

May 14, 2009 - House Passes Supplemental Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced today that the House of Representatives has passed the fiscal year 2009 Supplemental Appropriations bill by a vote of 368-60.

The \$96.7 billion supplemental bill provides funding to support ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, international and humanitarian assistance, and pandemic flu response.

"This is a completely bipartisan bill, and it provides the resources and capabilities needed for our troops in the field and our military families here at home," said Murtha.

The fiscal year 2009 Defense Appropriations bill, which passed last year, provided \$72 million to compensate service members currently held under stop-loss orders. The supplemental appropriations bill includes \$734.4 million to provide over 170,000 service members who have had their enlistments involuntarily extended since September 11, 2001 with \$500 per month for every month they were held under stop-loss orders.

"I have said repeatedly that stop-loss is nothing more than a back-door draft, disrupting the lives of our troops and their families," added Murtha. "Last year we provided funds to compensate service members currently held under stop-loss orders, and I pledged to provide the funds to compensate the other 170,000 who have been involuntarily extended since September 11, 2001. This bill fulfills that pledge, and honors the commitment and sacrifice of our troops."

Funds within the defense portion of the supplemental appropriations bill include:

Improving Military Healthcare

- \$100 million, above the President's request, to develop alternative treatments for service members suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and psychological health issues resulting from deployments. Since 2001, there have been 42,600 diagnosed cases of PTSD and over 58,000 service members treated for TBI.

- \$68 million, above the President's request, for orthopedic and other trauma research, treatment and rehabilitation. Nearly two-thirds of injuries sustained in combat require orthopedic procedures or treatment, and amputations following battlefield injury now occur at twice the rate of previous conflicts.

Caring for Military Families

- \$739 million, \$125.1 million above the President's request, for family advocacy programs such as child care, special needs, counseling, family reintegration assistance and spouse career training.

- \$238 million for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, which will provide information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach programs to members of the Reserve and their families for the challenges of mobilization, deployment, and return to civilian life.

Equipment and Force Structure

- \$3.1 billion above the President's request for C-17 and C-130 aircraft necessary to support the increase of U.S. forces in Afghanistan and an 8,000 mile supply-line.

- \$4.8 billion, an increase of \$2.2 billion above the President's request, to produce 1,800 lightweight Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles to protect our forces and provide a vehicle suited to the terrain and poor roads in Afghanistan.

- \$243.6 million above the President's request to reset Bradley Fighting Vehicles damaged and/or worn-out in theater.

- \$1.3 billion, a decrease of \$150 million from the President's request, to confront the evolving threat from Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's).

- \$500 million above the President's request to reduce the backlog in procurement of National Guard and Reserve equipment.

Support for Afghanistan/Pakistani Forces

- \$3.6 billion as requested by the President to train, expand, and improve the capabilities of the Afghanistan security forces, including the Army and National Police.

- \$400 million for the Defense Department to develop counterinsurgency capabilities within the Pakistani Security forces in fiscal year 2009. Subsequent fiscal years this authority will transition to the Secretary of State.

Policy Provisions

- Guantanamo Bay Detainees - the bill eliminates \$50 million requested by the Administration to transfer existing detainees until the President develops and submits to the Congress a written plan regarding the disposition of each individual detained at Guantanamo. Once a plan is in place, the Committee will consider a reprogramming request from the Department of Defense for funding.

- Withdrawal Timelines from Iraq - the bill supports the President's plan to withdraw all U.S. forces by August 31, 2010 and all U.S. combat forces by December 31, 2011. The bill directs the Secretary of Defense to report quarterly on how U.S. military forces are complying with the President's timeline, how the Government of Iraq is assuming responsibility for reconciliation initiatives, and the roles and responsibilities of contractors remaining in Iraq as the U.S. mission evolves.

- Contracting - the bill supports the efforts of U.S. military leaders in Iraq to promote the hiring of Iraqi nationals instead of U.S. or third party nations to provide contract services.

- No permanent bases in Iraq - the bill includes a general provision that prohibits establishing permanent bases for U.S. military personnel in Iraq and prohibits U.S. control of Iraqi oil producing assets.

- No permanent bases in Afghanistan - the bill includes a general provision that prohibits establishing permanent bases for U.S. military

personnel in Afghanistan.

For additional information, please visit: <http://appropriations.house.gov/>

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