



## 115th Congress in Review

### **Strengthening Illinois & Helping Create Jobs**

#### *Listening to and Getting Things Done for Illinoisans*

- Duckworth's first-ever bill as a Senator passed the Senate in a record 64 days and was signed into law by the President just four months after she was sworn into office. [The law Senator Duckworth wrote](#) supports Illinois jobs and prevents infrastructure projects from being ensnared in needless bureaucratic delays by rolling back a misguided U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rule that had enabled the governors of neighboring states to delay or block infrastructure improvements in Illinois. A DOT analysis estimated the law will save taxpayers \$86.3 million annually.
- Senator Duckworth prioritized meeting with constituents from around the state to hear about the issues facing their communities, hosting in-person and telephone town hall meetings to discuss her work in the Senate and answer questions on key issues including disability rights and education. Duckworth's office also hosted mobile office hours in communities across the state, and the Senator held several roundtable discussions with local leaders across Illinois to talk about vital issues like infrastructure, transportation and job creation. She also regularly invites all Illinois constituents visiting Washington, D.C., to join her for coffee and donuts so she can answer questions and listen to their concerns.
- Senator Duckworth successfully defeated Donald Trump's proposed [budget cuts](#) that would have eliminated the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is expected to generate \$50 billion in long-term economic benefits to the region by helping address the threats of invasive species, harmful algal blooms and toxic pollution. For every dollar invested in the initiative, two dollars are returned in the form of increased fishing, tourism and property values. Senator Duckworth also introduced the [Great Lakes Water Protection Act](#) to end the dumping of untreated sewage waste into the Great Lakes Basin.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [Sensible, Timely Relief for America's Nuclear Districts' Economic Development \(STRANDED\) Act](#) to help communities struggling with the impacts of stranded nuclear waste by incentivizing economic development and providing federal assistance to offset the economic hardships caused by stranded nuclear waste. Duckworth also authored language that became law directing the Department of Energy and the Department of Commerce to identify what financial resources are currently available to communities with stranded nuclear waste.
- Senator Duckworth submitted public comments in advance of a [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) field hearing in Chicago regarding the Trump Administration's efforts to repeal the Clean Power Plan](#). Her comments outlined the harmful health, environmental and economic impacts Illinoisans, including the 120,000 who work in the clean energy sector, would experience if the Clean Power Plan is rolled back. Duckworth also discussed how the elimination of the Clean Power Plan is estimated to lead to as many



as 1,400 premature deaths, 15,000 new cases of upper respiratory problems and significant increases in missed school and work days by 2030.

- After the shooting of an Amtrak conductor in Naperville, Senator Duckworth introduced the bipartisan [Passenger Rail Crew Protection Parity Act](#) to improve public safety and discourage violence aboard passenger trains. Duckworth's legislation, which passed out of committee, would bolster federal protections for passenger rail crewmembers to reflect those that are provided to airline crewmembers so that any assault of a rail crewmember, including engineers, conductors and on-board service personnel, could be charged under federal law.
- Senator Duckworth led the charge to defeat a proposal [that would have undermined the Renewable Fuel Standard \(RFS\) program](#), securing a commitment from Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue to fight efforts to impose harmful price caps on renewable identification numbers.
- A strong advocate for manufacturers who is working to expand Illinois's manufacturing sector, Senator Duckworth visited facilities in [Granite City, Chicago](#) and elsewhere across the state to discuss the [importance of investing in American manufacturers](#) as they create good-paying jobs and contribute to the local economy.
- In conjunction with the Small Business Advocacy Council and the Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago, Senator Duckworth hosted a [small business development workshop](#) to provide tips, tools and best practices to nearly 75 small business owners.
- As a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship who focused on expanding economic opportunity and revitalizing economies in communities around the state, Senator Duckworth participated in a [roundtable discussion with community leaders in Chicago hosted](#) by the Latino Policy Forum. The discussion covered a wide range of issues including immigration reform, education, small business development and healthcare.
- Senator Duckworth helped introduce the [Removing Incentives for Outsourcing Act](#) to close a loophole created by the 2017 GOP tax scam that encourages U.S. companies to move jobs and operations overseas in order to minimize their tax liability.



## 115th Congress in Review

### **Strengthening Illinois & Helping Create Jobs**

#### *Cutting Red Tape and Bringing Federal Investments to Illinois*

- After working for years as a Congresswoman to secure necessary funding and leading a Congressional coalition in support of a \$14 million federal TIGER grant to replace the current 136-year-old bridge, Senator Duckworth helped break ground on the new double-track [Fox River Bridge in Elgin](#) that will help eliminate the bottleneck between freight rail and Metra's Milwaukee District - West Line.
- A longtime advocate for the project dating back to her tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Senator Duckworth supported the [Elgin-O'Hare Western Access project](#) in the Senate and applauded the finalization of a framework agreement between the Illinois Tollway Authority and both Canadian Pacific Railway and Union Pacific Railway to move the project forward.
- Senator Duckworth [outlined the importance of supporting Argonne National Laboratory and FermiLab](#) research initiatives in quantum information science, particle physics and various innovative technologies, calling on the Trump Administration to fully fund the laboratories' cutting-edge efforts in the Department of Energy's (DOE) fiscal year 2019 budget request.
- A Duckworth amendment to secure \$15 million for the Great Lakes Science Center in each of the next five years [was approved unanimously by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works](#). Her amendment would authorize funding to conduct research in the Great Lakes Basin to help protect and preserve drinking water for tens of millions of Americans and would help support the Great Lakes' sport and commercial fishery industry.
- Senator Duckworth supported [the Farm Bill that overwhelmingly passed the Senate](#) and included several Illinois priorities as well as provisions that will ensure farmers receive the assistance they need, support Veteran farmers and urban agriculture efforts, improve drinking water, expand access to high-speed internet in rural communities and create historic investments in land and water conservation through climate-smart agricultural practices.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [Forward Looking Investment in General Aviation, Hangars, and Tarmacs \(FLIGHT\) Act](#) to make it easier for more than 65 small and rural airports in Illinois to undertake important infrastructure improvements by giving them greater access to funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and providing them with the needed flexibility to partner with private businesses to improve their facilities and create jobs.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [National Institute of Standards and Technology \(NIST\) Plumbing Research Act](#) to bring our water infrastructure into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by investing in critical research to make our water infrastructure systems safer, more reliable and more efficient.

- Senator Duckworth joined U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and a number of Illinois and Chicagoland elected officials [at the groundbreaking of the CREATE Program's 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project](#), which aims to eliminate freight congestion and reduce wait times at one of the worst bottlenecks in Chicago. The project was made possible thanks, in part, to the [\\$132 million](#) federal investment that Senator Duckworth helped secure.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the bipartisan [TIFIA for Airports Act](#) to improve airport infrastructure by allowing airport projects to access cheaper public and private capital financing.
- Senator Duckworth's office hosted Federal Grants Workshops to highlight resources available to local governments, community organizations, first responders and individuals. In addition to the workshops, Duckworth announced a total of more than \$1 billion in federal grant funding for Illinoisans including:
  - More than \$160 million in infrastructure grants, including \$132 million for [the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement project](#), \$22 million for the Springfield Rail Improvement project and \$7.6 million for the Interstate 57 Safety Project
  - More than [\\$354 million for Head Start and Early Head Start funding](#).
  - More than \$190 million for housing programs in [Chicago](#), [Metro East](#), [Northern Illinois](#), [Central Illinois](#), [Decatur](#) and [Western Illinois](#).
  - \$100 million for [local community health centers](#) and [disease prevention](#), and \$2.4 million for the [National Runaway Safeline](#).
  - [\\$100 million](#) for the Chicago Transit Authority's Red and Purple Modernization Program.
  - More than [\\$37 million to support emergency preparedness programs](#) throughout Illinois.
  - More than \$28 million for rural development projects in [Union and Jackson counties](#), [Shelby, Menard, Edgar and Macoupin counties](#) and [Jersey and Macoupin counties](#).
  - More than \$25 million for upgrades to airports in [Chicago](#), [Peoria](#), [Springfield](#) and [Marion](#).
  - More than \$16 million to support [AmeriCorps national service programs throughout Illinois](#).
  - More than \$13 million to [protect Illinoisans from toxic lead](#) by helping provide lead-free housing units to low-income families.
  - More than \$10 million to improve bus transportation in [Decatur](#) and [Bloomington-Normal](#).
  - More than \$9 million to [expand broadband access across Southern Illinois](#).
  - More than \$5.8 million to provide [first-responders](#) with access to [emergency response equipment](#), firefighting and emergency vehicles, personal protective equipment and training [and \\$25,000 to help emergency services in Alexander County and Cairo](#).
  - More than \$5 million for emergency relief and [road damage](#) repair to highways and roads throughout Illinois.
  - More than \$5.2 million to economic development projects in [Chicago Heights](#) and across [Southern](#), [Southwestern](#), [North Central](#) and [Western Illinois](#), including a [\\$3.75 million upgrade](#) for the Southern Illinois Airport Authority and \$276,000 to improve rural water infrastructure and energy efficiency in [Central Illinois](#).

- More than \$4.1 million to help [Illinois government agencies and community programs assist victims of domestic violence](#), reduce recidivism through mentoring programs and improve training for law enforcement officials.
- More than [\\$1.3 million to help eliminate housing discrimination](#) in Chicago [and help low-income seniors and Americans living with disabilities afford housing](#), and [\\$350,000 to help Chicago Heights](#) revitalize affordable housing facilities.
- \$1.3 million for the elimination of toxic pollutants from contaminated sites in the [Chicagoland area](#), [Rockford](#) and [Western Illinois](#).
- More than [\\$1.2 million to help the Illinois Department of Public Health](#) halt the spread of HIV infections and allow those diagnosed with the disease to live longer, healthier lives.
- More than [\\$1 million](#) to support rape prevention and education programs throughout Illinois.
- [More than \\$400,000](#) to support quality care for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries.
- [More than \\$400,000](#) to support the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC) in Peoria's work to help small businesses grow throughout Illinois.
- \$200,000 to support [agricultural research projects at the University of Illinois](#) and \$100,000 to [help researchers in Chicagoland reduce emissions and support ethanol production](#).
- \$163,758 to expand [on-campus child care](#) at College of Lake County in Grayslake and Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield.

## 115th Congress in Review

### Helping People Get Ahead

#### *Advocating for Illinoisans*

- To better serve the residents of Illinois and help ensure hardworking families across the state can easily and quickly take advantage of the constituent services offered, Senator Duckworth opened state constituent service offices in Chicago, [Springfield](#), [Carbondale](#), [Rock Island](#) and [Belleville](#). Duckworth's state offices provide a number of services to Illinoisans, including assistance with Veterans benefits, Social Security, Medicare, small business development and other issues with federal agencies.
- Senator Duckworth has been a strong advocate for families in Cairo, visiting the southern Illinois city twice to meet with residents of the [Elmwood and McBride housing developments](#) after decades of neglect and abuse led to their homes being condemned and slated for destruction with no workable relocation plan in place. She also [helped bring U.S. Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) Secretary Ben Carson to Cairo](#) so he could meet with community members face to face, and she pressed Donald Trump to [create a Cairo-focused task force](#) and introduced the [Creating American Investment, Redevelopment, and Opportunity \(CAIRO\) Task Force Act](#) to form a Cabinet-level task force to address the housing, health and economic crises in Cairo. She also called for those who created the crisis to face justice and worked to grow the local economy so that the Cairo community can remain strong for generations. Duckworth also [demanded that HUD](#) explain its decision to shutter two additional Alexander County Housing Authority facilities in Thebes, which it had moved displaced Cairo residents into months earlier.
- Senator Duckworth [advocated on behalf of Rockford-area resident and Vietnam War Veteran Greg “Kirby” Ingraham](#), whose passport application had been rejected despite the fact that he is an American-born citizen who had served his country in uniform. With Duckworth’s help, Ingraham finally received his passport. [Duckworth also successfully assisted a Fulton County constituent](#) who, for years, had been working to get back his father’s prized World War II Combat Infantryman’s Badge, which had been lost when the moth-ravaged coat it had been pinned on was thrown out. With Duckworth’s help, the constituent was able to recover not only the lost badge, but also received several additional medals the father had earned but the family never knew about.
- After a devastating [EF-3 tornado damaged](#) Taylorville and other areas across central Illinois, Senator Duckworth toured the damage, met with first responders and pledged to support efforts to secure federal funding to help the communities rebuild.
- Duckworth [toured](#) and [led a roundtable discussion](#) with staff at the Chestnut Health Systems opioid treatment facility in Granite City and met with the [Lake County Underage Drinking and Drug Prevention Task Force](#) to discuss the importance of protecting access to treatment and ensuring that lifesaving medications that can prevent opioid overdoses remain affordable for all Illinoisans.

## 115th Congress in Review

### Helping People Get Ahead

#### *Working for Working Families*

- Senator Duckworth's [\*Friendly Airports for Mothers \(FAM\) Act\*](#) was signed into law after years of work by the Senator. As a result of her new law, all large- and medium-sized airports will now have to provide clean, accessible, private rooms in every terminal for nursing mothers.
- When Duckworth became the [first U.S. Senator to give birth while serving in office](#), she sent a message that working families across the country deserve family-friendly workplaces, ultimately securing a rule change to bring the Senate into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by allowing infant children onto the Senate floor.
- Senator Duckworth supported working families across the country by helping introduce the [\*FAMILY Act\*](#) to provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave for those who need time to care for newborn or adopted children, seriously ill family members or their own serious health condition.
- Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [\*Working Families Tax Relief Act\*](#) to expand eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit while making it easier to claim, the *Raise the Wage Act* to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and the [\*Child Care for Working Families Act\*](#) to help ensure low- and middle-income American families have access to affordable and high-quality child care.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*21st Century American Service Act\*](#) to help make sure every young American who wants to dedicate a year to national service has the opportunity to do so. Her legislation would increase the number of service positions available through civilian national service organizations, educate all young Americans about the national service opportunities available to them and reduce financial barriers that prohibit some young Americans from serving. Senator Duckworth also received the Voices for National Service [Outstanding National Service Advocacy Award](#) in recognition of her lifetime commitment to public service and her efforts to promote and expand national community service opportunities to all young people wishing to give back to their communities.
- Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [\*Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act\*](#) to help Americans with student loan debt refinance their loans at more affordable interest rates.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*Community College to Career \(CC2C\) Fund Act\*](#) to help new graduates find jobs and close the "skills gap" that makes it difficult for small businesses and other employers to find qualified candidates for unfilled jobs. Her legislation supports innovative partnerships between community colleges, technical colleges and businesses to train students to fill jobs.
- With student parents making up more than one-quarter of all college students in America, Senator Duckworth introduced her [\*Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools \(CCAMPIS\)\*](#)



[Reauthorization Act](#) to help increase access to on-campus child care. She also led a successful effort to [add significant new funding](#) for the CCAMPIS [program](#) in the FY2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill.

- Senator Duckworth advocated against the Trump Administration's [efforts to both slash](#) taxes for the ultra-wealthy and protect wasteful corporate tax loopholes. She [spoke out against](#) the Senate GOP tax bill and the [secrecy around](#) its writing, calling the bill [a scam to give tax breaks](#) to Donald Trump and his friends and family. When it became clear that the tax scam would raise federal taxes for hundreds of thousands of Illinois taxpayers, Senator Duckworth also pushed the [State of Illinois to take action](#) to mitigate the negative impacts.
- Senator Duckworth helped lead the successful fight [against Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans' efforts to repeal President Obama's Affordable Care Act](#), specifically highlighting the devastating impact their repeal proposals would have had on Veterans, seniors, working families and people with preexisting conditions, including Americans with disabilities.
- To further expand healthcare access to more Americans, Senator Duckworth co-sponsored [legislation to help make prescription drugs more affordable](#) for the nearly 41 million seniors who are enrolled in Medicare Part D. Senator Duckworth also introduced the [Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act](#) to ensure breast cancer patients and survivors who have undergone a mastectomy are able to access custom breast prosthetics under Medicare.
- After Donald Trump proposed cutting \$231 from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) rural development programs, [Senator Duckworth pushed the Administration to protect the programs and their funding](#).
- Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [Choose Medicare Act](#) to allow Americans of all ages to purchase health coverage through Medicare.



## 115th Congress in Review

### Helping People Get Ahead

#### *Protecting Americans without a Voice*

- Senator Duckworth secured the passage of legislation to finally [require airlines to report the number of bags they lose and wheelchairs or motorized scooters they break or mishandle](#) so the traveling public can make the best choice of air carriers for their needs.
- A longtime advocate for women's health, Senator Duckworth cautioned against a Republican-led effort to allow states to [defund Planned Parenthood](#), citing the devastating impact it would have on the millions of Americans who rely on the organization for critical healthcare services like breast cancer screenings. Senator Duckworth also co-sponsored the [Protect Access to Birth Control Act](#) to safeguard women's access to birth control while Donald Trump was trying to make it harder for women to access contraceptive coverage.
- A former Army helicopter pilot, Senator Duckworth [successfully blocked efforts to reduce the number of training hours](#) that a passenger airline pilot is required to log before receiving a pilot's license that enables them to be trusted with the lives of hundreds of people.
- Senator Duckworth [introduced bipartisan legislation](#) to promote airplane safety by increasing compliance with the *Pilot Records Improvement Act of 1996*, which requires airlines to obtain the motor vehicle driving record of a pilot applicant from the National Driver Register (NDR) before allowing that individual to begin their service as a pilot. The Duckworth-Perdue *Pilot Records Improvement Enhancement Act of 2017* would streamline the hiring process for both pilots and air carriers by providing carriers with secure and appropriate access to NDR records through the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA).
- Senator Duckworth voted for the [Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018](#) that takes important steps to combat the opioid epidemic by establishing comprehensive opioid recovery centers, investing in community-based prevention efforts and giving law enforcement stronger tools to help confiscate illegal substances, such as fentanyl, that foreign suppliers are mailing into our country.
- During naturalization ceremonies in Illinois, Senator Duckworth [welcomed servicemembers and Veterans to our country for the first time as citizens](#), highlighting the value of both civilian and military service.
- Senator Duckworth [addressed families at the welcoming ceremony of the Abuelitas Program](#), which helps reunite family members legally residing in the United States with elderly loved ones living in Mexico who they often haven't been able to see in many years.

## 115th Congress in Review

### **Fighting for Troops and Veterans**

#### *Advocating for Servicemembers and Helping Keep Them Safe*

- As an Iraq War combat Veteran, Senator Duckworth has strongly advocated for the [need to provide our troops](#) with clear guidance and legal authority for their operations with a new Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), speaking out frequently and [penning a column in the Wall Street Journal](#) urging Congress to [replace and update the outdated](#) 2001 and 2002 AUMFs, which set the legal framework, parameters and constitutional basis for our ongoing military engagements in the Middle East. In 2017, Duckworth [joined a bipartisan coalition](#) to urge the Senate to debate a new AUMF. In 2018, Duckworth voted for [S.J. Res. 54](#) to direct the President to end unauthorized U.S. military assistance to the Saudi Arabia-led coalition in Yemen.
- In 2018, Senator Duckworth visited [South Korea and Japan](#). After seeing the demilitarized zone (DMZ) firsthand, and in advance of Donald Trump's summit with north Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, she returned home warning how deadly and destructive renewed hostilities with north Korea would be. Reflecting on her visit, Senator Duckworth delivered a [speech at Georgetown University](#) on the dangers of rushing to war with north Korea and [wrote to Trump](#) asking him to level with the American people about the costs of a potential conflict—in dollars and cents as well as human lives. Senator Duckworth then introduced an amendment to the *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)* to [prevent Donald Trump from irresponsibly withdrawing troops](#) from South Korea while the Kim regime remains a threat.
- Senator Duckworth visited Illinois's three active duty bases—[Scott Air Force Base](#), [Naval Station Great Lakes](#) and [Rock Island Arsenal](#)—and attended the opening of the [Illinois National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility and Readiness Center](#) in Kankakee.
- Senator Duckworth has been a [vocal critic](#) of Donald Trump's announcement that he intended to prevent transgender troops from serving in the U.S. military, and she sent a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Defense [opposing the Administration's discriminatory ban](#).
- On several occasions over the past two years, Senator Duckworth used her position to forcefully advocate against the use of torture, arguing that it endangers the lives of U.S. troops who serve every day in harm's way. The Senator [vocally opposed](#) the [nomination of Gina Haspel](#) to serve as CIA director because of her involvement in the CIA's torture program and she criticized [Donald Trump's nomination of Steven Bradbury](#)—the author of some of the infamous Bush Administration torture memos—to be general counsel of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

## 115th Congress in Review

### Fighting for Troops and Veterans

#### *Protecting Hard-Earned Benefits*

- After reports of Veterans being evicted and becoming homeless as a result of VA’s failures to make timely payments owed under the post-9/11 “Forever GI Bill,” [Senator Duckworth called on VA to fully repay Veterans the benefits they are owed](#)—with interest—but did not receive due to VA’s massive payments backlog. Duckworth also urged VA to assume any financial penalties Veterans incur because of its failure to make on-time payments to many student Veterans, and she asked VA to coordinate with credit reporting agencies to offer Veterans long-term protection by ensuring that no Veteran has their credit rating downgraded as a result of this crisis, which could lead to lasting financial harm.
- Duckworth successfully [led the fight](#) to defeat a Republican effort that would have raised taxes on as many as 7 million Veterans and prohibited them from receiving tax credits that make their private health insurance more affordable.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [Veterans Preventive Health Coverage Fairness Act](#) to make healthcare more affordable for Veterans by changing the status quo that currently forces them to pay out-of-pocket costs for essential preventive health medications and prescription drugs. The Senator’s bipartisan legislation would also add preventive medications and services to the list of no-fee treatments that VA covers. Under current law, Veterans are forced to pay co-pays for preventive healthcare services that military retirees and civilians with private insurance plans receive for free.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [Servicemember Student Loan Affordability Act](#) to fix a provision in federal law that unintentionally discourages members of the military from consolidating or refinancing pre-service student loans and taking full advantage of all student benefits provided to servicemembers.
- When it became clear that the January 2018 government shutdown could prevent servicemembers from receiving their paychecks and prevent the families of servicemembers killed in action during the shutdown from receiving death benefits, Senator Duckworth introduced a [Pay Our Military Act](#) to ensure that servicemember pay and death benefits would not be stalled.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the bipartisan [Military Hunger Prevention Act](#) to help keep troops and military families from going hungry, because no one willing to serve this nation in uniform should struggle to feed their families. The legislation eliminates inconsistencies that prevent many low-income servicemembers from accessing federal food assistance initiatives like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly referred to as “food stamps.” It also fixes a flaw in federal law that often forces those military families to rely on food pantries and food banks for emergency food assistance when the nation they are serving owes them much more.



- Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*Veteran Employment and Child Care Access Act\*](#) to support Veterans and their families, as well as reduce Veteran unemployment, by helping improve access to child care services for Veterans participating in workforce and job training programs offered by VA and the Department of Labor. Duckworth’s legislation would create a federal program modeled after the Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs’ “Tiny Boots” program to help ensure Veterans transitioning to civilian life can access affordable child care during their job-seeking process, which is especially important for low-income Veterans, those on the cusp of homelessness and those already homeless.

## 115th Congress in Review

### **Fighting for Troops and Veterans**

#### *Expanding and Protecting Job Opportunities*

- Senator Duckworth's [Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act](#), which would allow Veteran small business owners to acquire equipment and property that the federal government no longer has a use for by adding Veterans to the list of eligible recipients for federal surplus property, became law.
- Several of Senator Duckworth's [2018 National Defense Authorization Act \(NDAA\) provisions](#) were overwhelmingly passed into law, including proposals to help prevent low-income servicemembers from going hungry, make it easier for small businesses to get Department of Defense (DOD) contracts and make federal government contracting more efficient. The legislation also includes a provision Senator Duckworth led in the Senate to help small businesses apply for federal, state and local government contracts.
- Since arriving in the Senate, Duckworth has championed the Rock Island Arsenal, [visiting the facility](#) and [joining a bipartisan group of senators to pass an amendment](#) in the FY 2018 *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)* that will help ensure its long-term success and support its more than 6,000 employees. Senator Duckworth [proposed an amendment](#) to the FY 2019 NDAA to help the Arsenal's Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center. The amendment would require that the Secretary of Defense perform an assessment of the science, technology, engineering, mathematics, maintenance and manufacturing, or STEM(MM), workforce at arsenals, depots and ammunition plants, analyzing the number and types of positions available and expectations of loss due to retirements and voluntary departures. Duckworth also [filed a bipartisan amendment to the NDAA](#) to help prevent the Arsenal from closing in any future base realignment and closure (BRAC) processes by making sure that DOD uses Rock Island's facilities more efficiently. The bipartisan amendment will ensure DOD first seeks out existing government-owned space on military installations like Rock Island to house government offices before leasing commercial space for government purposes.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the bipartisan [Energy Jobs for our Heroes Act of 2018](#) to help Veterans gain the training and credentials necessary to secure good-paying jobs in the fast-growing low- and zero-carbon emissions energy industry. The Senator's bipartisan legislation will help ease the transition back to civilian life for servicemembers as well as strengthen the economy by connecting employers in the solar, wind, nuclear and cyber energy industries with talented, highly-skilled Veterans who possess the needed training and credentials to succeed. Duckworth had previously received a [commitment from U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry](#) during a Senate committee hearing to work on advancing this pro-Veteran legislation.

## 115th Congress in Review

### **Fighting for Troops and Veterans**

#### *Holding VA Accountable and Working for Veterans*

- When the Legionnaire’s crisis at the Quincy Veterans’ Home was brought to light, Senator Duckworth visited the facility and [called for accountability and answers](#), later helping secure additional federal funds that could be used by the State of Illinois to [improve the Veterans’ Home](#). Senator Duckworth continued to criticize then-Governor Bruce Rauner’s Administration’s [intentional mishandling](#) of the outbreak and called for [Illinois Public Health Director](#) Nirav Shah to resign over his agency’s handling of the crisis as a public relations problem instead of as a Veterans’ health crisis.
- Senator Duckworth introduced [several bills intended to protect and support Veterans](#) and servicemembers from being deported or denied healthcare, including the *Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2017*, the *Healthcare Opportunities for Patriots in Exile (HOPE) Act of 2017*, the *Immigrant Veterans Eligibility Tracking System Act of 2017* and the *Naturalization at Training Sites Act of 2017*.
- Senator Duckworth led the effort to [help combat Veteran Miguel Perez, Jr.](#) remain in the United States after he was failed multiple times by our nation, later condemning U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ [decision to deny](#) retroactive citizenship to Perez and [DHS’ decision to deport him](#). Senator Duckworth also criticized the Pentagon’s policy that led to [the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\) shuttering its offices](#) at U.S. Army basic training locations. These offices helped military recruits and servicemembers apply for citizenship.
- Advocating for the more than 40,000 homeless Veterans, Senator Duckworth—who coordinated the joint initiative with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to end Veteran homelessness while serving as Assistant VA Secretary—wrote to then-[VA Secretary David Shulkin](#) in December 2018 to express concern over a VA proposal to cut critical funding from programs that help reduce Veteran homelessness.
- On the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World War II, Senator Duckworth introduced a resolution to [establish a commemorative program](#) to honor Veterans and educate the public about the history of World War II.
- Senator Duckworth’s bipartisan [Chinese American World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act](#) to recognize the tremendous contributions made by the more than 18,000 Chinese American World War II Veterans was signed into law.

## 115th Congress in Review

### Protecting Civil Rights

#### *Defending American Values and Protecting Children*

- Senator Duckworth [led the successful effort](#) to block passage of the [ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017](#), a bill that would have [undermined protections included in the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#). Duckworth assembled a coalition of 42 Senate colleagues who pledged to block the legislation, sending a message to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell that the chamber would [not be able to pass it](#).
- Senator Duckworth helped lead opposition to Donald Trump's policy of forcibly separating children from their parents at the border, calling on Trump to [end the policy](#) and joining more than 30 Senate colleagues in [sponsoring legislation to keep immigrant families together](#).
- After the chaotic and inhumane implementation of Trump's first Muslim ban days after he took office, Senator Duckworth worked to [end](#) the ban and successfully pushed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Inspector General [to launch an investigation](#) of the Administration's actions. That investigation ultimately found [multiple instances of wrongdoing](#), and Senator Duckworth pushed back against [the Administration's apparent effort to cover up portions of the investigation's findings](#). When Trump [proposed a new travel ban](#), Senator Duckworth co-sponsored [legislation to rescind](#) it.
- Senator Duckworth pushed back against the [Trump Administration's inhumane decision](#) to withhold key law enforcement funding from sanctuary cities, and she co-sponsored [legislation to rescind Donald Trump's Executive Order on Interior Enforcement](#).
- Senator Duckworth was proud to join Senator Durbin in the fight to protect Dreamers from Donald Trump's anti-immigrant policies and actions, [calling on Congress to finally pass Durbin's Dream Act](#). She also spoke out against Trump's [move to rescind DACA](#), a decision that would have left nearly 800,000 Dreamers vulnerable to deportation if Trump's efforts hadn't been blocked by the federal court system.
- Senator Duckworth helped [introduce a bill](#) to rescind Donald Trump's executive order to construct a border wall and ramp up the deportations and detentions of undocumented immigrants.
- To protect voting rights, Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [Anti-Voter Suppression Act](#) to repeal Donald Trump's executive order that established a so-called "election integrity" commission to investigate false allegations of widespread voter fraud. Duckworth vocally criticized the commission's actions, including its intrusive and illegal request for personally-identifiable information on every U.S. voter, which it halted amid a growing number of legal challenges. She also introduced the [Pre-Registration of Voters Everywhere \(PROVE\) Act](#) to expand voter registration efforts nationwide and increase American citizens' participation in their democratic process.

- Senator Duckworth pushed the City of Chicago to make the entire Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) system 100 percent compliant with the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, joining representatives from Access Living—an organization committed to fostering an inclusive society so that Chicagoans with disabilities can live fully-engaged and self-directed lives—on the CTA’s Blue Line to [underscore the need for investments](#).
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [Korematsu-Takai Civil Liberties Protection Act of 2017](#) to prevent civil and human rights travesties similar to the internment of thousands of Japanese Americans during World War II from happening on U.S. soil again. In light of Donald Trump’s continued efforts to restrict minority and immigrant civil and human rights, this bill would help stop our nation from repeating history by ensuring that no individual is imprisoned or detained based upon a protected characteristic such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Joining her female colleagues, Senator Duckworth called on Senate leadership to bring forward legislation that would update and [strengthen the procedures available to survivors of all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination](#) in Congressional workplaces. In December 2018, the Senate finally passed that legislation.
- Senator Duckworth strongly opposed the Trump Administration’s unexplained [last-minute addition of a citizenship question](#) to the 2020 Census. The Constitution requires the Census to count every person living in the United States, not just citizens. However, the addition of a citizenship question could significantly reduce the response rate from residents who are immigrants and may be fearful of providing information to the U.S. government. That could have severe consequences since the Census is used to determine the distribution of federal funding and Congressional seats.
- When the Trump Administration’s Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to give internet providers the ability to freely block or slow down consumers’ access to the internet, [Senator Duckworth co-sponsored an effort to bolster net neutrality rules to protect consumers and promote innovation, which the Senate later approved](#).
- Drawing on her own family’s story of using public assistance during her childhood, Senator Duckworth pushed to block the Trump Administration’s proposed “public charge” rule, which could bar legal immigrants from obtaining permanent residence if they or members of their household use or have used public assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid. In a letter to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, Duckworth and 21 of her Senate colleagues [warned](#) that such a policy would deter struggling families from applying for benefits and could negatively affect millions of children.
- In recognition of her efforts to promote and expand the rights of people with disabilities, Senator Duckworth received the [United States International Council on Disabilities’ \(USICD\) Dole-Harkin award](#) in December 2018.
- To make fitness facilities across America more accessible for people with disabilities, Senator Duckworth introduced the [Exercise and Fitness for All Act](#). Her legislation would establish new federal guidelines to help ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to use fitness facilities as others, and it would allow small businesses to use the Disabled Access Tax Credit to help cover the cost of accessible exercise equipment.





