

## **HASC Member Day 2018**

Thank you Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith for this opportunity to share with the House Armed Services Committee some key priorities from Illinois's Tenth Congressional District.

My district is the proud home of many military families, active duty, reservists and veterans. As well, Naval Station Great Lakes in North Chicago, through which every new Navy recruit passes, is in my district and is central to our local community. We appreciate your work on the annual National

Defense Authorization Act, which is important both for our national security and local communities.

**I first respectfully request** that you again include language addressing the opioid crisis. Our men and women in uniform are not immune from the opioid epidemic ravaging the country. In fact, the National Institute of Health reports rates of prescription opioid misuse are higher among service members than among civilians due to the use of these drugs to treat the symptoms of PTSD and chronic pain

Last year, an amendment I offered to set continuing education requirements for Department of Defense doctors who prescribe opioids was included in the

House-passed version of the NDAA. Unfortunately, it was not included in the final bill. Including this provision would ensure our military doctors are up-to-date on the latest best practices in preventing overprescribing and treating misuse.

**Second**, I urge the committee to continue to support a critical joint counter-tunnel defense program undertaken with our ally Israel. These sophisticated subterranean tunnels are a major strategic threat for Israel, and are used by terrorist networks to stockpile weapons and launch deadly attacks.

Sustained joint cooperation to counter these tunnels both helps protect Israel and yields technological

benefits for American efforts to secure our own borders and in the fight against global terrorism. I urge the Committee to again authorize the program, which was appropriated \$47.5 million in the recently passed FY 18 omnibus.

**Finally**, I urge the Committee to address the issue of delayed promotions for men and women serving in the U.S. National Guard. This issue was brought to my attention by a constituent who waited nearly a year for federal recognition of their promotion. A recent poll of members by the National Guard Association of the U.S. found nearly half of respondents said it took more than 195 days to

receive a promotion, which is longer than the timeline set out by the National Guard. I ask the Committee to urge the National Guard to address this issue to ensure promotions are granted in a more efficient manner, while still maintaining necessary oversight. Thank you for your time and consideration of these matters.