



July 13, 2023

Dear Members of Congress,

On behalf of Concerned Veterans for America (CVA) and our thousands of activists around the country, we urge you to support the following policy priorities as the House of Representatives begins floor consideration of amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

Congress should prioritize addressing the greatest threats to our national security while upholding its constitutional oversight obligations over national security decisions. Congress also needs to ensure it effectively leverages our limited defense resources to best position our troops for success while protecting the access to quality health care our veterans have earned when they come home.

CVA's Key NDAA Amendment Priorities:

Ukraine:

YES – [Davdison \(OH\), Floor #24](#) Requires the president, in coordination with the Secretary of State, to develop and submit a report to Congress containing a strategy for U.S. involvement in Ukraine within 90 days. The report discusses U.S. interests at stake in Ukraine and specific benchmark objectives to measure progress, a plan for facilitating a diplomatic pathway for a negotiated cessation of hostilities, and an assessment of the costs to the U.S. and Ukraine of the conflict continuing an additional one, five, or ten years.

CVA Position: Despite committing over \$113 billion in military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine in 2022 alone, the Biden administration has offered vague and sometimes contradictory accounts of U.S. policy objectives in its support for Ukraine. A clearer sense of the end-state we seek will lead to more meaningful debate about the nature of U.S. support, rather than continuing a policy of open-ended “blank check” support to Kyiv, regardless of the consequences for U.S. readiness or security.

Additional CVA NDAA Amendment Priorities:

Ukraine:

YES – [Steil \(WI\), Floor #75](#) Requires the Secretaries of State and Defense to provide quarterly briefings to Congressional defense committees on the status of weapons the United States has committed to sending to Ukraine, in addition to other regional allies who are in turn providing weapons to Ukraine.

CVA Position: In 2022 alone, Congress authorized over \$113 billion in military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Amid multiple “accounting errors” over the value of committed weapons and inventory oversight issues highlighted as recently as June by the DoD Inspector General, additional transparency on the contents of military aid tranches is warranted.

Defense Spending:

YES – [Bowman \(NY\), Floor #62](#) Requires public disclosure about the cost of the United States’ overseas military footprint and operations.

CVA Position: This amendment would provide much-needed transparency about the ongoing costs of our military deployments and operations overseas. A clearer understanding of the way our force posture and strategy determine our defense costs is essential for being able to appropriately prioritize commitments which advance vital U.S. interests.

YES – [Biggs \(AZ\), Floor #54](#) Requires the DoD to perform an audit. Departments and agencies that fail to comply receive a 0.5% budget cut.

CVA Position: National defense is the federal government’s first responsibility to its citizens, and as the largest recipient of the federal discretionary spending budget, the DoD accounting for its spending is essential. Past DoD audits have historically uncovered more opportunities for savings than they have cost, but real accountability needs to be in place for defense agencies failing or not completing audits.

Iraq:

YES – [Luttrell \(TX\), Floor #65](#) Requires a report on U.S. assistance to Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces, and whether any of those funds have benefitted any member of a foreign terrorist organization.

CVA Position: As recently as 2021, the lead Inspector General report on the status of Operation Inherent Resolve noted that “Iran and Iran-aligned militias continue to have strong ties to some elements of Iraq’s traditional security forces.” The Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) are one such group of Iranian-backed militias that were part of the campaign against ISIS’ caliphate but are an instrument of Iranian influence within Iraq today. Congress should be informed on whether our ongoing train-and-equip mission is benefitting this group or members of designated foreign terrorist organizations.

NATO:

YES – [Roy \(TX\), Floor #51](#) Expresses sense of Congress that the United States should not continue to subsidize NATO member countries who choose not to invest in their own defense by meeting the 2014 Wales Summit Spending Benchmark.

CVA Position: At the Wales NATO Summit in 2014, member states collectively pledged to spend 2% or more of their GDPs on their national defense within a decade. In 2023 only 10 of 29 other alliance members are meeting their 2% targets just a year from the Wales Pledge deadline. Congress should send a signal that burden-sharing is a priority Americans expect our wealthy European allies to take seriously ahead of next year’s NATO summit in Washington.

Sincerely,



Russ Duerstine

Executive Director | Concerned Veterans for America