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## **LARSON VOTES TO INCLUDE ELIMINATION OF DISABLED VETERANS TAX IN DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL**

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) today voted in favor of a Democratic motion to return the conference report on the Defense Authorization bill to committee with instructions to include a provision to completely eliminate the Disabled Veterans Tax, which prevents disabled veterans from receiving both retirement and disability benefits. The GOP conference report for H.R. 1588 includes language that would only partially end the tax - leaving two-thirds of military retirees behind and forcing those covered to wait 10 years for full benefits. The Democratic motion failed by a vote of 217-188. The conference report with GOP provisions passed 362-40.

"It is unconscionable to deny more than half a million disabled American veterans the benefits they deserve for their service and sacrifice," said Larson. "The proposal put forward by the Republican Leadership would only affect a third of veterans that are denied their full benefits, and even then, would force them to wait 10 years before the problem is fully solved. For so many members of the Greatest Generation, 10 years could be too long a wait.

"Congress has an obligation to provide full benefits to all disabled veterans

that are eligible for their retirement and disability pay. With Veteran's Day only a few days away, it is time for Congress to match the lip-service for our veterans with real action to allow them to receive the benefits they earned," said Larson.

Veterans with 20 years of military service are entitled to receive retirement benefits from the Department of Defense. In addition, veterans who incurred service-related disabilities are entitled to receive disability compensation benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, due to an 1891 law banning "concurrent receipt" of both benefits, if a veteran has both 20 years of military service and a service-related disability, the veteran's military retirement benefit is reduced on a dollar-for-dollar basis by the amount he or she receives in disability compensation. This reduction in the veteran's retirement benefits is commonly known as the "Disabled Veterans Tax," which essentially taxes the disability compensation eligible veterans receive at a 100% rate.

Larson held a public forum on veterans issues in Newington Town Hall on November 3. Veterans Day is Tuesday, Nov. 11. On Monday, Nov. 10, Larson will release a study showing how the Disabled Veterans Tax affects disabled veterans in Connecticut and the First Congressional District.

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*Congressman Larson is a Member of the House Armed Services Committee*