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ICYMI: POLITICO Magazine: How Barbara Lee Became An Army of One

Washington, D.C. – Earlier this summer, Congresswoman Barbara Lee’s amendment to repeal the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) passed the Appropriations Committee with overwhelming bipartisan support, only to be stripped by Republicans on the Rules Committee at the request of Speaker Paul Ryan. On Sunday, POLITICO Magazine published a profile on Congresswoman Barbara Lee’s vote against the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force and her efforts to repeal it over the last 16 years. Below is an excerpt from the article:

“In an interview in her Capitol Hill office, Lee describes the moment she decided to vote against the 2001 war resolution. A self-described military brat whose father and ex-husband served in the Army and Air Force, respectively, Lee had been agonizing over the decision to authorize war against those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Her then-chief of staff, Sandré Swanson, was mourning the death of his cousin, who had been on United Airlines Flight 93.

“‘Growing up with stories and being in a military family, I understand that we don’t want to send our young men and women into harm’s way if we can avoid that,’ Lee says. She insists she’s not a pacifist and prefers the label ‘pro-peace’ to ‘anti-war,’ explaining that she ‘just grew up looking for alternatives to military solutions.’ She says there needed to be some military response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but she was concerned Congress was rushing to put its stamp of approval on a war without a clear strategy or endgame.

“She made up her mind the day of the vote at the memorial service at Washington National Cathedral attended by then-President George W. Bush and former Presidents Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford. The Reverend Nathan Baxter led the congregation in prayer, calling upon the country’s leaders, as they ‘consider the necessary actions for national security,’ to ‘not become the evil we deplore.’”

“It was those words, which she would go on to repeat, that sealed Lee’s decision. After that, she felt at peace. ‘I was very calm about it,’ she says. ‘It didn’t faze me after that.’”

To read the full article, please click here.

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