

U.S. Rep. Kind: Votes to uphold bedrock principle of civilian control of military

Posted on Thursday, Jan 21, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Washington, DC— Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** opposed exempting General Lloyd Austin from the National Security Act of 1947, which requires the head of the Defense Department to be at least seven years past active duty. Because General Austin retired in 2016, he is precluded from serving as Defense Secretary without a Congressional waiver.

“Civilian oversight of the military is a pillar of our democracy,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “I’m here to serve the people of western and central Wisconsin and my loyalty is to our Constitution, not party leaders. Just as I did in 2017 when I opposed a waiver for Gen. Mattis—whose service to this country I deeply respect— I oppose a waiver for Gen. Austin today. Exemptions should only be issued under extraordinary circumstances and we set a worrying precedent by making this our new normal. While I’m grateful for Gen. Austin’s service to our country, civilian control of the military is the law and I will not vote for an exception.”

In 2017 Rep. Kind voted to oppose a waiver allowing General James Mattis, who retired in 2013, to become Defense Secretary.