



Legislative Update

IN THIS WEEK'S LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

[HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY BILL](#)
[HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARING ON SEQUESTRATION ON INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS](#)
[HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS, DISABILITY ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON SEXUAL TRAUMA](#)
[SENATE PASSES COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS BILL](#)
[HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL](#)
[AUSN ON THE HILL](#)
[PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK](#)
[NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS](#)
[INTERN ANNOUNCEMENT](#)
[NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK](#)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY BILL

On 18 July 2012, the House of Representatives passed a bill, [H.R. 5872, the Sequestration Transparency Act](#), which puts pressure on the Obama Administration to detail how Federal agencies would implement sequestration at the beginning of 2013. The bill passed under suspension of the rules by a vote of 412-2, following the Senate's passage of similar language in June, adopted as an amendment to the Senate's Farm Bill, S. 3240. H.R. 5872 was approved by the House Budget Committee by a vote of 30-0, shortly after the passage of the Senate's Farm Bill, on 30 June 2012.

The language of H.R. 5872 states that the White House would be required to produce a report within 30 days explaining how the cuts scheduled to take automatic effect on 2 January 2013 would affect both domestic and defense programs. The cuts would be a total of \$109 billion every year for the next 10 years to all Federal agencies. This is in addition to the about \$1 trillion in cuts to Federal agencies already mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011, and found in this year's Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Budget Request, over the same 10 year span. Democrats and Republicans recognize the problem but are far apart on a solution that would not only affect Federal agencies capabilities, but also jobs that are vital to companies, industries and communities across the country.

Details can be found by going to [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog entry on H.R. 5872's passage](#).

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARING ON SEQUESTRATION ON INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

On 18 July 2012, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) held a hearing on sequestration implementation and the effects on national security with military industry leaders. The panel consisted of; Mr. Robert J. Stevens, Chairman and CEO of Lockheed Martin; Mr. David P. Hess, President of Pratt and Whitney; Mr. Sean O'Keefe, Chairman and CEO of EADS North America; and Ms. Della Williams, President of Williams-Pyro. The hearing was focused on the uncertainty around the implementation of sequestration. The defense industry, which is sensitive to defense budget cuts, seeks more clarity on how different projects and accounts will be cut, so companies can begin fiscally planning the future of their industry. The entire panel expressed great concern over the effects of sequestration to the defense industry and the lack of transparency in the sequestration process.

HASC Chairman, Representative Howard "Buck" McKeon's (R-CA-25), opened the hearing criticizing the administration's lack of guidance with handling defense industry leaders' concerns with sequestration to their industry. McKeon said, "This overdue guidance from the administration on how they intend to interpret the law and implement sequester mechanically is critical to employers, not to mention Congress." Mr. Stevens, CEO of Lockheed Martin, stated, "With just 167 days remaining until it takes effect, we have little insight as to how sequestration will be implemented and no insight into which programs will be curtailed, which sites will be closed, which technologies will be discontinued, which contracts will be reformed, and which suppliers, particularly small businesses who are so vital to our supply chain, will be shut down or severely crippled." Ms. Williams of

Williams-Pyro elaborated saying, "Sequestration is cosmetic surgery with a chain saw." Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA-08) asked how they are planning for a leaner budget over the next decade. Mr. Stevens replied that they have already taken steps to adjust to shifting circumstances with changes in programs and less facilities, and plan to increase business with coalition partners to stabilize their industry.

HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS, DISABILITY ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON SEXUAL TRAUMA

On 18 July 2012, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVA), Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing on, "Examining the Disability Compensation Benefits Process for Victims of Military Sexual Trauma." Subcommittee Chairman, Representative Jon Runyan (R-NJ-03) opened the hearing by saying they'd be hearing from multiple sets of panels. The first panel, three different women from three different groups which included the Service Women's Action network (SWAN), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission all testified on the same three principles; 1) That any servicemember who suffers a "Military Sexual Trauma" (MST) deserves to be compensated with a disability rating; 2) That there is almost no difference in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that originates from a combat experience and PTSD that originates from a MST (but unfortunately there is a huge gender gap in the amount of people requesting PTSD related to those who actually get it (7 out of every 10 men but only 3 out of every 10 women); 3.) The "burden of proof" requirements that the DOD currently has (under regulation 38 CFR 3.304, Chapter 1, Part 3, Sub part 4) make the already stressful act of revealing, accepting, and receiving treatment for MST even more painful with an unfair burden being put on the veteran. Panelists agreed and urged the committee to consider legislation, such as [H.R. 930](#) introduced by Representative Chellie Pingree (D-ME-01), that would set aside criteria for one universal standard for diagnosis, disability rating, and treatment for any and all PTSD related mental health issues.

However, the last panel comprised of Colonel Alan Metzler, Deputy Director for Policy and Oversight at the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), and Thomas Murphy, Director of Compensation Service at the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)] both stated that they believed the standards in place are right and their position was that H.R. 930 was not necessary. To that effect, the Committee Members thoroughly questioned the efficiencies of the VA on determining the problem and Chairman Runyan said his Subcommittee would look into aspects of H.R. 930 and MST.

SENATE PASSES COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS BILL

On 18 July 2012, the Senate passed a comprehensive veterans package bill, 'a veteran's omnibus bill,' by Unanimous Consent, using H.R. 1627 (which had previously passed the House last year and was sent to the Senate) as the conduit. The revised bill would amend Title 38, United States Code, to furnish hospital care and medical services to veterans who were stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, while the water was contaminated at Camp Lejeune, to improve the provision of housing assistance to veterans and their families, and other veteran related provisions that include aspects of pending veteran bills in the Senate.

