

June 16, 2009

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) today voted to bolster resources for America's troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Altmire voted for the FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Bill (H.R.2346), legislation which funds critical military operations, provides our troops with better equipment, improves military health care facilities, and strengthens resources for military families. The legislation is expected to pass the Senate for a final time later this week and will then be sent to the president to be signed into law.

“By passing this bill, Congress is helping to ensure that America’s troops have the equipment and resources they need to stay safe and effectively carry out their mission,” Altmire said. ““I will never vote against providing funding to our brave men and women in the field of battle. I am proud that this bill also advances two of my long time priorities -- improving health care for America’s troops and bolstering support for our military families.”

The FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Bill strengthens health care for America's troops by providing funding to repair military hospitals and further research on Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Congressman Altmire has been a lead proponent of improving treatment for TBI, which is known as the signature injury of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2008, an Altmire initiative became law that requires the Veterans Administration to screen all veterans for TBI symptoms and to operate a comprehensive program of long-term care for TBI rehabilitation.

The FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Bill also honors America's military families by bolstering educational, health care and counseling resources for them. The bill also invests in the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, which helps members of the Guard and Reserve and their families handle challenges related to mobilization. Congressman Altmire has long worked to ease the burdens placed on Guard and Reserve families whose loved ones are called to active duty. In 2008, an Altmire initiative was signed into law that strengthened the Family Medical Leave Act so it would cover Guard and Reserve families and help them deal with issues arising from a loved one's deployment.