

Weekly Video Address: Defense Authorization Bill

Written by Grassley Press
Monday, 12 December 2011 13:53

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Advisory for Iowa Reporters and Editors

Friday, December 2, 2011

During his weekly video address, Senator Chuck Grassley discusses an amendment he cosponsored to give the National Guard a seat at the table when major decisions are made, including how Defense Department resources are allocated. During the debate to authorize Pentagon spending, Senator Grassley also cosponsored an amendment to the defense authorization bill to contain runaway spending on direct contractor salary reimbursements.

Click [here](#) for audio.

Here is the text of the address:

As part of a bill debated this week to authorize Pentagon spending, the Senate approved an amendment I cosponsored to give the National Guard a seat at the table when major decisions are made, including how Defense Department resources are allocated.

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I'm a member of the National Guard Caucus in the Senate, and this amendment will build on reforms achieved in 2008. The total force concept adopted by the Defense Department in 1970 made the Guard and Reserves integral to any extended campaign by U.S. forces, but the culture at the Pentagon has been slow to adopt the reality.

Last year, Iowa was ranked 15th in the nation for the percentage of our population serving in the National Guard. Recently, we welcomed home the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, which had more than 2,800 soldiers serving on combat duty in Afghanistan. It was the largest single unit deployment of the Iowa National Guard since World War II. It's time to give the Guard and Reserves support that's on par with that dedicated to active forces.

I cosponsored another amendment to the defense authorization bill to contain runaway spending on contractor salary reimbursements. A large portion of government contracts actually reimburse the contractors directly for costs, including the salaries of their employees. These cost-reimbursement type contracts are used extensively by the Defense Department. The amendment I introduced with Senator Barbara Boxer of California limits unreasonable expenditures under these types of contracts. We can't afford to waste increasingly limited defense dollars.

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