

May 12, 2004- Sanchez Pushes for Stronger Rape Legislation in U.S. Military Code

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Sanchez Continues Fight for Stronger Rape
Legislation in U.S. Military Code

WASHINGTON--Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez again offered an amendment in the House Armed Services Committee during the mark-up of the FY '05 Defense Reauthorization bill. The amendment would replace the outdated sexual abuse statute currently being used by the military as part of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice patterned after federal code 18 U.S.C., a law that has been in effect for 18 years and has been adopted by 37 states. The Sanchez Amendment was voted down by a vote of 33-27.

Sanchez previously offered the amendment during the Total Force Subcommittee, which was voted down by an 8-6 vote, with Subcommittee Chairman McHugh offering to include language in the final mark-up that requires the Department of Defense to review the Sanchez Amendment over the next year.

"I am incredibly disappointed by the outcome of the vote on this amendment. Right now, the military law is weak and the Sanchez amendment would bring an already proven statute to address a growing crisis in our military," said Sanchez.

"This is a reasonable and, frankly, a conservative approach to updating this law," Sanchez continued. "We can't afford to continue to keep our soldiers unprotected from sexual predators, particularly when we are calling on them to make such incredible sacrifices to keep us safe."