

Subject: Reply from Senator John Boozman

Date: Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 10:55:40 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Senator John Boozman

To: Lasure, Sara (Boozman)

JOHN BOOZMAN

United States Senator *for* ARKANSAS



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Boozman Bulletin: Setting Priorities and Delivering Results

Restoring regular order to the appropriations process has allowed the Senate to approve funding bills in a manner that lets all members have a voice in determining how taxpayer dollars are spent. As chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee that determines the funding allocations for military construction projects and veterans' benefits, I worked closely with my colleagues to carefully [set priorities, make targeted investments and reduce waste while writing our bill](#). I was pleased that President Donald Trump [signed into law](#) our bipartisan legislation to fund construction of national defense facilities and family housing for our Armed Forces in addition to upholding our promises to our veterans by supporting their health care and benefits.



Boozman wrote legislation to fund critical veterans' programs that was signed into law by President Trump. The senator [urged his colleagues to approve the](#) bill before it was passed

by the Senate.

The bill includes a provision that requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to submit a departmental response plan to Congress that can be applied to all future cases of clinical disclosures, as well as provide recommendations about changes necessary to prevent incidents like the alleged misconduct that took place at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center.

It also contains \$14 million for improvements to the fuel system at Little Rock Air Force Base, in addition to a measure to move forward with improvements to the base's runway.

I am optimistic that the House will advance [legislation approved by the Senate last week](#) that will provide a pay raise to the men and women of our Armed Forces while funding critical military installations and programs in Arkansas.

Quick Takes:

- **Responding to the Opioid Epidemic:** Last week the Senate passed, with my support, comprehensive legislation to [address our nation's opioid crisis](#). The bill we passed provides law enforcement with additional tools to combat the spread of opioids, helps Americans struggling with addiction and expands research into non-addictive pain treatments. Arkansas was also recently awarded a [federal grant to support Community Health Centers](#) and their efforts to implement treatment, recovery and prevention methods to help fight this crisis.
- **Protecting our Homeland:** One of the top priorities of the federal government must be to [secure our border](#). I recently traveled to the U.S.-Mexico border to see first-hand the challenges that we face in controlling illegal immigration, human trafficking and drug smuggling. Visits like this help ensure that our policies and resource allocation meet the needs of the men and women working to secure our border. Our Border Patrol and air interdiction agents, ICE officers, field operations officers and Coast Guard men and women are on the frontline of this battle. I was grateful for the opportunity to show my appreciation for their sacrifice and hear how we can help them accomplish their mission and keep them safe.
- **Driving Down Prescription Drug Prices:** Last week I was pleased to support the [Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act](#), legislation passed by the Senate which will prevent health insurers and drug companies from masking the lowest possible cost of prescription drugs. The bill, which I cosponsored, takes on the health plans and pharmacy benefit management service providers that include "gag clauses" in contracts. This practice prohibits pharmacists from telling patients when a prescription drug would cost less if they paid out of pocket rather than using their health insurance.
- **Supporting Sportsmen and Wetlands Conservation:** I am honored to serve on the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission and be a [voice for Arkansas wetlands](#), which are extremely important to the Natural State's wildlife, tourism industry and economy. I was pleased to participate in my first meeting as a member of the commission and support preserving our lands.
- **Preventing Suicides and Treating the Mental Health Crisis:** September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This year, the reality that many Americans face serious crises of mental health and wellness has been impossible to overlook or ignore. Not only have several high-profile celebrities tragically taken their own lives, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found the suicide rate in Arkansas increased by about 37 percent from 1999 to 2016. We're [working at all levels of government](#) to help those at risk find hope and believe tomorrow is worth living for.

- **Recognizing Arkansas Veterans:** The 'Salute to Veterans' series honors the service and sacrifice of Arkansas veterans who served our nation in uniform. In the latest edition, I recognized WWII Searcy County veteran Cecil Blair who served in the Army in the European Theater. [Hear more about his military service](#). His entire interview will be preserved in the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.
- **Promoting Civic Engagement:** High school students from across the state are participating in the [Congressional Youth Cabinet](#), a program we launched last school year to give Arkansas youth first-hand experience in the democratic process and a chance to understand how public policy impacts them, their families and their communities. We have an enthusiastic group of students who represent the future of Arkansas. This is a unique and invaluable opportunity for them, and I look forward to a successful year.
- **Connect on Social Media:** Stay up to date with what I'm doing for Arkansans via social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



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