Top members of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs panels had reached the compromise on the packaged in late June. However, Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC) had placed a hold on the legislation, because he was concerned that language providing benefits for those exposed to contaminated water at Marine Corps' Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, did not include standard provisions meant to prevent fraudulent claims. Senator DeMint and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, came to an agreement on the floor late Wednesday afternoon to incorporate the anti-fraud provisions before Senate passage of the bill, and Senator DeMint agreed to release his hold.

The revised [H.R. 1627, now titled the Honoring American Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012](#), contains more than 50 provisions covering various health, benefits, housing, burial and insurance programs. The bill now goes back to the full House for its passage, due to the revised language, where it would be voted on before it goes to the White House for President Obama's signature.

Details can be found by going to [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog entry on H.R. 1627's Senate passage](#).

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL

In the early evening of 19 July 2012, the U.S. House of Representatives passed, by a vote of 326-90, [the Fiscal Year 2013 \(FY13\) Defense Appropriations Bill, H.R. 5856](#). The bill appropriates nearly \$608 billion to the Department of Defense (DOD), which includes \$518.1 billion in non-war defense funding, and \$87.7 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) for Defense activities related to the Global War on Terror. In a press release, House Appropriations Committee Chairman, Representative Hal Rogers (R-KY-05) stated that, "... in this environment of fiscal austerity, we must also recognize that even the Pentagon should not

have carte blanche when it comes to discretionary spending. This bill increases oversight and takes a balanced approach to budgeting, making common-sense decisions to cut spending in areas that do not affect the warfighter or our missions.”

The Senate is expected to markup its Defense Appropriations bill, which may be a direct response to some of the provisions in the House bill, however the White House has already issued a veto threat over many of the provisions and costs with the House version. There are a few amendments adopted as well that will generate controversy and cause difficulties passing muster with Senate Democrats. One such amendment introduced by Representative Steve King (R-IA-05) that passed the House would bar the Pentagon from using appropriated funds to support same sex marriages. Another Amendment that would upset the White House would block the President from reducing spending on nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Details on the debate can be found by going to [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog entry on H.R. 5856's passage.](#)

AUSN ON THE HILL

In addition to monitoring hearings on Capitol Hill this week and attentively watching the House floor for important bill passage, AUSN attended numerous meetings with Veteran Service Organization's (VSO's) to discuss pending legislative priorities, through The Military Coalition (TMC) and National Military Veterans Alliance (NMVA). AUSN also met with important members of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense including Senator Jeff Session (R-AL) and Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS), the Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

S.3405, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Senator Dean Heller (R-NV), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to treat small businesses bequeathed to spouses and dependents by members of the Armed Forces killed in line of duty as small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of Department of Veterans' Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

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.

We also encourage you and your friends and family to visit the re-designed [AUSN FACEBOOK PAGE](#). If you have an account, please Login and “Like” us, which will allow you to see our TWITTER feeds and other updates from AUSN that shows us monitoring Capitol Hill on your behalf!

NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS

There was one new Legislative Alert 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 #112-17: SUPPORT Stolen Valor Act of 2012

INTERN ANNOUNCEMENT

AUSN is looking for unpaid Legislative Interns to start as early as late August/early September and continue throughout the fall. Candidates should have, or be pursuing, a degree in Political Science/ Government Affairs or Communications. Strong writing and personal skills a must as well as an interest and passion for the United States Navy and Navy Reserve.

In addition to administrative tasks, i.e. answering phones and helping to schedule appointments, interns will monitor and write After Action Reports on Congressional Hearings of interest such as House and Senate Armed Services, Appropriations and Veterans' Affairs Committee hearings. Interns will also have the opportunity to attend meetings with Congressional Staff along with the Legislative Director as well as other meetings off of Capitol Hill. The Legislative Director is also willing to oversee a research project of the intern's interest if they are pursuing class credit for the internship.

Candidates can submit a cover letter, resume and 1-2 page writing sample to the Director of Legislation, Mr. Anthony A. Wallis at Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org or fax it to 703-683-3647 by August 10. Schedules are flexible/negotiable and Metrorail travel reimbursement is available to interns as well as free parking at our headquarters off of King Street in Alexandria. Further details

can be found at [AUSN's Legislative Intern webpage](#).

NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK

Next week, the House and Senate are in session, with the Senate Appropriations Committee expected to start work on its markup of the Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Defense Appropriations bill. Also on the agenda is possible Senate floor consideration of the [Senate FY13 National Defense Authorization Act \(NDAA\), S. 3254](#), however Senate leadership has stated consideration could be delayed as well as far back as after the August recess. AUSN has meetings next week with many Senate offices as well as the The Military Coalition (TMC) to discuss Defense Appropriations and NDAA items of interest. A joint hearing is also scheduled for next week Wednesday by the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees to hear testimony from the Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, and Secretary of Veterans' Affairs, Eric Shinseki, regarding assistance for servicemembers returning to civilian life, a top priority of AUSN. In addition, a HASC- Oversight Subcommittee hearing to discuss the Navy's shipbuilding and ship procurement progress was postponed this week due to the Defense Appropriations bill debate and has been rescheduled for next week Tuesday.

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

Anthony A. Wallis, Legislative Director
Phone (o): 703-548-5800, (m): 703-517-9310
E-mail: Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org
Legislative Action Center, [Contact Congress](#)