

Senator Duckworth Calls on Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and National Guard Bureau to Ban the Display of the Confederate Battle Flag

June 9 2020 8:50 AM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Combat Veteran and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today wrote to the leaders of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard and National Guard Bureau to call on each of them to prohibit the display of the Confederate Battle Flag. These requests submitted by Duckworth, a former Army Black Hawk pilot who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years and a member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, followed the decisive action by the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) to [issue detailed guidance](#) requiring the removal of public displays of the Confederate Battle Flag at USMC installations and prohibiting such displays moving forward.

“Honoring the ‘lost cause’ of those who waged war against the United States of America, or defending the right of an individual State to allow its residents to own, sell and kill fellow Americans as property, has no place in our Nation, especially the U.S. Armed Forces which waged a deadly war to eliminate the barbaric practice of slavery,” wrote Duckworth. “Critics of banning the public display of the Confederate Battle Flag may accuse me of seeking to ‘erase’ history. Nothing could be further from the truth. My own family has ancestors who fought for the North as well as some who fought for the South. The Civil War tore apart my family as it did so many others. Banning celebration is distinct from education. Remembering our history and more importantly, learning lessons from that history to avoid future mistakes, has nothing to do with displaying a symbol of past enemy forces, preserving statues that honor enemy forces or insisting that we name installations or platforms after former commanders of such enemy forces.”

Duckworth also noted, “Unfortunately, our education system has failed far too many of our Soldiers. These Americans were taught that the Civil War was not about slavery and actually a war over ‘States’ rights.’ Textbooks and curriculums perpetuating this myth

often fail to dig deeper and students are left to wonder what rights States were willing to die for? The right to dance? If it was not a war fought over a State's right to sanction the killing, owning and selling of African-Americans – what was it about?"

In response to the USMC Commandant's leadership, Duckworth sent the following letters today urging swift action to prohibit the display of the Confederate Battle Flag:

1. A [letter](#) to the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army;
2. A [letter](#) to the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations;
3. A [letter](#) to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force;
4. A [letter](#) to the Commandment of the U.S. Coast Guard; and
5. A [letter](#) to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.