

For Immediate Release

Military Families Act Honors America's Immigrant Soldiers and Families

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Washington D.C. - Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Daniel Inouye (D-HI), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Kristin Gillibrand (D-NY), and Russ Feingold (D-WI) have introduced the Military Families Act (S. 2757). The Military Families bill would allow immediate family members of active military service members to become lawful permanent residents even when the sponsoring soldier has lost his or her life in service. Also included in the bill are the sons and daughters of Filipino World War II veterans whose immigration status has been long deferred due to numerical limitations on immigrant visas.

"The introduction of the Military Families Act, is a reminder that our immigration system is badly broken, needlessly separating families, and even harming immigrants that are fighting and dying for our country. The Senate has delivered a well-deserved tribute to our immigrant soldiers and their families. Those who serve our nation - and their families who also make great sacrifices - deserve the full range of what our nation has to offer, including a path towards U.S. Citizenship," said Mary Giovagnoli, Director of the Immigration Policy Center.

An IPC paper released yesterday, [*Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Eight Years After 9/11*](#), highlights the critical role immigrants are playing in today's military. The report notes that "without the contributions of immigrants, the military could not meet its recruiting goals and could not fill its need for foreign-language translators, interpreters and cultural experts."

- As of June 30, 2009, there were 114,601 foreign-born individuals serving in the armed forces, representing 7.91 percent of the 1.4 million military personnel on active duty.
- In Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 alone, 10,505 members of the military were naturalized. Naturalizations of immigrants in the military are at their highest during times of war."

To view the report in its entirety see:

- [*Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Eight Years After 9/11*](#) (IPC Special Report, November, 9, 2009)

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