
NEWS RELEASE

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**SENATORS GREGG AND SUNUNU COSPONSORS INITIATIVE
TO REIMBURSE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO
INCUR TRAVEL EXPENSES DUE TO CANCELLED LEAVE**

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senators Judd Gregg (R-NH) and John E. Sununu (R-NH) today announced that they are original cosponsors of an amendment to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill that will reimburse unused travel expenses incurred by members of the Armed Forces due to the cancellation of previously scheduled leave. The amendment, authored by U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), includes travel from the theater of operations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom to the final destination, and applies to expenses incurred during Fiscal Year 2003 and 2004.

Both Senator Gregg and Sununu were also original cosponsors of an amendment by U.S. Senator Norm Coleman (R-MN), that passed the Senate yesterday, which will provide the full cost of domestic airfare for our troops returning home for approved leave. Currently, the military may fly service members from their location abroad to certain points in the United States, and they then must use their own resources to travel from those points to their homes.

Senator Gregg stated, "As the men and women of our Armed Forces continue to serve with distinction abroad, the difficulty and uncertainty of their missions sometimes cause leave time to be delayed or cancelled with minimal notice. This often leads to the loss of non-refundable travel reservations for members of the Armed Forces and their families. Instead of adding the burden of paying for a travel bill that can run hundreds of dollars to the disappointment of cancelled leave, Congress is working to ease the financial burden by ensuring those financial expenses are reimbursed. While our troops are selflessly serving to protect our nation in foreign lands, we should do all we can as a Congress to ensure no financial penalties are incurred due to circumstances out of their control."

Senator Sununu stated, "Our troops, who are at the front lines fighting for freedom day in and day out, should not have to pay for travel expenses for official leave, particularly when military schedules force travel delay or cancellation. That is why I have joined my colleagues in supporting measures to ensure that the Department of Defense handles these expenses."

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