

As lawmakers prepare to consider [S. 2296](#), the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026*, NTU is urging lawmakers to vote in the best interests of taxpayers on the following amendments to the underlying bill. We believe these amendments would have significant implications for taxpayers, limited government, or free market principles:

### **Support**

**Amendment [#3792](#) from Senator Risch (R-ID):** This amendment would create an Office of Inspector General for Foreign Assistance under the State Department. This allows for independent and objective audits of foreign assistance programs at State, where many were relocated when USAID was shut down, including humanitarian assistance, foreign development assistance, and related emergency assistance. Strong IG's can help ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent more wisely at agencies, and this is especially true when it comes to foreign aid.

**Amendment [#3790](#) from Senators Sanders (D-VT) and Grassley (R-IA):** This bipartisan amendment would automatically reduce spending at the Department of Defense if it does not complete a full audit of its operations by the end of each calendar year. DoD has persistently failed to complete successful audits of its operations. We understand that the agency is huge and uniquely challenging to audit, but that is not a good enough reason to simply not complete a full audit. This amendment would force what should obviously happen to finally occur, under threat of an automatic 2% cut in appropriated funds.

**Amendment [#3702](#) from Senator Kennedy (R-LA):** This amendment would improve coordination on the Do Not Pay system run by the Social Security Administration between federal and state governments. This should help improve data in the system, lower the number of improper payments made by the federal government, and help limit the possibility of people who are still alive from being inadvertently listed as deceased.

**Amendments [#3475](#), [#3472](#), [#3471](#), and [#3470](#) from Senator Lankford (R-OK):** These are a series of amendments all aimed towards improving transparency and accountability at federal agencies. Amendment #3475 would require "Clarity Statements" from agencies which would provide clearer information to the public about requirements and policies, while #3472 would require agency leaders to create multiyear financial management plans. #3471 would require clearer agency reporting of improper payments and #3470 directs OMB to coordinate with agencies to improve financial reporting systems designed to limit the prevalence of improper payments.

**Amendment [#3318](#) from Senator Lee (R-UT):** This amendment would help save taxpayer dollars by allowing for the construction of U.S. Coast Guard vessels on a limited basis in the shipyards of close defense allies, if building the ships there would save money.

**Amendment [#3309](#) from Senator Lee (R-UT):** This amendment would require congressional approval for the use of any presidential drawdown authority with a total value of over \$100 million dollars. This would allow for improved oversight of these actions, likely lowering costs for taxpayers.

**Amendments [#3301](#) and [#3300](#) by Senators Lee (R-UT) and Warren (D-MA):** These amendments would limit the use of unfunded priorities lists (UPLs) at the Department of Defense, where service

branch leaders ask Congress for funding additions they sought for defense authorizations and appropriations beyond the president's budget request, undermining sound budgeting practices.

**Amendment [#3286](#) by Senators Moran (R-KS) and King (I-ME):** This amendment would make significant improvements to the acquisitions programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs, while also improving cost assessment and program evaluation at the agency. The VA is the fastest growing agency in the federal government, with yearly spending increases that regularly outpace inflation. This amendment should help slow down these spending increases and save taxpayer dollars.

**Amendment [#3282](#) by Senators Durbin (D-IL), Boozman (R-AR), and Cassidy (R-LA):** This amendment would create a comprehensive strategy for increasing investment, trade, and development in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, with a goal of increasing American exports to these regions by 200% over 10 years.

**Amendment [#3104](#) by Senator Scott (R-SC):** This amendment would limit the use of "reputational risk" by financial institutions in making credit and banking decisions, with the goal of ending discriminatory actions against individuals who are denied access to financial services due to their political actions or beliefs.

**Amendment [#3262](#) by Senator Tuberville (R-AL):** This amendment would repeal the Corporate Transparency Act, protecting small business owners from burdensome federal regulations that require them to divulge private information.

### **Oppose**

**Amendment [#3726](#) from Senators Peters (D-MI) and Young (R-IN):** This amendment would reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, at a cost of \$500 million a year through 2031. This is a significant sum of money that merits more thorough review than can be achieved through the NDAA process. In an era of tight federal budgets, projects like this should be reviewed more closely.

**Amendment [#3817](#) from Senator Sheehy (R-MT):** This amendment would make every airport in the country a "defense asset," and block any from being closed, unless specifically approved by Congress. This is particularly problematic in an era of limited federal resources and high budget deficits.

**Amendment [#3786](#) from Senator Kaine (D-VA):** This amendment would require DoD to buy only American-made disposable food service products, increasing costs for taxpayers.

**Amendment [#3642](#) from Senator Hoeven (R-OH):** This amendment would establish a program to pay tuition and educational costs for members of the Air National Guard. However worthy these individuals may be, the costs in this amendment are not offset elsewhere, increasing the federal deficit when the government has a debt level of over \$37 trillion.

**Amendment [#3465](#) by Senator Schiff (D-CA):** This amendment would require DoD to buy organic food products, passing these higher costs on to the taxpayer.

**Amendment [#3350](#) from Senator Collins (R-ME):** This amendment would require DoD to buy only 100% American-made combat boots for soldiers from only American sources, increasing costs for taxpayers.

**Amendment [#3332](#) from Senator Schiff (D-CA):** This amendment would tie the hands of the Defense Department, requiring it to not limit or reduce the use of F-15 aircraft, or reduce the number of bases where they are located, without congressional approval.

**Amendment [#3328](#) from Senator Schiff (D-CA):** This amendment would create a loophole for veterans from work requirements to receive food stamps. Work requirements for able-bodied Americans to receive federal benefits are both good for taxpayers and for the recipients themselves, promoting improved self-worth and life outcomes.

**Amendment [#3287](#) from Senators Moran (R-KS) and Warnock (D-GA):** This amendment is one of many proposed expansions in veterans benefits for this year's NDAA. These proposed recipients (surviving spouses of veterans who remarry) seem worthy of consideration, but this amendment is not offset. In an era of large federal deficits, and with a U.S. debt load of over \$37 trillion, we cannot continue to create benefits that are not paid for.

**Amendments [#3277](#) and [#3274](#) from Senator Cruz (R-TX) and Cornyn (R-TX):** These amendments are two of many in the NDAA that attempt to require the Defense Department to keep programs that it does not want. In this case, the Senators want to keep "expeditionary combat aviation brigades" and "B-1 bomber aviation squadrons" from being cut from the Pentagon budget. This limits the ability of the DoD to focus resources on new projects that are better suited to the wars of the future, wasting taxpayer resources.

**Amendment [#3270](#) from Senators Klobuchar (D-MN) and Cruz (R-TX):** This amendment, in the name of improving privacy rights for candidates and members of Congress, would seriously limit the availability of public information about these individuals. While there have been cases of this sort of public information being abused by activists, who demonstrate outside of the home of public officials at odd hours and harass their family members, this serious limitation of public information limits the ability of the public and the media to assess the politicians who they are asked to vote for and report on.

**Amendment [#3249](#) from Senators Murkowski (R-AK) and Sullivan (R-AK):** This amendment is another one that attempts to require the Defense Department to keep or create programs that it does not want. In this case, the Senators want to force the Pentagon to create a new Special Forces unit to be based in their state.

**Amendment [#3155](#) by Senator Scott (R-FL):** This amendment would require the Defense Department to only purchase over the counter drugs for base commissaries that are made in America. This measure, if passed, would likely greatly increase costs for military service members and veterans, and also for all taxpayers.

**Amendment [#3151](#) by Senators Shaheen (D-NH) and Hassan (D-NH):** This amendment is one of many proposed expansions in veteran services for this year's NDAA. This proposal (requiring at least

one veterans hospital in every state) seems worthy of consideration, but is not offset. In an era of large federal deficits, we need the VA to carefully spend every dollar it receives and not tie its hands when it needs to make tough financial decisions.

**Amendment [#3064](#) by Senator Murphy (D-CT):** This amendment aims to significantly increase federal taxation on firearms. American households are facing increased inflation; there is no need for Congress to increase prices further.

**Amendment [#2968](#) by Senator Blumenthal (D-CT) with several other cosponsors:** This amendment is one of many proposed expansions in veteran benefits introduced for this year's NDAA. This proposal (allowing for full concurrent receipt of defense and veterans benefits) may seem worthy on the surface, but goes against the original design of both sets of benefits. Moreover, this proposal would be very expensive for taxpayers, with ballooning costs for years to come that are not paid for.

**Amendments [#2961](#) and [#2951](#) by Senator Rosen (D-NV):** This amendment is one of many proposed expansions in veteran benefits that have been offered. These proposals would presume the presence of toxic exposure to veterans who served on several bases in Nevada. Whatever merit this proposal may have, it should be reviewed by the Veterans Administration first before coming up for a vote in Congress. The potential costs to the taxpayers are simply too high to allow for quick approval as an NDAA amendment.

**Amendment [#2928](#) by Senator Hassan (D-NH):** This amendment is one of many proposed expansions in veteran benefits that have been offered. In this case, the spouses of disabled veterans would receive increased eligibility in the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program. Like the other proposed expansions in this year's NDAA, it is not paid for, and would increase federal deficits.

**Amendment [#3649](#) by Senators Hagerty (R-TN) and Alsobrooks (D-MD):** This amendment would increase transaction account insurance coverage at smaller banks. While it is meant to protect the funds of Main Street businesses from smaller bank failures, this will increase costs for the smaller banks, possibly causing some to close. There are better ways to protect the funds of Main Street firms, which should be addressed in regular order and not in the amendment process for a Pentagon authorization bill.

**Amendment [#3397](#) by Senator Fischer (R-NE) and several cosponsors:** This amendment would allow for the sale of gasoline composed of 15% ethanol content year-round. While the bill is framed as increasing consumer choice, 15% ethanol gas is more expensive to produce, and many cars are not even able to safely use it.