

Madame Chair and Members,

My name is Bree England, and I'm here to share about why the veterans and military affairs bill, and keeping it separate from other bills, is so important to me.

First, a little about me. I am 13 years old, and I'm part of a proud military family. My grandma Teresa, grandpa Mike, mom Amanda and Uncle Jake all signed a blank check payable to THIS COUNTRY for an amount up to their lives. My mom's and grandparents' military service makes me eligible to be a Junior Auxiliary member. As a Junior Auxiliary member, I have learned how to support and honor those who served in my community. That is why I am here today.

I was told that the bill to give money to military and veterans in Minnesota might be combined with other bills. That makes me really sad and worried about homeless veterans, veterans who need help with mental health, and the veterans living in the state veterans homes. Veterans really need that money or some will continue living on the street. I've been learning about suicide in the military and veteran community, and it's a lot higher than the rest of the population. That's not right and it needs to stop.

It's hard for me to understand why political parties would argue over money to help veterans. I am still hopeful. It's not too late to get over differences and do the right thing for those who served. Please do not tie the military and veterans bill to other things. Thank you.