



May 27, 2011

House Approves FY 2012 Defense Authorization Act

On Thursday, the House of Representatives passed the Fiscal Year 2012 Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes \$690 billion for the Department of Defense and other vital national defense activities. The bill also establishes a comprehensive defense policy, including provisions concerning military and civilian personnel, acquisitions and procurement, Department of Defense organization and management, and education and training. Recognizing the service and sacrifice of the members of our Armed Forces and their families, the authorization provides a 1.6 percent increase in military pay. Furthermore, the bill prohibits the use of federal funds to detain, transfer, or release detainees from Guantanamo Bay; authorizes funds for the procurement of additional armored vehicles to protect our troops; and requires the Comptroller General of the United States to assess the extent to which the Department of Defense is identifying, tracking and realizing \$100 million in efficiency savings that the Secretary of Defense has proposed to find. Congressman Miller will continue to work with his colleagues to enact an authorization that ensures our troops have the equipment and resources they need to successfully complete their missions and invests in the capabilities needed to keep our country secure.

House Votes to Reassert Congressional Oversight of Health Care Spending

In addition to its unconstitutional mandates and burdensome tax increases, the Democrat health care law also undermined Congress' power to establish spending priorities by mandating billions of dollars in spending on various health-related programs. On Tuesday, the House voted to restore its authority by converting a \$230 million direct appropriation, i.e. mandatory spending, for residency programs at teaching health centers into an authorization of appropriations. If enacted, this bill would ensure that all funding requests for the graduate medical education program go through the normal appropriations process. While Congressman Miller is a strong supporter of the graduate medical education program, he supported this legislation to ensure Congress can conduct proper oversight of the program through the annual appropriations process and prevent potential abuse of taxpayer dollars.

House Votes to Extend Key National Security Provisions

While it has been nearly ten years since the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001, the threat of future attacks on our country remains high. On Thursday, Congressman Miller supported legislation passed by the House to extend through June 1, 2015 several provisions that strike a delicate balance between enhancing the ability of the intelligence community to gather foreign intelligence on American soil, while preserving Americans' fundamental rights and freedoms. One provision amends the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) to broaden the type of records law enforcement may access as part of a national security investigation. In order to obtain these items, the government must obtain approval from a federal judge. Another provision originally authorized by the PATRIOT Act permits the government, upon receiving the approval of a FISA court, to use "roving wiretaps" to conduct surveillance on terrorist suspects on multiple communications devices. The "lone wolf" provision, which was originally authorized under a 2004 intelligence law, permits intelligence officials to gather intelligence on non-U.S. citizens with suspected ties to terrorism but who cannot be immediately tied to a terrorist group. As our nation continues the fight against terrorism, Congressman Miller will continue to work to protect our nation from those who are determined to do us harm while safeguarding our cherished liberties.

Honoring and Remembering America's Fallen

This upcoming Monday, May 29th, marks Memorial Day, a time when we remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. All Americans, as well as millions of people around the world, owe their freedom to the courage, service, and sacrifice of the brave men and women who dedicated their lives to promoting peace, stability, and democracy worldwide. They are a continuation of the long, proud tradition of American military service that stretches back through the centuries to our nation's founding. Men and women of this great country, who have enjoyed so many freedoms, must bear in mind that each and everyone one of us owes an incredible debt of gratitude that can never fully be repaid. As Memorial Day approaches, Congressman Miller joins all Americans in honoring those heroes who have died to keep our country free.

The Capitol Connection Newsletter is published at the end of every week in which Congress is in session. To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, please send an email to CapitolConnectionNewsletter@mail.house.gov or call (202) 225-3201.