



Legislative Update

This week, Congress returned from recess, finalizing a few hearings before consideration of the Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), H.R. 4310. On 17 April 2012, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) held a hearing regarding other Members of the House's priorities for the FY13 NDAA, a forum to allow Members not on HASC an opportunity to speak. The main takeaway from this hearing was how Members are concerned with TRICARE rate increases being proposed and their constituents suffering from PTSD and TBI once they return home from deployment. On 18 April 2012, the HASC-Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations held a hearing on the 30 year ship building plan of the Navy as proposed in the FY13 Budget Request and impacts on the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). In the hearing, the panel heard from expert researchers outside the Department of Defense (DOD), such as Mr. Ronald O'Rourke of the Congressional Research Service, who stated that the, "30 year plan includes a total of 268 ships to be procured and that, combined with the age composition of the Navy's existing ships, results in a projected fleet that would remain below 310 ships during the entire 30 year period... which would result in shortfalls in various years of submarines, cruisers, destroyers and other naval vessels." Along with monitoring hearings, AUSN kept an eye on developments of the House Armed Services Committee website, which included an [FY13 NDAA Webpage](#) to monitor the NDAA process of H.R. 4310. HASC also released, with the common problem of defining and addressing to the general public what sequestration is, a [Sequestration Webpage](#) to provide supporting documents to inform individuals about the impacts it would have upon the Defense community. The Military Coalition (TMC) was also notified that the Department of Veterans' Affairs launched the [VOW to Hire Heroes Webpage](#) about the new legislation passed into law last year, available for our transitioning servicemen and women.

In addition, over the recess period and into this week, AUSN held meetings with key staff of Member and Senate offices such as Representatives Randy Forbes (R-VA-04) who chairs the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) who is the Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Senator John McCain (R-AZ), the Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Each meeting focused on sequestration impact in regards to shipbuilding, end strength and veteran programs, as well as other [AUSN Legislative Priorities](#). In addition, earlier this week we spoke with Senator John Boozman (R-AR) and his staff to discuss the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Modernization Act which was recently introduced and he appreciated our [letter of support](#) for this cost neutral bill. AUSN's Executive Director, RADM (ret) Casey Coane, and myself also attended a morning meeting in the U.S. Capitol with other Veteran Service Organization's (VSO's) with HASC Staff and the Office of the Majority Whip, Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-22), to discuss DOD sequestration and what the House is doing and how VSO's can help. AUSN sent a [letter](#) expressing concerns with sequestration to the Speaker of the House, John Boehner (R-OH-08), Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-08) and other Members of House Leadership.

PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

S. 2299, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), the bill would amend the Service members Civil Relief Act and title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of civil relief to members of the uniformed services and to improve the enforcement of employment and reemployment rights of such members.

H.R. 4407, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Todd Young (R-IN-09), the bill would amend the indemnification responsibilities applicable to the Secretary of Defense when Department of Defense property at military installations closed pursuant to a base closure law is conveyed to expand such indemnification responsibilities to include all military installations closed since October 24, 1988.

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.

LEGISLATIVE ALERTS

Two Legislative Alerts were sent this week based on hearings and interaction with Congressional staff, as well as traction on the

issue. 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. If you have not seen them, please go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and/or check your e-mail for the following alerts which were titled:

Legislative Alert #112-8: The Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act

Legislative Alert #112-9: The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Modernization Act

NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK

The House Armed Services Committee (HASC), Subcommittees will be holding hearings and marking up their relevant sections of H.R. 4310, the FY13 NDAA, on Thursday and Friday morning. The Full Committee is expected to markup H.R. 4310 on 9 May 2012, the week after both the House and Senate go into recess in early May. The Senate will begin their markups, in Closed Door sessions, throughout mid to late May. AUSN will be attending a few Capitol Hill meetings with staffers and monitoring, along with the HASC Subcommittee markups, a few additional Senate hearings as the Senate prepares for its consideration of the FY13 NDAA.

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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Legislative Action Center: [Contact Congress](#)