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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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Miller: “Do Not Use Veterans as Pawns in a Dangerous Political Game”

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, the Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Rep. Jeff Miller, issued the following statement on the latest tactic in the debt crisis debate:

“Taking care of America’s veterans has been, and always will be, one of this country’s highest priorities. Many questions have been raised recently regarding the debt crisis and what will happen to America’s veterans come August 2. As of today, the Administration has yet to provide clarity to these men and women. This is a serious situation and it requires a serious response.

Why would the President invite some of the largest Veterans Service Organizations to the White House under the guise of discussing the details of reaching the debt limit on August 2nd, and not assure them that veterans will continue to receive funding whether or not an agreement is reached? Why would the President not offer assurances to the men and women who wore this country’s uniform, but instead unapologetically attempt to use veterans as pawns in a dangerous political game?

Under the Budget Control Act of 2011 put forth by Speaker Boehner, and consistent with the ideals and priorities for veterans outlined in the House-passed budget resolution, veterans programs will continue to be adequately funded. These are the facts. Through the Budget Control Act, veterans will also continue to receive the best care and services possible from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

We have made great strides in meeting the needs of veterans of today, while keeping our promise to yesterday’s veterans. We must not be lured into turf battles, but instead rise above the political fray to fight for America’s wellbeing. Out of control spending is crippling our country, and we need to slow the growth of government and take responsibility for our bills. As we do this, our veterans deserve better than to be used as shields in political warfare. Instead, we have an obligation to work in a bipartisan manner to better serve veterans and their families. No one should disagree this is the least we owe these men and women.

As Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, I, and my colleagues, are committed to providing answers, which is why we are, and will continue to, provide our plans in writing for public review, while urging the Administration to ensure America’s veterans receive the benefits they have earned.”

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