

special, or runoff) in which the Member is a candidate.

6.1.2 *Uncontested candidate.* When the Senate Rules Committee receives written certification from the appropriate state official that the Member's candidacy may not be contested under state law, that candidate is uncontested. A Member running for re-election in a state that permits write-in votes for the Member's election shall be considered a contested candidate and is subject to the restrictions in this section.

6.1.3 *Mass communication.* Means an electronic communication including, but not limited to, posting to an Official Website, automated telephone calls for events such as Tele-Town Halls, and electronic mail transmission of substantially identical content to 500 or more recipients.

6.2 During the moratorium period, no Member office may seek constituent input or inquiries (such as online petitions or opinion polls) via a mass communication using Senate Internet Services unless the Member is an uncontested candidate. Nor shall a Member do so on behalf of another Member unless the other Member is an uncontested candidate.

6.3 No Member office may transmit an unsolicited mass communication during the moratorium period unless the Member is an uncontested candidate. A mass communication to a subscriber list or a post on an Official Website available to voluntary followers is deemed to be solicited and is therefore permitted during the moratorium period (subject to the limitations of 6.2).

6.4 Communications in the normal course of Senate official business such as in direct response to a constituent, another Member of Congress, or a federal, state or local government official and a news release to the communications media are permitted during the moratorium period.

6.5 A Member subject to the restrictions in this section shall display the following statement on the Member's Official Senate Website homepage: "Pursuant to Senate Policy, petitions, opinion polls and unsolicited mass electronic communications cannot be initiated by this office for the 60-day period immediately before the date of a primary or general election. Subscribers currently receiving electronic communications from this office who wish to unsubscribe may do so here (link)." The words "Senate Policy" must be hypertext linked to these rules displayed on the Member's home page.

6.6 A Member may not use another Senate office such as a Senate committee to circumvent these Rules.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, on the eve of Veterans Day and the 240th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps, I rise to speak about the fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA.

This legislation has taken a circuitous route to get to where it is today. The President correctly vetoed the original bill as it was a flawed product. It was flawed in the sense that it unfairly exempted the defense budget from the same draconian budget caps on nondefense programs by utilizing the overseas contingency operations, OCO. While this approach would have funded the defense bill, it neglected our economic security and left unaddressed important national priorities including law enforcement, education, transpor-

tation and community development, and medical research. A strong economy and strong communities are the backbone of our national security, and we should not divide our country into two Americas—defense on one side and everyone else on the other. That is not the way Congress should be doing business, and that is why our military leaders, led by Secretary of Defense Carter, opposed the earlier versions of this year's NDAA.

The bill, which we passed 91-3 today, comes after passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act, which provides balanced relief from cuts to ensure we have a strong defense and a strong economy. I supported this revised bill. While it was not a perfect bill, it is the result of a bipartisan compromise by the Congress. The fiscal year 2016 NDAA provides the men and women of our Armed Forces with the resources and equipment they need to defend our Nation and protect its interests.

I commend Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for their leadership on the Senate Armed Services Committee in creating and shepherding this vital legislation through this chamber. The outstanding and bipartisan efforts of committee members will allow the defense authorization bill to become law for the 54th consecutive year.

I am proud to serve alongside Chairman WICKER as ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee and want to thank him for leading the subcommittee which helps ensure that our Navy and Marine Corps forces are trained and equipped to conduct the vital missions they are tasked to complete. A strong and prepared Navy and Marines is absolutely essential to our national security strategies in the Asia-Pacific region, and this bill supports those efforts.

This NDAA includes a number of provisions that reaffirm the importance of the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific; support the men and women who serve in our military and the Hawaii National Guard; invest in Hawaii's military bases, schools, and facilities and those that assess the ballistic missile capabilities of rouge nations and the current capacity to defend Hawaii against missile threats.

Our support of the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific is critical. Maintenance of stability in this region cannot be underestimated. Continued engagement and partnership with our friends and allies in the region is invaluable. By extending the State Partnership Program, we not only hone the capabilities and readiness of our National Guard, but we gain the dual benefit of enhancing our partnerships and the capacity of regional neighbors.

However, I do have some concerns with the final bill that I intend to work on going forward.

While my colleagues and I continue to work to reduce redundancy and increase efficiencies within our military, I would have serious concerns if across-

the-board reductions to headquarters operations were made by the Department of Defense implementing this bill. In talking with military commanders, I know that cuts at command headquarters to include U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, U.S. Army Pacific and Pacific Air Forces, which are all based in Hawaii, would impact our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

We need to ensure that any reductions are carefully thought out and take into account the assigned missions and right sizing of headquarters to adequately support the demands we place on our operational forces. I will closely monitor the Pentagon's implementation of these provisions going forward.

In addition, I want to ensure that the men and women of the Department who travel for extended periods of time on official business are reimbursed for food and lodging at appropriate levels. Last year the Department changed how these workers are reimbursed, and the bill passed today directs the Government Accountability Office, GAO, to review the issue and report back to Congress. I will be tracking the GAO report on this important issue, as well as the Department's implementation of their extended Temporary Travel Duty, TDY, policy.

While the passage of this legislation is critical, it still contains misguided provisions I have long disagreed with and that negatively affect our security, as well as the men and women who defend this Nation. An area I strongly disagree with is in regard to the restrictions on transferring prisoners from Guantanamo Bay. These harm our security interests and continue to undermine our leadership on human rights. We need to work towards a solution to close this facility.

Despite these concerns, this legislation is a product of a sincere bipartisan and bicameral effort to provide the men and women of our military the tools and resources it needs to defend our great Nation.

OBSERVING VETERANS DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate Veterans Day and to thank all those who have served our country for their extraordinary bravery and sacrifice.

As many of my colleagues know, President Woodrow Wilson first established this holiday—originally known as Armistice Day—on November 11, 1919, to honor the brave Americans who fought and died in World War I. After the end of World War II, Armistice Day was expanded to honor all veterans of our military services, and the holiday's name was changed to Veterans Day.

My home State of Maryland has a long and proud military tradition dating to the first militiamen who set foot in the Maryland Colony in 1634; to the