



Senator Joni Ernst Relentlessly Fights for Iowa

Highlights and Accomplishments from 2019

99 County Tour

Every year, Senator Ernst completes her 99 County Tour, visiting **all 99 counties** in the state of Iowa within a calendar year and **holding public and open town hall meetings** with constituents. Here are some of the highlights of her fifth 99 County Tour:

- **35 public town halls** – From small rural areas like her hometown of Red Oak in Montgomery County, to Iowa's most populated county, Polk County.
- **Hospitals and Pharmacies** – Senator Ernst made several visits over the last year to hospitals, pharmacies, and other health care centers where she discussed the work she's doing to bring down costs and provide better access to health care for Iowans.
- **Farms and Agriculture Communities** – The Senator visited several farms, including the Nieuwenhuis Farm in O'Brien County and Hingtgen Farms in Jackson County, where she heard about the need to get the USMCA trade agreement done and to ensure EPA upholds the RFS.



Agriculture and Environment

Serving as chairman of the **Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Energy and Rural Development** and a member of the **Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee**, Senator Ernst remained focused on issues impacting Iowa's agriculture community. Here are some of the things she's worked on over the last year to help Iowa's farmers:

- Delivered disaster aid to Iowans, including specific funding for damaged stored grain.
- Successfully pressed the administration to **lift the 232 steel & aluminum tariffs** with Canada and Mexico.
- Secured **relief for family farmers** facing financial hardship through her *Family Farmer Relief Act* that's now law.



- Assisted Iowa farmers with **mental health support** through her *FARMERS FIRST Act*.
- Helped roll back Obama’s harmful Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule and continued working to make a clearer WOTUS definition in the law.
- Worked to modernize and prioritize **Iowa’s transportation infrastructure** needs, including mobility challenges in rural communities and lock and dam modernization.

Renewable Fuels and Energy

Senator Ernst knows how important the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) is to Iowa’s continued growth and development. That’s why she has **fought relentlessly for a reliable, robust RFS**. Here is a look at some of her work over the last year to support Iowa’s growers and producers:



- Secured **E15 year-round** by the summer driving season.
- Negotiated an agreement with President Trump to **ensure 15 billion gallons of ethanol**.
- Pressed EPA Administrator Wheeler to **uphold the RFS** in the supplemental rule making.
- Worked with USDA to prioritize and build out infrastructure for higher ethanol blends.
- Received the **“Fueling in Growth Award”** for the 5th year in a row from Growth Energy.
- Successfully pressed FERC to prioritize pipeline propane to Iowa.
- Pushed bipartisan legislation to **incentivize wind energy job development and training**.

Veterans

As the **first female combat veteran to serve in the U.S. Senate**, Senator Ernst is especially focused on fighting to improve the benefits and support for our veterans and to hold the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accountable when they fall short. Here’s a look at some accomplishments over the past year:

- Successfully had her bipartisan bill, **the HAVEN Act signed into law** to protect the economic security and well-being of veterans and families who rely on VA benefits.
- Fought to **combat veteran suicide** by demanding accountability at the VA after a reported uptick in suicide rates.
- Sought to **improve health care for veterans** with bipartisan legislation, which has advanced in the Senate, to help streamline data sharing across government agencies.
- Urged the VA to take action following reports that the Department was hiring providers with a history of misconduct.
- Worked across the aisle to fix a loophole that puts service-disabled veterans who own small businesses at a disadvantage when competing for contracts.



Make 'Em Squeal

Since her first day in office, Senator Ernst has worked tirelessly to rein in Washington's out-of-control spending and to "**Make 'Em Squeal.**" The Senator issues her monthly Squeal Award to highlight some of the most egregious waste in our government. Here are some of the Senator's top "squeal" moments and major accomplishments in cutting waste from the last year:



- **Cutting future former presidents' unlimited perks** through her bipartisan bill which passed the House and Senate committee with unanimous support.
- Called for members of Congress to be prohibited from leaving DC if they fail to pass a budget on time, with her **No Budget, No Recess Act**.
- Cracked down on government projects that are over-budget and beyond schedule with her bipartisan **Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act**, which advanced in the Senate.
- Worked to ban excessive bonuses to contractors of federal projects that fail to meet outcomes through her **Bogus Bonus Ban Act** that passed in the Senate.
- Pushed for federal agency headquarters to be housed outside of the DC beltway, like the Bureau of Land Management.
- Fought against wasteful spending on advertising and promotion through the **SWAG Act** which **prevents tax dollars from being spent on mascots and swag**.
- Called out end-of-year waste by federal agencies and pushed to end the incentive for these "use-it or lose-it" shopping sprees.
- **Worked to save hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars** by allowing DoD to consolidate unneeded warehouses; the U.S. Mint to change the composition of coins; and so much more.

