Duckworth aided in the [release](#) of Illinoisans Judith and Natalie Raanan who were taken by Hamas terrorists during the October 7 attacks on Israel. Duckworth continued [underscoring](#) the need for all parties to remain laser-focused on the safe return of all hostages being held by Hamas and to take all possible measures to protect and deliver humanitarian aid to innocent civilians suffering in Gaza. Duckworth

has consistently called for bringing sustained and greater [humanitarian relief](#) into Gaza to [minimize](#) the suffering of innocent civilians. Her efforts include [urging](#) for the inclusions of full humanitarian assistance in any national security funding packages, [calling](#) for humanitarian [cessations](#) of hostilities, [pushing](#) for [fuel](#) to be allowed into Gaza for hospitals and water treatment and [more](#).

Supporting union workers

When United Auto Workers [authorized](#) a strike [against](#) General Motors, Stellantis and Ford earlier this year, Duckworth [joined](#) striking workers in Naperville to show her solidarity as workers pushed for better wages. Duckworth [commended](#) President Biden's visit to Stellantis in Belvidere to celebrate the agreement reached between UAW and Stellantis for a new contract that [included](#) re-opening the shuttered plant in that city as an electric vehicle battery plant.

Helping families keep in touch with loved ones

Just days into the new year, Duckworth's *Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act* was [signed into law](#) after years of Duckworth [pushing](#) for the law, which is already [helping ensure](#) consumers trying to keep in touch with their incarcerated loved ones are charged just and reasonable rates for all inter- and intra-state calls, regardless of the technology used.

Supporting servicemembers and bolstering military readiness

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Duckworth [secured several important provisions](#) in the *Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)*. Her key provisions will help support a strong and ready total force, lead in the Indo-Pacific region, build the logistics enterprise for a combat-credible deterrent, tackle climate change and defend the environment and restore American competitiveness. This year's NDAA also will [help Illinois](#) by supporting school districts near military bases and charting a sustainable future for C-40 aircraft.

Condemning reckless Republican efforts harming our military

Throughout Senator Tommy Tuberville's ultimately futile, damaging and failed blockade on more than 450 critical military promotions, Duckworth [repeatedly called](#) for Tuberville to [end](#) his nearly year-long hold that hurt our military readiness and national security, as well as forcing unnecessary harm on our military families. In September, Duckworth [joined](#) several of her Senate Democratic colleagues and military leaders in [calling out](#) Tuberville's hold where she urged her Republican colleagues to stop simply disagreeing with Senator Tuberville in secret and to come forward and publicly

condemn Tuberville's dangerous military hold lest they be complicit in his efforts, too. In July, Duckworth also [joined](#) several of her Senate Democratic colleagues on the Senate floor to [condemn](#) Tuberville's reckless, partisan hold. She also joined other SASC members in [calling on](#) U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell to help end Tuberville's hold. In a hearing, Duckworth [called](#) Tuberville out, arguing that his actions have left our Marines without a Commandant for the first time in more than a century, hold our servicemembers and military families hostage over an individual senator's political agenda and threaten our military readiness and national security.

Advocating for Illinois on an international stage

During her first year as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Duckworth led a series of official visits abroad to champion Illinois and strengthen economic ties for our state. Throughout the year Duckworth led a series of trips to [Japan](#), [Indonesia](#), [Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Romania](#) and the [United Kingdom](#) to highlight the benefits of Illinois's major exports as well as its position as a prime location for business expansion and investment in the U.S.—touting the state's strong workforce, educational and research institutions, and energy and transportation infrastructure. Following her trip to Japan, Japan [announced](#) a regulatory change that will lead to an increase in imports from U.S. biofuel producers, supporting our farmers and growing Illinois's economy. Duckworth highlighted her efforts this year at fireside chats at [City Club Chicago](#) and the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#).

Enhancing Medicare for the disability community

After years of sustained and determined efforts [led by Duckworth](#), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)—for the first time in history—[expanded Medicare coverage](#) for [seat elevation systems embedded in power wheelchairs](#), which are vital durable medical equipment that enable wheelchair users to independently perform activities of daily living, such as getting into and out of a power wheelchair, dressing and preparing meals.