



November 13, 2020

Senator Tammy Duckworth  
524 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Duckworth:

The Military Coalition (TMC) represents more than 5.5 million service members, veterans, their families and survivors. We support the proposed legislation to exempt military families from the J-1 visa ban that prohibits the admission of au pairs into the United States. Due to the ban, military families are denied access to another form of affordable child care, negatively affecting military readiness.

The au pair program is much more than a cultural exchange. There is no comparable, affordable child care alternative to meet the needs of military life. Nannies are unaffordable for most military families, consistent babysitters are expensive, daycare centers do not offer flexible hours needed to accommodate the military workday, and military child development centers have long wait lists. More than 40 percent of service members have children, the largest cohort under age five. Military families rely on au pairs to provide overnight child care, help during deployments and permanent change of station moves. Families coping with an injury or illness report that their au pairs have helped ease child care responsibilities for the caregiving spouse allowing them to focus on the injured service member's care and other household responsibilities. For those with health concerns for children during the pandemic, au pairs offer a child care solution they cannot get elsewhere.

Military spouses face a 24 percent unemployment rate, significantly higher than their civilian peers, which has increased in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. With uncertainty about in-person learning for school-aged children and many child care centers at reduced capacity, au pairs provide safe, consistent child care allowing military spouses to return to work.

Family security and military readiness are inexorably linked. We ask that you support all our eight services, including the commissioned corps of NOAA and the Public Health Service by expanding the bill language from "armed forces" to "uniformed services."

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Coalition. We appreciate your continued support of our nation's service members, veterans, their families and survivors

Sincerely,

Jack Du Teil  
President  
The Military Coalition

See attached list of organizations

Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)  
Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)  
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS)  
Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)  
Chief Warrants & Warrant Officers Association of the U.S. Coast Guard (CWOAUSCG)  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service (COAUSPHS)  
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)  
Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)  
Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)  
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)  
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV)  
Marine Corps League (MCL)  
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America (MCA)  
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)  
National Military Family Association (NMFA)  
Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)  
The Independence Fund (TIF)  
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)  
The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)  
United States Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)  
U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)  
Vets First