

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4702

August 18, 2016

Senator John McCain  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services  
Russell Senate Building, Room 228

Senator Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services  
Russell Senate Building, Room 228

Congressman Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building

Congressman Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building

Dear Chairman McCain, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Thornberry, and Ranking Member Smith,

As you lead the conference reconciling differences between the House and Senate National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAAs), I urge the conference committee to adopt the following positions on key provisions:

**1. Allow Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to operate on military installations**

I believe we must do more as a Congress to address military food insecurity. One key step would be to allow entities operating the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for WIC to use space on base. During the committee mark-up, my amendment to give the service secretaries the authority to approve the provision of space on base for a WIC office was included as section 2813. Language allowing WIC offices to operate on bases should be included in the conference bill.

**2. Maximize funding for Impact Aid**

School districts with reduced property tax bases due to military installations rely on Department of Defense (DOD) Impact Aid to overcome this shortfall. Because these schools educate large numbers of military family members, this program ensures servicemembers' children are receiving the best education possible. Unfortunately, funding for this program has been reduced in recent years. I request that the final bill include an increase in the authority for DOD Impact Aid, including the supplemental program for students with disabilities.

**3. Reject discrimination**

If enacted, section 1094 of the House bill could roll back civil rights for employees of federal contractors. As drafted, it would apply to the entire government and appears to directly undermine protections for LGBT members of the workforce. During floor consideration, I joined a bipartisan group of members attempting to remove this provision. Section 1094 is unacceptable because it could legalize discrimination and should be rejected.

**4. Ensure TRICARE continuity for certain National Guard members**

Since 2010, hundreds of National Guard members have served on full-time Federal Duty status and received coverage for themselves and their families through TRICARE. However, if these individuals are called to State Active Duty, as happened during the response to the 2014 Oso mudslide, they must temporarily transition to state health insurance. This process is disruptive for members of the Guard and inefficient for states and the federal government. During mark-up, I led a bipartisan effort to include an amendment, modeled off of Rep. DelBene's H.R. 4554, to fix this problem. This amendment was included in the House-passed legislation as Section 722, and I request that it be included in the final bill.

**5. Authorize continued research into low enriched uranium (LEU) for naval reactors**

At present, nuclear reactors on U.S. submarines and aircraft carriers rely on highly enriched uranium (HEU). This is due to the immense power demands and space constraints of these platforms. However, advances in reactor design could allow LEU reactors to be used in future ships without sacrificing performance. Doing so would achieve both nonproliferation and financial goals, by reducing the legitimate uses of HEU and reducing the security needs associated with manufacture, transport, and storage of naval reactor fuel. I request that the final NDAA include the full authority for LEU naval reactor research from the House bill.

With hundreds of sections to reconcile between the two versions of the NDAA, I know the conference will be a significant undertaking for conferees and staff alike. I look forward to continuing to work on these and other provisions to achieve outcomes that will benefit our women and men in uniform by promoting readiness and strengthening our national security.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen

Member of Congress

Washington State, 2<sup>nd</sup> District