

Congressman Tierney Comments on GAO's Report on the Department of Defense's Efforts to Prevent Domestic Abuse

Washington, DC - Congressman John F. Tierney, Chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, made the following statement in response to the release of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, "Sustained Leadership and Oversight Needed to Improve DOD's Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Abuse":

"GAO's report on the Department of Defense's efforts to prevent and treat domestic violence reveals troubling shortcomings that need to be addressed. While I am glad to see that the Department has made some progress in recent years, much remains to be done.

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Apparently, a congressionally mandated database to provide data on domestic abuse is still not complete 10 years after the legislative requirement.

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The Defense Department also lacks an oversight plan with goals and metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs.

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Without accurate data and tools for assessment, neither the Department nor Congress has any way to know whether the Department's efforts are having an effect.

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These issues must be corrected.

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"I am also troubled by the Department's response that domestic violence is a 'national problem' that needs to be addressed by a number of federal agencies. While true, I have pointed out many times in the context of sexual assault in the military that the U.S. government has a heightened obligation to our men and women in uniform – and their families – to ensure that they are protected from these types of crimes whether at home or deployed.

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The lack of a robust program to address domestic violence is an affront to our servicemembers that cannot stand.

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I will continue to monitor this program and work to ensure that the Department takes the

necessary steps to prevent domestic violence within the ranks and to provide support and treatment to those who are affected by these crimes.”

To access the report [click here.](#)