Rep. Louise M. Slaughter

Ranking Member, House Committee on Rules

Representing New York’s 25th District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT

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***Press Release***

Slaughter Successfully Leads Effort in House to Fully Fund Military Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office

Defense Funding Bill Contains More Than $24 Million for SAPRO

WASHINGTON — Today, Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY), a leading advocate for preventing sexual assault in the military, announced that she successfully lobbied House appropriators to fully fund the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) at the level of $24 million for Fiscal Year 2015. The funding bill, which contains $275 million in total for efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assault, passed the House this afternoon.

“The scourge of sexual assault in our military is a shameful stain on the world’s greatest fighting force, and that’s why I fought so hard to ensure full funding for the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office in this bill,” Rep. Slaughter said. “Our brave young men and women should be able to serve their country without having to worry about being assaulted by their fellow service members, and those who have survived sexual assault deserve the best treatment that we can offer.”

Rep. Slaughter, a longtime champion of sexual assault prevention in the military, made headlines last year when her inquiries prompted the DoD to pull an offensive Air Force brochure that instructed victims “it may be advisable to submit than to resist.” Slaughter’s inquiries prompted the DoD to conduct a full review of all SAPRO materials, and was even addressed on the hit show “House of Cards”:

(Rep. Slaughter’s letter gets ‘House of Cards’ shoutout)

In 2012, Rep. Slaughter authored an amendment included in the FY 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), requiring the Department of Defense to educate service members about the option to apply for the correction of military records when a member experiences any retaliatory personnel action, such as a loss of rank, for reporting sexual assault or sexual harassment. In 2011, Slaughter authored a provision included in the FY 2012 NDAA that allows sexual assault victims to promptly transfer from the base of their superior officers, and to appeal to the next highest-ranking official if denied a transfer by their direct superior. This resulted in 99 percent of expedited transfer requests being approved, according to a SAPRO report which was released later that year.
April 2, 2014

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Chairman  Ranking Member
Defense Subcommittee  Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations  Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515  Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Visclosky:

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) is tasked with implementing a comprehensive policy to ensure the safety, dignity and well being of all members of the armed forces by eradicating military sexual assault. Promising strides towards this goal have been made in recent years, but almost every day another story in the news reminds us that a great deal of work remains to be done.

The responsibility of the SAPRO is complex and multifaceted. They focus on preventing sexual assault through education and training campaigns at all levels, improving victims’ access to services and the quality of those services received, and proper handling and resolution of a sexual assault case. Each of these efforts, as well as an overall focus on changing the culture of the military, is an integral part in addressing a systemic problem.

For these reasons, and for the protection and safety of all members of our military, we respectfully request that the Defense Subcommittee provide funding of at least $24,165,000 for the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office at the Department of Defense.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter  Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress  Member of Congress

Michael Turner
Member of Congress