

Congresswoman Doris Matsui Praises Increased Voter Outreach to Troops Overseas

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-05) announced that the Department of Defense (DoD), through the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), has stepped up its efforts to educate Uniformed Service members, their dependents and U.S. citizens overseas in order to encourage primary and general election voting.

“Every American should have absolute access to casting their vote in this year’s elections. With the increased amount of servicemen and women abroad, making sure they are aware of how they can vote is more important than ever,” said Rep. Matsui.

In response to the growing number of troops overseas, the FVAP will conduct 155 workshops worldwide by September of this year. Equipped by the DoD, Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) are trained around the globe at U.S. embassies and consulates. They become knowledgeable on absentee voting procedures, and prepared to conduct the workshops.

The FVAP distributes voting materials to the VAOs, service members, their families, and overseas citizens. This election cycle, in anticipation of the support required for the increased number of early primaries in 2008, the distribution began 2.5 months earlier than in any previous election year. The FVAP also maintains a comprehensive website that offers information on absentee voting, access to registration forms and back-up ballots, training, and electronic alternatives to the by-mail balloting process.

“I commend the Department of Defense for taking proactive measures to ensure that our brave servicemen and women have full access to exercise their right to vote. As they serve with honor to protect us here and abroad, it is only fitting that we make sure that they have every opportunity to enjoy the very way of life they are fighting so courageously to uphold,” said Rep. Matsui.

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