

House Armed Services Committee

DEMOCRATS

Ike Skelton, Ranking Member

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Democrats Applaud Committee Support for Military Widows and Families

WASHINGTON D.C May 12.— Today the House Armed Services Committee enacted two high priority items for American troops and their families. After months of Democratic urging the Committee approved legislation to end the “Widow’s Tax” on the surviving spouses of military retirees and to eliminate the cap on the popular Military Housing Privatization Initiative.

“I am pleased that after months of pressing these important issues, the committee agreed to make our nation’s servicemen and women a top priority,” said Armed Services Ranking Member, Ike Skelton (MO). “We have been working these issues for a long time, and the families and widows of the men and women who have fought for our country understand the importance of the efforts we have made on their behalf.”

As it currently stands, when a military widow reaches the age of 62, her spousal survivor benefits drop from 55% of her spouse’s retired pay to 35%. Democrats in the House of Representatives have sent many letters to the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee declaring their support to end this Widow’s Tax. “We are pleased to see that the committee provided the funding to phase in an end to this tax,” stated Rep. Vic Snyder (AR).

“The surviving spouses of our military servicemen and women deserve to receive the full benefits that their spouses spent years paying for,” said Representative John Larson (CT). “Our ongoing efforts to support our military and correct this problem have finally paid off.”

“By agreeing to eliminate the spending cap on the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, the leadership of the House Armed Services Committee effectively reinforced the Democratic idea that it is more than just airplanes and weapons systems that make our military great—it is also the families that provide the support to our troops at home,” commented Representative Solomon Ortiz.

“Over 50,000 military families will now be able to get new, decent homes because Democrats pushed to eliminate the spending cap that had threatened to cut off the necessary funding for these projects,” said Representative Susan Davis (CA).

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