

## **Amendment to H.R. 7900**

### **National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023**

#### **Offered by: Mr. Jackson of Texas**

In the appropriate place in the report to accompany H.R. 7900, insert the following new Directive Report Language:

##### **Discontinue Taxpayer Funds Directed at Perceived Extremism**

The committee notes that beginning in January of 2021, the Department of Defense began focusing significant attention and resources on perceived extremism within the ranks of the military. On February 5, 2021, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin released a memorandum mandating a service-wide stand-down within 60 days for discussion and education on extremism in the military. On April 9, 2021, Secretary Austin established the Countering Extremist Activity Working Group (CEAWG) to oversee the implementation of the immediate actions and formation of additional and long-term recommendations to address perceived extremism in the ranks. From April to December of 2021, the Department of Defense CEAWG compiled findings from internal and external subject matter experts and found that, “[t]he available data generally shows that cases of prohibited extremist activity among service members was rare,” at just 100 cases.

On January 6, 2022, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff detailed the number of hours and amount of taxpayer dollars that were spent on fighting this alleged extremism in the ranks. Chairman Milley’s letter detailed that there were 5,359,311 hours spent on the extremism stand down, or roughly 2 hours per service member in a total force of 2.46 million, including reservists. Furthermore, it detailed that over half a million dollars was spent on the stand down, which does not include the cost of the CEAWG compiling the report.

The committee believes that the vast majority of service members serve with honor and distinction. Unfortunately, the narrative being created surrounding systemic extremism in the military besmirches our men and women in uniform. The committee believes that when an extremist activity does in fact occur, it must be dealt with swiftly and appropriately; however, the case incident rate does not warrant a Department-wide effort on the issue. In light of the findings by Secretary Austin’s CEAWG, the committee believes that spending additional time and resources to combat exceptionally rare instances of extremism in the military is an inappropriate use of taxpayer funds and should be discontinued by the Department of Defense immediately. As such, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than January 31,

2023, on the amount of time and money that the Department of Defense used in the previous year to investigate and fight the alleged extremism.