

**Washington, D.C.** - Today, the US House is expected to pass a \$408B Defense Appropriations bill that includes significant funding for the Citizen-Soldier Support Program at UNC Chapel Hill. US Rep. David Price (NC-04), a member of the House Appropriations Committee, was responsible for securing \$5M for the program in the spending bill.

This funding would allow UNC to expand the Citizen-Soldier program statewide and allow program directors to share the model with other interested states. Citizen-Soldier currently operates in five North Carolina communities.

"North Carolina is at the forefront of Guard and Reserve deployments, and having spoken personally with the families of Guard and Reserve members, I know that they are facing unprecedented challenges on the home front," said Price. "Many spouses are suddenly finding themselves single parents and breadwinners, while they worry about loved ones overseas. I am hopeful that this program will provide critical support at a time when it's desperately needed."

The program, for which Price also secured funding in last year's defense spending bill, facilitates practical and emotional support for North Carolina National Guard and Reserve soldiers and their families as they prepare for and return from deployments. It provides critical local resources to these families, augments existing defense department programs, and brings together employers, schools, child-care providers, health professionals and the faith community to form a broad network of family support. Organizers have received strong positive feedback so far in the communities in which it operates: Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Rocky Mount and Wilmington.

"North Carolina is one of the most military-friendly states in the country," said UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor James Moeser. "This collaborative initiative gives communities more ways to support our military men and women and their families. It shows that Carolina and our program partners connect with the citizens of this state and their needs."

UNC-Chapel Hill spearheads the Citizen-Soldier Support Program in partnership with N.C. State, Duke, East Carolina, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro, Virginia Tech, Bryn Mawr College and UNC-TV.

The Defense Appropriations Bill goes next to the Senate for approval.

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