



Senator Herb Kohl

United States Senator for Wisconsin



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A mistake caused our troops to be denied leave when they returned home from overseas, and we need to make it right.

Many service members have deployed overseas in the last decade. To compensate men and women serving multiple or extended deployments, the military began a program to provide extra days of paid leave.

Members of the Wisconsin National Guard's 1157th Transportation Company received some of these days off when they returned from Iraq, but the Army miscalculated the number of days they earned under the new program. The mistakes were discovered and the Army corrected their records, but only allowed them to take the extra days after they returned from their next deployment. However, many of these soldiers will not deploy again, and some no longer serve in the military. It has been years since they returned and they still have not been compensated.

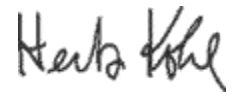
Mistakes happen, but they need to be fixed. That is why I introduced an amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill last year that would provide these men and women with the option to cash out the leave they were incorrectly denied. Unfortunately, the amendment was blocked on the other side of the aisle from being included in the final Defense Authorization bill.

But this is not the end of the story. This week we took a big step forward and introduced the Fair Military Leave Act, which is similar to my previous amendment. I was joined in the Senate by Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon, and Rep. Ron Kind and Tom Petri have introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives.

I have the highest respect for the members of our military and we should not drag our feet on this issue. They earned this benefit, and they should be allowed

to use it.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Herb Kohl in black ink.