



Written by [David Kelly](#) on July 18, 2023

Senate to Review Hundreds of Add-ons to NDAA Legislation

The U.S. Senate will be quite busy over the next two weeks as they negotiate the nearly 670 proposed [amendments](#) to the chamber's version of the fiscal year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

No one knows for sure which amendments will reach the Senate floor for debate, but one can expect several key amendments on the Department of Defense's (DOD) abortion travel policy. That policy was targeted in the House version of the NDAA that passed last Friday covering "woke" policies such as diversity, equity, and inclusion; critical race theory; and transgender healthcare.



The Epoch Times reported:

Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) on July 13 filed a [proposed amendment](#) that seeks to terminate DOD's abortion travel policy as well as any provision of "allowances to obtain abortion" outside normal leave policies and prohibit the use of medical convalescent leave to obtain abortions.

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), on July 12, submitted a [proposed amendment](#) calling for termination of the October 2022 DOD abortion travel policy "not later than seven days after the date of the enactment" of the NDAA.

In opposition to the Republican amendments, Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) submitted an [amendment](#) to the NDAA titled the Protecting Service Members and Military Families' Access to Reproductive Care Act of 2023. The bill provides for the granting of an administrative absence at the request of a member of the Armed Forces for purposes of receiving non-covered reproductive healthcare (including an abortion or assisted reproductive technology) or to accompany a spouse or other dependent who receives non-covered reproductive health care. It will also cover travel-related expenses.

Most of the amendments introduced authorize appropriations for military activities of the DOD, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy (DOE) and so forth, with a plethora of add-ons to the estimated \$886.3 billion Fiscal Year 2024 NDAA.

Here are a few additional key amendments:

Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) introduced 31 amendments, including [one](#) that restricts the Senate from proceeding with the "consideration of any resolution advising and consenting to the ratification of a treaty or other agreement to admit Ukraine to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] until the



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Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense certify to Congress that Ukraine has settled any international dispute.”

Lee also submitted an amendment, as [The Epoch Times](#) notes, “prohibiting the president from signing ‘any agreement, communique, or other document with the official signature of the United States that provides long-term security guarantees for Ukraine,’ capping the president and Pentagon’s ‘drawdown capacity’ on the Congressional fund created to funnel support to Ukraine, the probation of force against the Russian Federation without Congressional approval, and a requirement for the DOD to annually produce a ‘report on the contributions of allies to the common defense.’”

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) proposed a NDAA amendment that seeks “remedies” for those discharged from the military in “adverse action” over the DOD’s Covid-19 mandate. The bill’s [text](#) states: “The Secretary of Defense may not take any adverse action against a covered member based solely on the refusal of such member to receive a vaccine for COVID-19.”

One [amendment](#) that hopefully will make it to the Senate floor for debate was submitted by Senator Rick Scott (R-Fla.) and asks the DOD to “cease all diversity, equity, and inclusion instruction until the Secretary of Defense submits to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives all curricular, instructional, and guided discussion materials used by any teacher or instructor for the purposes of diversity, equity, and inclusion instruction within the Department, including any materials used in the stand-down to discuss extremism in the ranks.”

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) introduced an [amendment](#), as reported by the Times, “to clarify who can declare war and who can’t. Paul’s proposal maintains that ‘Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty [NATO] does not supersede the constitutional requirement that Congress declare war before the United States engages in war.’”

With the plethora of prospective NDAA amendments facing an unknown future, it will be interesting to see which ones make the floor for debate. The Senate and House will need to work out any differences in the legislation before coming to an agreement that both chambers can approve by the beginning of the new fiscal year on October 1.



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