

Urges House Conferees to Support “Shaheen Amendment” in Final NDAA

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Co-chair of the Congressional Pro-Choice Caucus, today applauded the Senate’s strong support for improving servicewomen’s access to reproductive healthcare.

Today, the Senate passed the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2013 (NDAA). The legislation includes an amendment authored by Senator Shaheen (D-NH) that would greatly improve the ability of servicewomen to access safe, secure and affordable reproductive health services. Slaughter has authored similar legislation, the MARCH for Military Women Act, in the House.

“I’m pleased that my colleagues in the Senate have stood up for the rights of servicewoman in our armed forces,” said Slaughter. “We now have a chance to grant our nation’s servicewomen the same rights as every other American woman whom they serve to protect. As this year’s NDAA heads to conference, I strongly urge House conferees to support inclusion of the Shaheen Amendment in final text of the bill.”

Like the MARCH for Military Women Act, the Shaheen Amendment would finally provide women in the military with the same rights to reproductive health services as the civilian women whom they serve to protect. Currently, the health coverage provided to servicewomen does not cover abortion, even in the case of rape or incest. Estimates are that 300 women in the military become pregnant by a rape each year. In addition, servicewomen are currently barred from paying for abortions with their own money while on overseas military bases - forcing them to look for independent or local services in countries with rudimentary healthcare systems, such as Afghanistan – adding to the trauma they may have already faced from a sexual assault.

The Shaheen Amendment would allow the Department of Defense to provide abortion services to servicewomen at military facilities around the world, and would cover abortions in cases where pregnancy is the result of incest or rape.

[For more on Slaughter’s work to provide safe, secure and affordable reproductive healthcare to](#)

[women in uniform, click here.](#)