



Action Alert

Legislative Alert #112-23: Urge the Senate to adopt House NDAA language for TRICARE Pharmacy Copay Rates
MILITARY HEALTHCARE

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Issue Background: Earlier this year, the House passed the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and reported the bill to the Senate. The House bill, H.R. 4310, contained a plan that would keep the TRICARE Pharmacy copay fees lower than the Department of Defense (DOD) proposal found in the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) submitted last February. The DOD proposal would triple the current pharmacy copay rates over a period of five years. The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) did not comment nor address this proposal in their version of the NDAA, S. 3254. As it stands, the language differences between the two bills must be solved once Congress returns and eventually goes to conference over the FY13 NDAA. The House pharmacy copay plan keeps copays much lower by having a 1-year mandatory trial mail-order refill of maintenance medicine. This 1-year mail-order trial will give Servicemembers and Veterans 40% lower retail copays, 50% lower mail-order brand-name copays, 25% lower mail-order non-formulary copays, permanent zero copays for mail-order generics, permanent COLA cap on future increases, and continued retail access to non-formulary medicine.

Action Required: Contact your Senators and urge them to support the House's position on the TRICARE Pharmacy copays in either Senate floor consideration should amendments be offered or in Conference negotiations. By supporting the House's plan in H.R. 4310, Section 718, it will ensure that TRICARE Pharmacy copay fees would not increase at DOD's proposed rates.

Details (To Be Put Into Letter):

Those who serve, and have served, this nation should not have to suffer the burden of increased medical care costs. The FY13 NDAA that the House passed, H.R. 4310, and the one reported out of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), S. 3254, differ on TRICARE Pharmacy copay rates. The House version keeps rates low, while the Senate version fails to address the issue of the DOD proposal in the FY13 Budget Request to triple pharmacy copays over five years. Allowing the TRICARE Pharmacy copay increase to occur would significantly hurt our Veterans and Servicemembers.

The House, through its bill H.R. 4310, has already taken action by passing a plan that would keep the TRICARE Pharmacy copay rates at a lower cost. This plan sets the prices and rates for the copays and saves both the Federal Government and Veterans money. The House plan keeps copay rates lower by having a 1-year mail-order trial that gives

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There appears to be no reason evident as to why the Senate would not adopt the House language in the NDAA for TRICARE Pharmacy copays, as the plan would save the Federal Government money and keep copays low for our Servicemembers. Once Congress returns to a “lame-duck” session, they must address this issue on either the Senate floor or in Conference negotiations with the House. The Senate should not support DOD’s proposal to increase Pharmacy copay rates. The Senate should support the House’s plan which would set prices, save money, and keep healthcare costs for our nation’s Servicemembers low.

Our Servicemembers and Veterans have served our Nation honorably and we owe it to them to assist them in as many ways as possible. It is important that the Senate support the House plan in the FY13 NDAA that will keep pharmacy copay rates under TRICARE low for our military and Veteran communities.

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.