Flood Relief and Work with the U.S. Army Corps

This year Iowa experienced devastating flooding, including in areas around Senator Ernst's hometown of Red Oak. As a member of **the EPW Committee**, Ernst has used her unique position to fight relentlessly for relief, improvements to river management, and critical support for Iowa's infrastructure. Here are some important achievements from the past year:

- Passed a **federal disaster relief package** that included critical support for Iowans impacted by the spring floods.
- Secured a provision in the federal flood relief package to **extend USDA funds to cover Iowa farmers** who had **lost stored grain** in the spring floods.
- Broke ground on the **Cedar Rapids flood mitigation project**, following years of relentless efforts to secure \$117 million in federal funding.



- Hosted and chaired a Senate field hearing in Southwest Iowa where she **questioned witnesses from the Army Corps** and local leaders about river management.
- Pushed for the **Army Corps to prioritize flood control** and **give Iowans a stronger voice** in decision-making.

Health Care

As an aunt to a nephew with autism and a sister to two siblings who both have Type 1 diabetes, Senator Ernst is focused on improving health care for all Americans. Here is some of the work she's been doing this past year:

- Worked to **lower the costs of prescription drugs** by advancing multiple bills through the Senate.
- Pushed to help **put a stop to surprise medical billing** with bipartisan legislation.
- Outlined her vision on health care, which includes three major components: ensuring **protections for those with pre-existing conditions**; lowering prescription drug costs; and providing choice for families.
- Led the effort to **increase access to over-the-counter birth control**.



Combating Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence

As a survivor of sexual assault and domestic abuse, Senator Ernst has prioritized combating domestic violence and sexual assault. Here are some of her key successes from the last year:

- Authored legislation to **modernize and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act—VAWA**.
- Led the way on bipartisan bills to **expand support for victims of sexual assault in the military** and to provide senior commanders with more oversight to best prosecute these serious offenses.
- Fought to safeguard resources for **investigating sexual abuse and conducting oversight of U.S. Olympics** following the appalling crimes by **Larry Nassar**.
- Called for **greater transparency at the VA** after alarming reports of sexual abuse.
- Pressed for more accountability and transparency to combat the issue of sexual assault on **college and university campuses**.

Veterans

VA sexual assault cases raise concerns among a pair of GOP lawmakers

National Security

As a former company commander in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Senator Ernst is committed to fighting for our men and women in uniform. Ernst serves as **chairman of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities (ETC)**, where she is focused on

improving our technologies and keeping America's armed forces several steps ahead of our adversaries. Here are some of the key accomplishments from the last year:

- Secured a tremendous number of her own provisions in the annual defense bill—the *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA)—that focus on:
 - Bringing fiscal responsibility to the Pentagon through implementing parts of her own bill, the *COST Act*.
 - Enhancing the workload and production at **the Rock Island Arsenal** and at **the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant**
 - Improving research on treating blast exposure injuries.
- Administered oversight as **Chairman of the ETC Subcommittee** to ensure America's military remains equipped to defend against a growing array of threats.
- Pushed for proper-fitting body armor and protective equipment for female servicemembers.
- Visited U.S. troops, including a number of Iowans, deployed in Kuwait and Afghanistan and received firsthand military briefings on our nation's strategy in the region.



Families and Values

As a mother, Senator Ernst is committed to defending life and supporting families, including working parents and students, across Iowa. Here is some of the work she's done this year:

- Prioritized **paid parental leave** opportunities for working moms and dads.
- Fought to provide financial relief to the more than 300,000 family caregivers in Iowa.
- Put forward bipartisan solutions to **increase access to quality and affordable child care across Iowa.**
- Pushed for full defunding of Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider.
- Championed bipartisan bills to provide Iowa students and families the tools to plan for their future and **address the growing student loan debt.**
- Hosted and chaired a Senate Small Business Committee field hearing to tackle workforce issues, including **helping to lift families out of poverty** through her *EMPOWERS Act*.
- Led the effort to ensure that we finally **establish accurate and complete abortion data** reporting requirements for all 50 states.
- Fought to **protect the unborn from discrimination** based on Down syndrome.

