



PRESS RELEASE

House National Security Committee

Floyd D. Spence, Chairman

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HOUSE VOTES TO PROTECT U.S. ARMED FORCES

Today, the House passed H.R. 3308, the "United States Armed Forces Protection Act of 1996" on a strong, bipartisan 299 - 109 vote. Upon final passage, Chairman of the National Security Committee, Floyd Spence (R-SC), issued the following statement:

"I am very pleased that the House has once again voted in a bipartisan fashion to limit a President's ability to place U.S. military forces under the operational command of the United Nations. Although similar legislation has enjoyed the strong bipartisan support of Congress for the past three years, President Clinton vetoed the FY 1996 defense authorization bill in no small part over his objection to this very issue. Were it not for his veto, the protections in this legislation would already be the law of the land.

"This legislation is an entirely legitimate policy restriction that simply requires a President to certify that it is in our nation's security interests to place young American men and women under UN command before proceeding with such a command arrangement. This straightforward limitation is the unfortunate, but necessary result of the Administration's willingness — demonstrated in Somalia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Haiti, and elsewhere — to subordinate American interests to those of the United Nations.

"Once again, Congress is sending the strong message that the safety of American troops, not UN interests, is paramount. This long overdue legislation is an issue of national interest and concern that deserves the support of all Americans."

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