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SEN. CRUZ, COLLEAGUES DEFEND SERVICE MEMBERS FROM VACCINE PUNISHMENT WITH AMERICANS ACT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and 13 of his colleagues have introduced the Allowing Military Exemptions, Recognizing Individual Concerns About New Shots (AMERICANS) Act of 2022. The legislation counters the Biden administration's efforts to coerce and punish service members who decline the COVID-19 vaccine, and introduces accountability measures in response to DOD efforts to undermine transparency.

The bill is co-sponsored by Senators Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Roger Marshall (R-Ks.), Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), Rand Paul (R-Ky.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.), James Lankford (R-Okla.), James Risch (R-Idaho), Rick Scott (R-Fla.), Mike Braun (R-Ind.), and Steve Daines (R-Mont.).

This bill would require the Secretary of Defense to make every effort to retain unvaccinated service members, strengthen language to ensure service members receive discharge classifications commensurate with their record of service, require the Department of Defense to report the number and type of COVID-19 vaccine religious exemptions that have been denied, and create an exemption from COVID-19 vaccine requirements for service members with natural immunity. The act would also protect service academy students and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) members in the same way.

About the bill, Sen. Cruz said:

"It is absolutely unacceptable that the Biden administration is trying to coerce our men and women in uniform to violate their conscience and religious beliefs, let alone on an issue as polarizing as the COVID-19 vaccine. The AMERICANS Act will ensure that these and similar efforts to politicize our military on this issue are blocked."

Sen. Cruz previously sponsored Sen. Roger Marshall's (R-Kansas) NDAA amendment to protect service members who refused to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Sen. Cruz previously offered the vaccine exemption and reporting requirements as amendments to the FY2022 NDAA.

While the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2022 contained provisions to protect service members, those provisions were weakened by Democrat leadership during the House and Senate conference on the bill before final passage.

Read the bill [here](#).

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