

Sent: Tue, 21 Sep 2010 17:42:17 -0400
From: Winnie Stachelberg <wstachelberg@americanprogress.org>
To: "Messina, Jim" <jim_messina@who.eop.gov>, "Bond, Brian K." <brian.k.bond@who.eop.gov>, "Schiliro, Philip M." <philip_m._schiliro@who.eop.gov>, Ron Klain

Subject: FW: Lincoln Statement on National Defense Authorization Act Procedural Vote

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From: Stowers, Jim (Lincoln) [mailto:Jim_Stowers@lincoln.senate.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 5:28 PM
To: Winnie Stachelberg
Subject: FW: Lincoln Statement on National Defense Authorization Act Procedural Vote

Winnie - Here is the public statement. Happy to talk more whenever. Jim

From: Goldberg, Marni (Lincoln) **On Behalf Of** Lincoln, Lincoln Communications (Lincoln)
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 5:24 PM
Subject: Lincoln Statement on National Defense Authorization Act Procedural Vote

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2010

Contact: Marni Goldberg
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Lincoln Statement on National Defense Authorization Act Procedural Vote

Washington – U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) released the following statement on the procedural vote on the National Defense Authorization Act that occurred this afternoon:

“I think the stalemate we find ourselves in today is an example of Congress’ failure to appropriately deal with issues of critical importance to Arkansans and the American people, and that is why people are so angry.

“Both political parties are too focused on how they can embarrass one another and we are no longer doing what our constituents expect us to do – work together to find common ground and move our nation forward.

“Today, I filed eight amendments to improve services and benefits for Arkansas’s veterans, Guardsman and Reservists. But, under the process and time-frame established by this motion, none of my amendments would have merited consideration this week.

“I have heard my constituents loud and clear, and I will continue working to ensure that we do things in an open and transparent way. I opposed the Motion to Proceed because we all need to listen to our constituents and provide time to fully debate and consider the issues they care about.

“In late July, I was able to gain unanimous support for the most ambitious Child Nutrition Authorization Bill in the history of our country. It didn't require a procedural motion. It was bipartisan, paid for and reflected the best of what this Senate can be. I hope that process becomes the norm.”

“I am a cosponsor of the DREAM Act, and have stated that I will support the Lieberman compromise, which would repeal the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy when our military commanders say it is appropriate for our military readiness and national security. However, these important issues were taken hostage today to an election year political agenda at the expense of full and open debate on a \$726 billion defense spending bill.

“I believe there many important issues in this critical bill that deserve our full attention. When we are ready to get serious about debating the multitude of issues that are relevant to this bill, I am prepared to help move that debate and this legislation forward.”

Today, Senator Lincoln introduced a package of bipartisan amendments to improve the benefits given to Arkansas's military families, and to ensure that Arkansas's National Guard and Reservists are also adequately compensated for their invaluable service.

The Veterans Training Act, which would provide more flexible educational benefits to veterans and service members by allowing beneficiaries of the Post 9/11 GI Bill to pursue certificate or apprenticeship programs, or programs at non-degree postsecondary institutions, including vocational, technical, and career schools.

The Veterans Survivor Fairness Act, which would increase the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Benefits Rate so that it is equivalent to the rate paid to survivors of federal civilian employees, provide a graduated scale of benefits so many survivors are no longer denied benefits because of an arbitrary eligibility restriction, and allow surviving spouses who remarry after age 55 to retain DIC benefits.

The Selected Reserve Continuum of Care Act, which would make health care more accessible to Guardsmen and Reservists so they are able to maintain the necessary medical readiness to fulfill their missions. It would require the Secretaries of the military to provide medical and dental services to members of the Selected Reserve if these services are needed to meet applicable standards of medical and dental readiness. Current law authorizes, but does not require, this care.

The Travel Reimbursement for Inactive Duty Training Personnel (TRIP) Act, which would reimburse members of the Selected Reserve for travel expenses to drill that exceed 50 miles, including mileage, meals and lodging at the standard government rate set by the General Services Administration (GSA).

The Military Employer Family Friendly Award, which provides an annual, non-monetary Military Family-Friendly Employer Award to those employers that provide workplace flexibility to working spouses, caregivers and returning servicemembers so they can address the needs of the home during deployments.

The Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act, which grants veteran status to members of the reserve components who have 20 or more years of service and do not otherwise qualify.

The Selected Reservist Education Enhancement Act, which would tie the GI Bill for reservists to the new “national average cost of tuition” standard being applied to active duty Montgomery GI Bill rates, ensuring that when the national average cost of tuition increases, Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve rates will increase by at least the same percentage. The value of these benefits has plunged over the years.

A Study on the Effect of Deployment on First Responder Agencies, which would require the National Guard Bureau, in consultation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to submit a report to Congress that would evaluate the impact, financial and otherwise, the deployment of first responder employees has had on their first responder agencies and the agencies’ ability to serve their communities.

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Visit Senator Lincoln’s [Online Office](#).