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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | May 26, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Files Priorities to NDAA to Support Service Members and Veterans**    **(Washington, DC)** – Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller issued the following statement after filing several amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017. All of the amendments aim specifically to support service members and veterans across the country.    “With over 300,000 veterans calling Nevada home, in addition to my seat on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, it should come as no surprise my attention continues to be focused on improving the health care experience for our nation’s veterans. These amendments also seek to utilize technology to ensure deployed service members can stay in touch with loved ones. Finally, it is imperative members of the Armed Services receive the necessary skills to transition into civilian life once their years of service have concluded. These are all top priorities I look forward to advancing in this year’s NDAA,” said **Senator Dean Heller**.    **BACKGROUND:**    **Heller Amendment #4232 Encouraging DOD to Improve Internet Access for Deployed Service Members**           **Background:** This amendment encourages the DOD to enter into contracts with third party vendors to provide free access to wireless high-speed Internet to all members of the Armed Forces who are deployed overseas at any United States military facility.    **Heller Amendment #4233 on Transitioning Service Member Job Training Initiatives**           **Background:** This amendment requires a report on the success and potential improvements to the Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships and Skillbridge Initiatives (JTEST-AI) for service members who are being separated from the Armed Services. The DOD SkillBridge initiative promotes a smooth transition by allowing service members meeting certain qualifications to participate in civilian job and employment training, including apprenticeships and internships. As service members transition into civilian life, one of the challenges is finding high quality employment opportunities. The Skillbridge Initiative gets a jump start on this process by ensuring service members’ opportunities are generated even before they have left service.    **Heller Amendment #4234 on the Status of Concealed-Carry on U.S. Military Bases**           **Background:** Last year, Senator Heller [championed](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=D1F10BC9-798B-4EB2-9ED9-9184DAE1ED0B#_blank) a provision in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (Sec. 526 of Public Law 114-92) to establish a process for commanders to allow service members to carry a personal firearm on base for protection. This amendment would require a report on what process the Department of Defense (DOD) has established, the status of implementation of this process, and a list which bases are currently utilizing this process.    **Heller Amendment #4235 to Expand Space-A Travel to 100 percent disabled veterans**  **Co-Lead:** Senator Jon Tester (D-MT)           **Background:** Space-A travel is a means of travel by which retired members of the armed forces are permitted to travel on military aircraft when there is extra space. When mission and cargo loads allow, there are often open seats for extra passengers. Several different groups can travel aboard military aircraft on a Space-A basis. Unfortunately, disabled veterans who have a service-connected permanent disability rated as 100 percent cannot travel on military flights unless they are military retirees. This amendment would authorize veterans who have a service-connected, permanent disability rated as 100 percent to travel on Space-A.    **Heller Amendment #4257 on Completion of the Interoperable Electronic Health Record**  **Co-Lead:** Senator Bob Casey (D-PA)           **Background:** This amendment requires that by September 30, 2017, the DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) meet the Government Accountability Offices (GAO’s) 2014 recommendations on completing an iEHR. The amendment would also require an update within six months on progress toward completing any action items that are not considered addressed by GAO. As Co-Chairs of the VA Backlog Working Group, Senators Heller and Casey have fought to ensure an iEHR comes to fruition so that veterans are able to have a complete and accurate record when applying for disability claims, as well as a paperless record that will ensure a faster disability claims process at the VA.    ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |