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Barrow Promotes Bi-Partisan Legislation to Help Families, Charities Send Postage-Free Mail to American Soldiers Overseas

Thirty veteran and military groups have joined in supporting the legislation

Washington, DC – With thousands of Georgians serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, 12th District Congressman John Barrow (D-GA) is working to make it easier for American families to stay in touch with loved ones fighting overseas. Barrow has signed on as an original co-sponsor of the *Supply Our Soldiers Act*, a bill that would eliminate postage costs for families and charities wishing to ship letters and packages to soldiers in combat serving overseas.

“With so many Americans fighting over in Iraq and Afghanistan, we should be taking every step we can to make sure they know that they’re constantly in our thoughts and prayers,” Barrow said. “Eliminating the postage on cards and small packages is a small price to pay to support our troops, remind them of home, and help keep their morale up.”

If passed by Congress, the *Supply Our Soldiers Act* (H.R. 2874) would direct the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the Secretary of Defense to immediately develop a program making postal benefits available for personal correspondences and small packages sent from within the United States to next-of-kin members of the Armed Forces.

The benefit would apply to service members who are on active duty abroad in support of military operations or against an enemy of the United States, as well as soldiers hospitalized in a U.S. military facility as a result of disease or injury incurred during service overseas. The bill would limit postal benefits to \$150 per calendar quarter, and limit the size and weight of allowable parcels. It would also allow charitable organizations to apply for these benefits.

Leaders of prominent veterans and military groups agreed with the importance of this initiative, including the National Association for Uniformed Services and the National Military Veterans Alliance.

“This is an outstanding way to keep morale high for those men and women who are risking their all for our country and to raise the spirits of their families at home,” Major General Bill Matz, president of the National Association for Uniformed Services, said.

“The NMVA has been made aware of the high costs incurred by the family, loved ones, and charities who are sending letters and packages to service members on active duty supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom,” Retired Naval Reserve Captain Marshall Hanson, co-director of the National Military Veterans Alliance representing 29 veterans groups, said. “Consideration of this bill will significantly help with maintaining high morale in Active, Reserve and National Guard units and their families by providing some relief from the expense of having their immediate family members overseas.”

Veterans and military Groups supporting the legislation include:

- American Logistics Association
- American Military Retirees Association
- American Military Society
- American Retirees Association
- American WWII Orphans Network
- AMVETS
- Association of Old Crows
- Catholic War Veterans
- Class Act Group
- Gold Star Wives of America
- Korean War Veterans
- Legion of Valor
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Military Order of the World Wars
- National Assoc. for Uniformed Services
- National Gulf War Resource Center
- Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
- Naval Reserve Association
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Reserve Enlisted Association
- Reserve Officers Association
- Society of Military Widows
- The Retired Enlisted Association
- TREA Senior Citizen League
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
- Uniformed Services Disabled Retirees
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans of America
- Women in Search of Equity
- National Military Family Association

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