

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 127

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to express support for the Allowing Military Exemptions, Recognizing Individual Concerns About New Shots (AMERICANS) Act of 2023.

WHEREAS, Senator Marsha Blackburn and eighteen other Republican senators have introduced the Allowing Military Exemptions, Recognizing Individual Concerns About New Shots (AMERICANS) Act of 2023, a bill that would reinstate military service members involuntarily separated from the services for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine; and

WHEREAS, the bill would also compensate such military service members with benefits and back pay; and

WHEREAS, if passed, the AMERICANS Act of 2023 would dramatically change the Defense Department's COVID-19 vaccine policies and correct the wrongs done to unvaccinated service members who were discharged for exercising their conscience; and

WHEREAS, the bill would prohibit the Secretary of Defense from issuing a replacement COVID-19 vaccine mandate without congressional approval; and

WHEREAS, service members separated solely for their COVID-19 vaccine status and seeking to rejoin the military would be reinstated; the bill would also credit such service members for retirement pay calculations using the time of their involuntary separations, restore the rank of any service member demoted solely for their COVID-19 vaccine status, and compensate such service members with any benefits and pay lost to such demotions; and

WHEREAS, the AMERICANS Act of 2023 would provide a COVID-19 vaccine exemption process for service members with natural immunity, relevant underlying health conditions, and sincerely held religious beliefs against receiving vaccines; and

WHEREAS, the previous mandates issued by the Department of Defense requiring that all service members, including National Guard and Reserve members, be vaccinated against COVID-19 were rescinded on January 10, 2023, by Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby formally express support for the Allowing Military Exemptions, Recognizing Individual Concerns About New Shots (AMERICANS) Act of 2023 and urge the United States Congress to pass such bill into law without delay.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the members of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation.