



# Legislative Update

## IN THIS WEEK'S LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

[SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION/VA MARKUP](#)  
[HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, FY13 MILCON/VA APPROPRIATIONS FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP](#)  
[HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY HEARING ON EDUCATION BENEFITS](#)  
[HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, FY13 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP](#)  
[HOUSE CONSIDERS PASSAGE OF THE FY13 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT](#)  
[AUSN ON THE HILL](#)  
[PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK](#)  
[NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS](#)  
[NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK](#)

### SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION/VA MARKUP

On 15 May 2012, the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (SAC-MILCON/VA) held their markup and passed by voice vote its draft version of the Senate FY13 MILCON/VA Appropriations bill. The bill totals **\$146.6 billion** with discretionary funding at **\$71.9 billion**, which is **\$227.7 million** above the Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) enacted level and **\$465.9 million** below the President's FY13 Budget Request.

The SAC-MILCON/VA markup also provided **\$10.6 billion** for military construction projects which, a decrease of **\$2.4 billion** below the FY12 enacted level. There was also appropriated **\$476 million** for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) which includes **\$126.7 million** for BRAC 2005 and **\$349.4 million** for BRAC 1990, as requested in the President's Budget Request, however this is **\$106.2 million** below the FY12 enacted level. There was no allocation or mention of adhering to the President's FY13 Budget Request for two additional rounds of BRAC.

Finally, the Subcommittee markup contained **\$1 billion** for Reserve Component military construction as well as an additional **\$250 million** for the Rural Health Initiative. Additional details of the bill will be released once the Senate Appropriations Committee completes its Full Committee markup of SAC-MILCON/VA's FY13 MILCON/VA Appropriations bill next week, but an additional summary of what was considered can be found at the [SAC-MILCON/VA website](#).

### HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, FY13 MILCON/VA FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

On 16 May 2012, the Full House Appropriations Committee completed its markup and passed by voice vote the draft version of the FY13 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MILCON/VA) Appropriations bill, sending it to the House Floor for future consideration. In total HAC markup includes **\$147.4 billion** for FY13 MILCON/VA which is **\$10.9 billion** above the FY12 enacted level and a decrease of **\$693.7 million** in the President's FY13 Budget request.

The bill has a balanced focus on construction and veterans affairs, the latter being an issue the majority of the committee proclaimed to be their utmost priority. The Full HAC MILCON markup provided **\$10.6 billion** for military construction, which is **\$2.4 billion** less than FY12 enacted levels and a decrease of **\$573.4 million** from the President's FY13 Budget Request. This drastic drop in funds appropriated is explained in the Air Force's drastic decrease of construction projects. However, the Full HAC VA markup provided **\$135.4 billion** in both discretionary and mandatory spending, which are **\$13.2 billion** above FY12 enacted levels and a decrease of **\$258.8 million** from the President's FY13 Budget Request.

Details on the Full Committee HAC markup of the FY13 MILCON/VA Appropriations Draft bill can be found at the [AUSN MILCON/VA Appropriations Analysis webpage](#).

### HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY HEARING ON EDUCATION BENEFITS

On 16 May 2012, the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC), Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, held a hearing on education benefits and the issue of educational institutions targeting veterans. The hearing began with HVAC- Economic Opportunity Chairman Marlin Stutzman (R-IN) noting that there has been considerable discussion in the press about questionable practices by colleges and universities and the need to increase the transparency of their operations. The hearing noted that federal aid dollars have led many admissions offices at for profit

institutions to use aggressive recruitment strategies targeted at veterans using the G.I. Bill for funding.

The President's Executive Order #13607 directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Education, and the Department of Defense to take steps to improve the services available to veterans and to police the college education market. The Executive Order does not address the 90/10 rule, which is a requirement that dictates that no more than 90% of a colleges revenue can come from federal financial aid. Until that is changed, G.I. Bill benefits will continue to be targeted by for profit colleges. Many of the witnesses, which included over three panels of various VSO's and VA officials, testified to the effect that if for profit colleges wish to achieve the goals proposed in the executive order, compliance should not be difficult, though there will undoubtedly be some resistance because compliance could hurt the institutions profit.

#### **HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, FY13 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP**

On 17 May 2012, the Full House Appropriations Committee (HAC) conducted its markup and passed by voice vote the draft version of the FY13 Defense Appropriations bill, sending it to the House Floor for future consideration. In total the HAC markup provided **\$519.2 billion** in non-war funding, an increase of **\$1.1 billion** over the Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) enacted level and **\$3.1 billion** above the President's Budget Request. In addition, the markup contains **\$88.5 billion** for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) for Defense activities related to the Global War on Terror, which is **\$1.8 million** below the President's Budget Request. Highlights of the Full Committee HAC markup include an additional **\$1 billion** for an Arleigh Burke class destroyer, the FY13 Budget Request asking for **\$3 billion** and the HAC FY13 Defense Appropriations markup including **\$4 billion**. In addition, there was appropriated **\$723 million** for advanced procurement of a Virginia Class Submarine (returning it from it being taken away in FY14) since the FY13 Budget Request asked for **\$874.9 million** and the HAC FY13 Defense Appropriations markup including **\$1.6 billion**. Also appropriated was **\$5.2 billion** for 29 F-35 aircraft and a total of **\$32.9 billion** for the Defense Health and Military Family Programs, which is **\$334 million** above the FY12 enacted amount and an increase of **\$334 million** from the President's FY13 Budget request.

Details on the Full Committee HAC markup of the FY 13 Defense Appropriations Draft bill can be found at the [AUSN Defense Appropriations Analysis webpage](#).

#### **HOUSE CONSIDERS PASSAGE OF THE FY13 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT**

Last week, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) passed and reported favorably to the House its markup of the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). AUSN did an [analysis of the HASC Passed bill, H.R. 4310](#), when it was revised for floor consideration earlier this week. On 15 May 2012, the House Rules Committee reported out Amendments that would be considered on the House Floor for H.R. 4310, the FY13 NDAA. AUSN compiled a spreadsheet and highlighted Amendments of Interest/Concern being considered and posted as a [Capitol Hill Blog Entry on NDAA Amendment Consideration](#). In anticipation of House Floor consideration of amendments, AUSN sent a [letter of support for amendments offered by Representative Peter Welch \(D-VT-01\) and Representative Chris Gibson \(R-NY-20\)](#) that would make improvements within states to the Yellow Ribbon Program.

General debate began the evening of 16 May 2012 and is to conclude today, as this update is being written, with an expected final passage later this afternoon/early evening. AUSN will report on the outcome sometime next week.

#### **AUSN ON THE HILL**

This past week, AUSN monitored all the markups and Floor consideration of Appropriations and Authorization bills, mostly on the House side, but also in the Senate. AUSN went to meetings with staff of Representative Candice Miller (R-MI-10), where we spoke with them and staff of Representative Don Young (R-AK-At Large) to discuss House floor amendments to the FY13 NDAA that weren't considered in the HASC Full Committee markup such as Space Available Travel and improvements to the Yellow Ribbon Program. In addition, AUSN met with staff of Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) to discuss S. 491, the Veteran Status legislation, that appears to have stalled in the Senate, despite its passage in the House. AUSN is continuing to work on this issue, partnering with members of the Military Coalition (TMC) as well. Finally, on 17 May 2012, AUSN participated in a VSO Roundtable discussion with House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-08) along with other Democratic Members of the House to discuss veteran issues and priorities in the Capitol.

#### **PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK**

**S. 3203, The Military Health Care Protection Act of 2012.** Introduced by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to limit increases in the certain costs of health care services under the health care programs of the Department of Defense.

**S. 3179, (Official title yet to be released).** Introduced by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), the bill would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to enhance the protections accorded to servicemembers and their spouses with respect to mortgages.

**H.R. 5747, The Military Family Home Protection Act.** Introduced by Representative Elijah Cummings (D-MD-07), the bill would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to improve the protections for servicemembers against mortgage foreclosures.

In the advocacy section of the website, you can click on [Bills of Interest](#) to get daily revisions on Congressional action for priority bills. I STRONGLY encourage you all to visit our [Advocacy](#) page, especially the [Capitol Hill Blog](#) which receives almost daily submissions when Congress is in session to see what AUSN is doing for you on Capitol Hill.

## **NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS**

There were no legislative alerts this week due to much of our previous alerts being already considered by the markups and Congress having an aggressive schedule with markups and votes this week. Again, when these alerts are sent to your email, please click on the TAKE ACTION link that is at the top of the alert email to send a letter response to your Members of Congress (a few of you have written in that you wish to send letters, but don't know how). Please continue to go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and/or check your e-mail and submit ones you haven't seen yet to your Congressional delegation as Congress continues its markups and consideration of Authorization and Appropriation bills.

## **NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK**

Next week, House of Representatives is in recess. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) will begin their Subcommittee markups of the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act throughout the week. All of these markups are Closed Session with the exception of the SASC- Subcommittee on Readiness markup next week Tuesday. The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to have its Full Committee markup of the draft text of the Senate's version of the FY13 MILCON/VA Appropriations bill. In addition, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will be holding a hearing on the Disability Evaluation system administered by the VA and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will be holding a hearing on the Law of the Sea Treaty as well. AUSN is also participating in numerous meetings with Senate offices and staff next week in anticipation for Senate NDAA and Appropriation measures.

The Association of the United States Navy is continuously on and/or monitoring Capitol Hill, advocating for your concerns and utilizing our strong relationships with Members of Congress, Staff and cooperating with other military associations to tell the Navy and our veterans' story. This is an ALL HANDS ON DECK effort and your grassroots advocacy will help make the changes that need to happen!

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS**

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