

**□ *The Walz legislation has the support of the Military Officers Association of America and the VFW***

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Walz announced that bipartisan legislation he authored to protect veterans jobs unanimously passed the Veterans Affairs Committee and is headed to the House floor in the near future.

The bipartisan legislation requires the Transportation Security Administration to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA guarantees that employees in both the public and private sector who are called to active duty can keep their jobs when they come home.

"The unemployment rate among our service members is already far too high. Protecting the jobs they already have should be a top priority," said Walz, who is a 24 year veteran of the Army National Guard. "The TSA employs thousands of veterans, reservists and members of the National Guard who should not have to worry about losing their jobs when called to active duty. They have earned and deserve this simple protection. We have USERRA protections in place for a reason, and this bill will ensure that veterans working for TSA are protected as they would be in any other position."

The bill also has the support of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). VADM Norb Ryan, USN (ret.), President of the MOAA, applauded the introduction of the Reemployment Rights bill for National Guard and Reserve members employed by the Transportation Security Agency.

"It's critical for the Federal government to be seen as a model employer for our Operational Guard and Reserve warriors, especially because the nation relies on them more than ever to help defend our nation," said Ryan. "MOAA strongly supports enactment of this legislation that will ensure all Reservists who work for the Federal government are equally protected under the USERRA."

Raymond Kelley, Legislative Director of the VFW, said, "This much needed change in TSA

policy sets a new standard in the federal government's full support of our Veterans. The VFW was adamant about working towards this legislative fix after helping to discovering this loophole. This fix will not only give our service members working at TSA the reemployment rights they have earned but also ensure TSA has unfettered access to the best and brightest our military has to offer. This is the right thing to do, and the VFW fully supports all efforts to honor these men and women by applying USERRA protections to TSA."

Currently, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) says it complies with USERRA voluntarily. However, at least two Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) have tried and failed to appeal TSA actions under USERRA. Both the Office of Special Counsel and Merit Systems Protection Board ruled TSOs were barred from USERRA coverage under the Aviation and Transportation Security Act.

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