- Senator Duckworth helped protect Illinoisans from exposure to public health risks caused by the Trump Administration. In addition to [helping ensure the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) maintains its Region 5 office](#) that employs nearly 1,000 workers and is headquartered in Chicago, [Senator Duckworth led successful efforts to defeat Trump's nominees to head key environmental and public health posts](#), including the nominees to lead EPA's Chemical Safety Division and the Council on Environmental Quality. These nominees had corrupt relationships with the industries they previously represented and, if confirmed, would have regulated, and they each had a history of helping corporations continue the long-standing practice of burdening low-income communities and communities of color with pollution. Duckworth also introduced a suite of bills that would strengthen protections against public health risks like [lead in drinking water](#) and carcinogens like [ethylene oxide](#). Congress passed key provisions from her legislation in major bills including the [Water and Resources Development Act of 2018](#) and the *Continuing Appropriations Act of 2019*.

## 115th Congress in Review

### Protecting Civil Rights

#### *Reforming our Criminal Justice System and Keeping Americans Safe*

- After [meeting with Yvonne Ambrose, the mother](#) of slain Chicago child sex trafficking victim Desiree Robinson, Senator Duckworth called on Congress to do more to address sex trafficking and protect victims by providing law enforcement and prosecutors with the additional tools they need to effectively prosecute offenders and traffickers. Duckworth later voted for the [Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers \(SESTA\) Act](#), which clarifies and strengthens criminal and civil remedies for victims of sex trafficking and fixes a portion of federal law that made it harder for Robinson's mother to hold accountable those involved in her daughter's murder.
- In honor of Blair Holt, a Chicago Julian High School honor student who was gunned down protecting his friend while they were riding home from school on a crowded public transit bus, Senator Duckworth introduced the [Blair Holt Firearm Licensing and Record of Sale Act of 2018](#) to prohibit unlicensed gun ownership and the transferring or receiving of firearms without a valid firearms license. The bill would also direct the attorney general to establish and maintain a federal record of sale system.
- To help prevent police-involved deaths and encourage independent and impartial investigations into law enforcement officials' use of deadly force, Senator Duckworth introduced the [Police Training and Independent Review Act](#), which [is supported by a coalition of more than 90 members of Congress as well as the NAACP](#).
- Senator Duckworth pushed for more transparency from the Office of the Attorney General, [calling for an investigation](#) into whether former Attorney General Jeff Sessions' involvement in the firing of then-FBI Director James Comey was inappropriate given Sessions' recusal from any investigation into the 2016 presidential election including the one looking into Russia's ties to the Trump campaign. Duckworth also urged Sessions to reconsider his decision to [review the use of consent decrees in cases of police violence](#), pointing out that stopping the use of consent decrees could thwart efforts to protect civil rights and improve public safety. Existing consent decrees serve to support sweeping police reform with the intention of putting a stop to civil rights abuses.
- A leading advocate in the Senate for strengthening the nation's criminal justice system, Duckworth introduced the [Calling Technical Corrections Act](#) to help loved ones keep in touch with incarcerated family members, something studies have shown can help reduce recidivism rates and thereby save taxpayer dollars.
- After conducting an oversight visit at [the Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee](#), Senator Duckworth [pushed Congress](#) to ensure that all Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facilities meet the current national standards.

