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House Democrats Had Pressed the Issue

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) applauded a vote late last night in the House Armed Services Committee to allow military spouses to retain their full survivors benefits. Under current law, when a military widow reaches the age of 62, their spousal survivor benefits drop by a third, from 55% of their spouse's retired pay to 35%. The Committee voted to provide the funding the phase the penalty out. Larson has previously held a forum in his district on this and other veterans issues.

“The surviving spouses of our military servicemen and women deserve their full benefits,” said Larson. “The hard work of our veterans and the discharge petition allowed us to keep the pressure on and force the committee to take action on this issue. These ongoing efforts to support the military and correct this problem have finally paid off. Our veterans and their families should not have to fight to receive the benefits they have sacrificed a great deal to earn.”

Larson and 200 other House Democrats had recently signed onto a legislative discharge petition that would force the GOP Leadership to bring legislation to correct the situation, H.R. 548, to the floor for a vote. No Republicans signed the petition despite the fact that 336 House members had co-sponsored the bipartisan bill, the Military Survivor Benefits Improvement Act.

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