

Illinois Sen. Duckworth: Calls on Dems to 'unify behind a new vision for the future'

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U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth called on state Dem party activists to “unify behind a new vision for the future” at the convention tonight.

Duckworth, D-Ill., emphasized unity among all Americans in her speech, telling the crowd in the last address of the night that U.S. citizens “will never give up on our own” and will not “leave anyone behind.”

Duckworth, an Iraqi war veteran, highlighted her experience when her aircraft was shot down by an RPG in Baghdad, resulting in her losing both of her legs and part of her arm before being carried to safety.

But she drew parallels between that experience and party activists who “have been on the front lines fighting for our values for decades,” calling them “just as important as those fights on the battlefields.”

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She also used her story to stress the need for embracing the U.S.’ “shared values” and promoting national unity, as she denounced GOP party policies, particularly surrounding health care.

“When I was knocked down, a crew of brave soldiers lifted me up,” she said. “And right now, so many Americans have been knocked down by the everyday struggles of putting food on the table.”

She also praised U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin as a senator who “just gets things done.”

And she applauded Baldwin, D-Madison, for her work on legislation for veterans, saying she was proud Baldwin was “leading the fight” to combat homelessness among vets. Baldwin has been knocked by the state GOP for her action in response to a veteran’s death at the Tomah VA, after he was overprescribed painkillers.