## 115th Congress in Review

### **Holding Washington Accountable**

- Duckworth has led efforts to hold the Trump Administration accountable for its many ethical violations and conflict-of-interest issues. After Donald Trump nominated Michael Dourson to lead the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, Senator Duckworth sounded alarms over the nominee’s continued work [on behalf of the chemical industry](#) even while being considered for the EPA position. During Dourson’s Senate confirmation hearing, Duckworth also grilled him on his Koch Industries-funded “research” that falsely claimed that exposure to the dangerous toxin petroleum coke (petcoke) is safe. The nominee’s work was used by the Koch-owned KCBX Terminals, Inc. to justify not cleaning up the toxin, which led to high asthma rates and respiratory problems for adults and children who were exposed to the substance on Chicago’s Southeast Side. Duckworth eventually placed a hold on Dourson’s nomination and [wrote an op-ed](#) expressing alarm over both his long track record of manipulating scientific research to benefit corporate interests at the expense of public safety and his defense of toxic chemicals that have been linked to high cancer rates among servicemembers and Veterans. Shortly thereafter, Dourson withdrew his nomination.
- Senator Duckworth was part of a [lawsuit](#) against Donald Trump alleging that he has violated the Constitution’s Foreign Emoluments Clause, noting that Trump has received numerous benefits from foreign states without first seeking or obtaining Congressional approval as the Constitution clearly requires.
- After the killing of *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, [Senator Duckworth demanded a full accounting of any financial ties between the Trump Organization and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#).
- On several occasions over the past two years, Senator Duckworth has forcefully advocated against Trump Administration officials’ apparent support for the use of torture, arguing that such tactics endanger the lives of U.S. troops who serve every day in harm’s way. The Senator [vocally opposed](#) the [nomination of Gina Haspel](#) to serve as CIA Director and criticized [Donald Trump’s nomination of Steven Bradbury](#)—the author of some of the infamous Bush Administration torture memos—to be general counsel of the Department of Transportation (DOT).
- Senator Duckworth held Scott Pruitt accountable throughout his short yet harmful tenure as EPA administrator, [highlighting his previous positions on and contradictory statements](#) about [the Renewable Fuel Standard](#) and criticizing his [climate change denial](#). She also called for a [non-partisan government watchdog to investigate](#) whether salary raises for two top Pruitt aides violated multiple federal laws, including the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Antideficiency Act. Duckworth also [called for Pruitt’s resignation](#) after his [wasteful and exorbitant spending](#) of taxpayer dollars came to light.

- Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*Foreign Agent Lobbying Transparency Enforcement Act\*](#) to strengthen registration requirements for foreign government lobbyists and to crack down on foreign agents who fail to comply with the law. Duckworth introduced her legislation following several high profile examples of foreign government lobbyists like Paul Manafort, Michael Flynn and Jack Abramoff all retroactively registering as lobbyists only once media reports exposed their activities.
- Following reports of pay-to-play politics, Senator Duckworth called on Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director and then-Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Acting Director Mick Mulvaney to [release documents related to his scheduling policies](#) at the OMB and the CFPB, beginning with his Senate confirmation in February 2018. The request was made in response to comments Mulvaney made to a group of banking lobbyists in April 2018. Referring to his time in the House of Representatives, Mulvaney said, “We had a hierarchy in my office in Congress. If you’re a lobbyist who never gave us money, I didn’t talk to you. If you’re a lobbyist who gave us money, I might talk to you.”
- After reports that the Interior Department was [improperly withholding federal funding](#) from a number of organizations across the country that were expecting federal grants but had not yet received them, Senator Duckworth led a group of Senators in sounding the alarm. They helped expose how then-Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke had hired a thoroughly unqualified high school football teammate of his to manage the agency’s grant review process.
- After several Trump Administration senior officials—including Secretaries Zinke, Pruitt and Steven Mnuchin—violated the Federal Travel Regulation by wasting taxpayer dollars on inappropriate travel expenses like charter jets and first class airfare, Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*Federal Travel Transparency Act\*](#) to help ensure that the Trump Administration, and any future administration, spends taxpayer dollars more responsibly.
- Senator Duckworth [voted against](#) the confirmation of Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General, later calling out [Sessions for misleading Congress](#) in his confirmation hearing. She also pushed for more transparency from the Office of the Attorney General, [demanding an investigation](#) into whether Sessions' involvement in the firing of then-FBI Director James Comey was inappropriate given his recusal from any investigation into the 2016 presidential election.
- Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [\*Presidential Conflicts of Interest Act of 2017\*](#) to require the President and Vice President to disclose and divest any potential financial conflicts of interest.
- When Senate Republicans decided to overturn decades of Senate precedent and [eliminate the 60-vote threshold for Supreme Court nominees](#), Senator Duckworth pushed back and later supported a filibuster to oppose [Neil Gorsuch’s confirmation](#) to the Supreme Court.
- Duckworth also helped rally opposition to [Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation](#) by highlighting his [record of dishonesty](#) in confirmation hearings, the credible allegations of [sexual assault](#) against him as well as his [extremely partisan comments that could make it hard for him to appear impartial on a number of cases that may come before the Court](#).
- In light of the Russian government's attacks on our election infrastructure and interference in the 2016 presidential election, Senator Duckworth co-sponsored legislation to [prevent the creation of a joint cybersecurity unit with Russia](#) that Donald Trump proposed.

- Senator Duckworth co-sponsored the [\*Democracy Is Strengthened by Casting Light On Spending in Elections \(DISCLOSE\) Act\*](#) to create a more transparent federal campaign finance system by ensuring that businesses and organizations spending money in elections disclose their individual donors to the public.
- Senator Duckworth led the charge to [\*criminally investigate\*](#) whether former Special Advisor to Donald Trump Carl Icahn violated federal anti-corruption law by attempting to use his government position to enrich himself by hundreds of millions of dollars—and effort that led to Icahn’s resignation.
- Senator Duckworth voted to introduce new [\*punitive measures and sanctions against Russia\*](#) and to prevent the Trump Administration from lifting sanctions against Russia without Congressional approval.
- Senator Duckworth introduced the [\*Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission Whistleblower Protection Act of 2018\*](#) to protect whistleblowers who are employed by the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.