

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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### Ranking Member Robert Garcia Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs Hearing on “The Risks of Progressive Ideologies in the U.S. Military” January 11, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Grothman.

**To be honest, I’m frustrated and disappointed to be here today.**

On March 28th, we held a hearing called “Ensuring Force Readiness: Examining Progressivism’s Impact on an All-Volunteer Military.”

So, I can’t wait to see what we will learn in today’s hearing, “The Risks of Progressive Ideologies in the U.S. Military.”

**Back in March, I was disappointed that the majority chose to ignore the root causes of challenges we’re facing to recruitment and retention in our armed service, such as the implementation of the “I Am Vanessa Guillen Act,” which seeks to help and protect victims of sexual violence in the military; the need for improved mental health support for our servicemembers; the need for reliable and affordable childcare for our warfighters who are deployed on a moment’s notice; and so much more — especially when our economy is creating record numbers of jobs in the private sector, and our military has to compete for top talent.**

Data and evidence show that sexual assault, mental health care, and affordable childcare are all real factors that affect military recruitment, retention, and readiness.

During that hearing, I stressed that to recruit from the most diverse generation in history, we need a military that looks like America. We need a cohesive military which does not allow bigotry within the ranks.

But that hearing also found that politicized attacks on military leaders, and family hardships, may be significant factors in dissuading otherwise motivated young people from pursuing military careers, depriving our country of valuable talent.

The idea that “wokeness” is a top national security threat did not make any sense then.

And it makes even less sense now, given the world we face today.

**I believe the overemphasis on this far-right, Fox News talking point is part of what inspired Tommy Tuberville to launch his unprecedented blockade of military officer promotions.**

**Senator Tuberville intentionally blocked more than 400 general and flag officers within the Department of Defense from Senate confirmation and promotion.**

**Even more junior officers lost the opportunity to rise in rank, with massive impacts on factors such as retention, pay, pension, and future opportunities.**

**His culture war stunt did far, far more to undermine our military readiness than anything else.**

And I ask unanimous consent to enter the letter I sent to you on October 19, 2023, Mr. Chairman, calling for a hearing on national security implications of Mr. Tuberville's blockage of military promotions, into the record.

I really can't understand why we're holding a second hearing on this ridiculous topic, when we could be working in a bipartisan way to address real challenges to our national security — like the work we're doing together on UAP disclosure.

We should be talking about our real national security threats.

Our allies in Ukraine need aid immediately. We need to support Taiwan. We need to provide aid to Israel and civilians in Gaza.

**We could hold hearings that use data and evidence to demonstrate that American aid boosts our national security at minimal cost and highlight how our aid safeguards democracy and freedom against brutal aggressors.**

**We could even show how Ukraine aid directly benefits communities all around the country, who benefit from investment and jobs — and drive home how these investments will uphold our national security in the long term.**

**Instead, the majority is holding Ukraine and other crucial foreign aid hostage.**

They are demanding, instead, that we bring back indefinite detention for children at the border, defund Catholic Charities, and end the right to asylum.

Some Republicans appear to be parroting Putin's talking points and want to sell out our allies and partners.

They're even actively obstructing \$14 billion for border security, while far right members are saying openly that they don't want any kind of bipartisan border security actions. One of our Congressional colleagues said the quiet part out loud, and I quote, "Let me tell you, I'm not willing to do too damn much right now to help a Democrat and to help Joe Biden's approval rating."

Republicans on our subcommittee are investigating wokeness.

**Republicans on the full Committee are only interested in the Donald Trump Revenge show, with their bogus impeachment inquiry. The Republican majority can't agree to perform Congress's basic functions to fund our government and provide support to our closest allies.**

It's not "wokeness" that is threatening our national security, whatever that word actually means.

The real threat to our security is far right obstruction, dysfunction, and culture war stunts.

This hearing, and this Republican House, is deeply disappointing. I yield back.

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