House Votes to Repeal Military Covid Mandate; Biden FURIOUS

Congressional Republicans have dealt a blow to the Biden agenda with language included in a recently passed defense bill that repeals the White House's military vaccine mandate.

Passed on a 350-80 bipartisan basis in the House, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorizes spending for the Defense Department for the next year. Because it makes possible the funding of daily activities, such as pay for service members, the bill is considered "must-pass."

As a result, it has been passed without failure every year during the last six-year period. Democrats attempted to fill this year's bill with items from the left-wing wish list, but their efforts were frustrated.

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Republicans, on the other hand, succeeded in including language to remove the federal mandate that members of the military receive the Covid vaccine.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), along with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), and other members of the GOP caucus, negotiated the provision with congressional Democrats.

McCarthy published a statement upon the bill's passage:

> The end of President Biden's military COVID vaccine mandate is a victory for our military and for common sense. Last week, I told the president directly: it's time to end the COVID vaccine mandate and rehire our service members.
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> While I applaud the end of this onerous mandate — the Biden administration must go further. Unfortunately, the mandate has already had negative consequences for our military:
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> The Army and Navy missed their 2022 recruitment goals by thousands of service members. And, at the direction of the Biden administration, the Defense Department discharged 3,300 Marines, 1,800 soldiers, 1,800 sailors, and 900 airmen simply based on their personal decision to not take the COVID vaccine. This decision was detrimental to the ranks, and there is no doubt it put our national security at risk.

The Pentagon had fought to prevent the mandate from being repealed. While Republicans celebrated its elimination, they contended that they will continue to fight for the reinstatement of the troops who have been discharged for refusing to get vaccinated.

In addition to repealing the mandate, the recently passed bill provides $858 billion in defense spending to bolster U.S. resources in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China's movements against Taiwan.

Among the pet items that Democrats had wanted to include in the bill was a proposal by Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) that would have given mainstream media outlets the ability to collude with Big Tech to keep small and conservative outlets out of the market. Opposition from Senate Republicans resulted in the language being taken out shortly before the vote.

Additionally, Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) had wanted to include a plan to allow marijuana companies access to banking institutions, but it was shot down.

The establishment did gain one victory, however, with a boost in Ukraine spending — $800 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative.

One benefit for troops, however, was a 4.6-percent pay raise, additional money for housing allowances, and a reduction of on-base grocery prices — measures intended to help service members deal with inflation.

The Senate is expected to pass the bill in upcoming days.

The Biden administration is reportedly fuming at the fact that the mandate is likely to be repealed.

As Fox News reported, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said that "We continue to believe that repealing the vaccine mandate is a mistake. Making sure our troops are ready to defend this country and prepared to do so, that remains the president's priority and the vaccine requirement for Covid does just that."

He added, "But Republicans in Congress have obviously decided that they'd rather fight against the health and well-being of those troops, rather than protecting them. So we still believe it's a mistake."

The military mandate had been the Biden administration's one win as far as requiring the vaccine for Americans. The White House had attempted to impose a mandate on businesses through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), but the Supreme Court deemed it illegal.

But Biden's policy had a major effect on the military, with most personnel having been vaccinated.

Despite this, supporters of freedom can celebrate one step in the right direction represented by the military mandate's repeal, as being late to do the right thing is better than never at all.

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