



Legislative Alert #113-1: URGE the President and Congress to Address the Looming ‘Perfect Storm’ of Defense Cuts MILITARY

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Issue Background: Following months of failed negotiations to find a balance of revenue vs. spending cuts, the President, on the morning of 3 January 2013, signed into law P.L. 112-240, a ‘Fiscal-Cliff’ deal that essentially “kicked-the-can-down-the-road” in terms of the scheduled Department of Defense (DOD) sequester. Sequestration, put off for two months, is now set to begin on 1 March 2013, and will almost coincide (happening just a few weeks later) with the expiration of the current Continuing Resolution (CR). This measure, passed last year, allowed the Federal government to operate under the previous year’s budget starting 1 October 2013 until the March of this year, due to Congress’ inability to pass a Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) budget. Adding to an already chaotic March is the fact that the current national ‘debt-ceiling’ is set to expire as early as mid-February. Already insufficiently funded, by having to operate under the previous year’s budget, DOD and its ability to achieve mission success and defend our nation will be severely threatened if the President and Congressional leaders do not address the many concerns that make March a ‘Perfect Storm’ of defense cuts and a decidedly important month for the future of our nation’s security.

Action Required: Contact the President and your Senators and Representatives and urge them to come together and enact legislation that will protect DOD’s ability to carry out its strategic policy and, consequently, ensure the fiscal stability needed to maintain a strong national defense. This ‘Perfect Storm’ looming in March of this year, will severely impact our military readiness.

Details (To Be Put Into Letter):

As March approaches, with little to no signs of an agreement being made or compromise legislation being enacted, the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Navy are bracing for deep cuts that will affect the ability of our military to carry out missions. In a memo to DOD officials, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Ashton Carter, directed his Department to, amongst other things, to cancel all ship, aviation and ground vehicle maintenance beginning as early as 15 February 2013. The complex nature and incredible importance of ship maintenance means that these cancellations will undoubtedly turn into suspensions or postponements, and the necessary maintenance will be added to the already lengthy backlog of naval vessels requiring maintenance. Compounding the delicate and already stressed system of ship maintenance is the fact that private shipyards make up about half of the ship-maintenance workforce. The cancellation of their contracts and schedules

would severely threaten the possibility of retaining this workforce, leaving a significant amount of the important skilled workers the Navy depends on for ship maintenance unemployed and at risk of leaving the field permanently.

Furthermore, with the expiration of the CR and uncertainty surrounding both the Presidents Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) budget request and the remaining FY13 budget for DOD, many current defense operations will be left vulnerable along with reductions to current capabilities. While it's been made clear that wartime funding, wounded warrior programs and military personnel accounts would not field any of the cost saving cuts (before or after sequestration), wartime operations and personnel involved will undoubtedly be affected by a myriad of concerns, to include delayed training and maintenance, as well as lack of equipment, resources and relief. With the expiration of the CR just a couple months away and the debt-ceiling maybe just a few weeks away, the time to act is now. Already insufficiently funded, by having to operate under the previous year's budget, DOD and its ability to achieve mission success and defend our nation will be severely threatened if the President and Congressional leaders do not address the many concerns that make March a 'Perfect Storm' of defense cuts and a decidedly important month for the future of our nation's security.

Take Action: Click the "Take Action" link at the top of the Alert to immediately email and/or write to your Senators. This is the quickest and most effective method of expressing your views to Congress. You can also write and/or e-mail the 'Details' section or edit as you desire for a more personalized communication . Also, contact friends and family and urge them to use the Contact Congress feature on AUSN's website as well. Please direct any questions concerning this issue to our Director of Legislation, Anthony Wallis, at 703-548-5800 or at Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org.