



# Legislative Update

There was no shortage of excitement this week on Capitol Hill, as the House of Representatives introduced and passed out of Committee hearings and deliberation, its Budget Resolution, the formal response of Congress to the President's FY13 Budget Request that is mandated to be released no later than 6 weeks after the submission of the President's request. Chairman of the House Budget Committee, Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI-01), submitted in his [Budget Report](#), "Providing for the Common Defense" section on page 19, that, "Defense constitutes approximately 20% of total federal spending, but will bear 50% of spending reductions through sequestration." Chairman Ryan's Budget Report notes that the House requests a total of \$554 billion for Fiscal Year 2013. Other hearings this week included the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Military Personnel hearing on the Defense Health Program on 20 March 2012. Chaired by Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC-02), witnesses of this hearing included Dr. Jonathan Woodson, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Vice Admiral Matthew L. Nathan, the Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy and Steve Strobidge, the Co-Chair of The Military Coalition (TMC), which AUSN is a member of. Of particular interest during this hearing, was the dialogue exchange between Members and the witnesses on the consequences of not implementing the proposed TRICARE fee increases upon the Department of Defense (DOD), but also the fact that the "cost savings" associated with these fees are targeted on a small population of the United States, which has given much in service of their country.

AUSN's Legislative Director also submitted written testimony to the Joint House and Senate Veterans' Affairs hearing on 22 March 2012 regarding the Legislative Priorities of the Veteran Service Organizations (VSO's). Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Representative Jeff Miller (R-FL-01), highlighted three main areas that the Veterans' Affairs Committees would be looking at this Fiscal Year. These were; 1) Increasing Veteran Employment 2) Changing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefit process (i.e. improving efficiency of claims) and 3) Ensuring that veterans' programs are exempt from sequestration, should it occur. All three of which were addressed in AUSN's submitted written testimony which can not only be found on the [Testimony](#) section of AUSN's website, but also posted online at the [House Committee on Veterans Affairs website](#).

In addition, AUSN held meetings this week with key staff of Member offices this week such as Representative Chris Gibson's office (R-NY-20) regarding his sponsorship of the Blue Water Navy Veterans legislation, H.R. 3612, and staff from Representative Joe Wilson's office (R-SC-02) regarding personnel cuts and shipbuilding issues with the FY13 Budget Request. AUSN's Legislative Director also had a great sit down conversation with Representative Erik Paulsen (R-MN-03) at a breakfast reception on 22 March 2012. He was looking for a few talking point ideas to focus on, and we were happy to provide a few of AUSN's priorities to him and his staff in preparation for future speaking engagements, and to put on his radar for legislative consideration.

## PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

**HR 4245, (Official title yet to be released).** Introduced by Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reimburse eligible veterans who are entitled to Medicare benefits for Medicare deductibles and other expenses that are owed by the veterans for emergency medical treatment provided in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities.

In the advocacy section of the website, you can click on [Bills of Interest](#) to get daily revisions on Congressional action on bills. We **STRONGLY** encourage you all to visit our [Advocacy](#) page which has been updated to reflect current events, 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 (a few of you have written in that you wish to send letters, but don't know how). If you have not seen them, please go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and/or your e-mail for the following alerts which were titled:

**Legislative Alert #112-4: Sequestration Exemption Legislation**

**Legislative Alert #112-5: Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans**

Next week, Congress will again be in session and holding hearings on subjects that include military personnel issues as well as disability assistance programs. AUSN has scheduled a few meetings with Congressional Staff as well as we continue to advocate our Legislative Priorities on Capitol Hill. Following next week, both the House and the Senate will be in recess for the first two weeks of April.

## LEGISLATIVE INTERN NEEDED

AUSN is looking for an unpaid Legislative Intern to start as early as April and continue throughout the summer. Applications have come in, but we would like to see more! Candidates should have, or be pursuing, a degree in Political Science/Government Affairs/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](mailto:Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org) or fax it to 703-683-3647 by April 6. 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

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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