
May 22, 2008 - Rep. Slaughter Hails Passage of Groundbreaking Sexual Violence Protections

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Rep. Slaughter Hails Passage of
Groundbreaking Sexual Violence Protections For DoD Contractors

First Legislation Addressing
Sexual Violence Among U.S.
Contractors To Pass Either House or Senate

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules, is pleased to announce the passage of an amendment she authored, establishing better protections for victims of sexual violence working for U.S. companies contracted by the Department of Defense supporting missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. This amendment was included as part of H.R. 5658, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

The passage of Rep. Slaughter's amendment marks the first time legislation addressing sexual violence among U.S. contractors passed either the House or Senate.

The

legislation requires contractors, like KBR, to report crimes committed by and against their employees to the Defense Department, as well as, make the information publicly available. Further, DoD contractors must provide psychological and medical assistance to victims of sexual assault.

"Brutal sexual assaults among U.S.

contractors serving overseas are both appalling and chillingly commonplace," said Rep. Slaughter. "For far too long an environment condoning and even encouraging violence against women has been allowed to fester within companies contracted by the Defense Department, like KBR."

The horrific case of Jamie Leigh Jones, a former KBR employee who was brutally gang-raped by fellow employees in Baghdad has brought national attention to the far too common occurrences of sexual violence among U.S. contractors serving overseas.

"This legislation makes it no longer acceptable or legal to sweep the heart wrenching stories of vicious sexual violence under the rug," continued Slaughter. "From now on, all companies taking advantage of massive Defense contracts will be required to address the aftermath of assault, including the medical and psychological needs of victims."

H.R. 5658, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 authorizes \$531.4 billion for defense and national security programs in the coming fiscal year.

Rep. Slaughter's amendment is co-sponsored by Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX).

BACKGROUND ON SLAUGHTER'S AMENDMENT

The amendment specifies that the Secretary of Defense must develop specific requirements regarding acts of sexual violence perpetrated by or against U.S. contractor personnel employed by the Department of Defense in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Within 90 days of the legislation's enactment, the DoD Secretary must establish:

- a requirement for defense contractors to report all instances of sexual violence perpetrated by or against contractor personnel;

- a requirement for defense contractors to provide for victim and witness safety, as well as, medical assistance;

- a requirement that every DoD contractor provide all employees critical

information on how and where to report offenses and where victims can seek assistance.

Furthermore, the Secretary of Defense must make public a numerical accounting of offenses, including acts of sexual violence, on a quarterly basis.

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