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NEW NAME CHOSEN FOR FRIDAY LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

After numerous weeks of submissions, having received a majority of 38% of the votes, The Legislative Watch was the winner! Thanks to all those who offered great suggestions!

AUSN ANALYZES RECENT OMB MEMO ON FUTURE OF SEQUESTRATION

In a memo released late last week by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Federal agencies were asked to develop a 2015 budget submission according to specific requirements. OMB called for the budget plans to continue to build on the President's plan in order to reduce spending on lower priority programs and generate effective investments that allow for economic growth and job creation. This was done with the notion of sequestration still dictating budget decisions in the future as no compromise on the issue is in sight. AUSN took a look at this memo and its effects upon a future Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) Budget cycle, in the midst of a currently complicated looking Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14).

OMB requested that the discretionary and mandatory budget submissions should, "reflect a 5 percent reduction below the net discretionary total provided for your agency for 2015 in the 2014 budget... as well as... budget submission should also include additional reductions that would bring overall submission to a level that is 10 percent below the net discretionary total provided for [each Executive Branch Agency] for 2015 in the 2014 budget." These submissions were asked to exclude: 1) across-the-board reductions; 2) reductions to mandatory spending in appropriations bills; 3) shifts of costs to other parts of the Federal budget; 4) reclassifications of existing discretionary spending to mandatory; or 5) the enactment of new user fees to offset existing spending.

Details can be found at [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog on the OMB Sequestration Memo.](#)

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HEARING ON SEXUAL ASSAULT

On 4 June 2013, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) held a hearing with concerns over the issue of sexual assault in the military along with an inquiry as to the steps that the military has initiated and several bills that have been introduced in the Senate to combat sexual assault. Notable witnesses included Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), and General James F. Amos, Commandant, United States Marine Corps (USMC). SASC Chairman, Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) opened by

recognizing that more than 3,000 cases of sexual assault were reported across the services in 2012 and explained that a change of culture will be needed throughout the military in order to successfully reduce the occurrence of sexual misconduct. SASC Ranking Member, Senator James M. Inhofe (R-OK) agreed that a change in culture will be necessary to address the issue but expressed his opposition to any legislation that would remove unit commanders from the role of administering justice within their commands.

In his opening statement to the Committee, General Dempsey acknowledged that the military must do more to protect victims of sexual assault and stated that ninety programs and initiatives are being implemented to advance change. Admiral Greenert testified that a Navy pilot program implemented at the training facility at Great Lakes, which educated sailors on sexual misconduct, had yielded positive results and programs have been established at other Navy facilities to reduce the occurrence of sexual assault, however he recognized that changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) may be necessary to fully address the problem. Admiral Greenert went on to state that, "By virtue of experience, skill and training, our commanders are the best assessors of their people and are the key to sustaining the readiness of their unit and... Preventing and responding to sexual assault is not just a legal issue, it is a leadership issue. The performance, safety and climate of a unit begin and end with the commander." General Amos explained that eradicating sexual assault is a top priority of the Marine Corps but explained that change and accountability needs to begin with the commanders who must affect a change in the culture of their respective units.

As question and answering commenced during the hearing, Chairman Levin expressed doubt that instances of sexual misconduct would be reported in cases where personnel lacked confidence in their commanders and asked if servicemembers are notified that they can report cases to authorities other than their commanders. General Amos replied that personnel were informed that there are various avenues they can use to report instances of sexual misconduct including a victim advocate group which consists of the servicemember's peers. Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) asked if the services performed criminal investigations during the recruitment process prior to an individual entering service. Admiral Greenert explained that criminal investigations are conducted and noted that recruiting prospects with histories of sexual misconduct are prevented from joining the service but acknowledged that the investigations are not 100% effective. Senator Deb Fischer (R-NE) asked if there are any processes that exist that can better address sexual assault within the commands. Admiral Greenert noted that surveys are conducted following changes of command which ask about the climate of the command with attention paid to sexual assault and harassment and that any claims of sexual misconduct revealed in the survey are sent up the chain of command to be adjudicated. Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO) sat silently as his SASC colleagues questioned one military leader after another about what they were doing to address the problem of sexual assault in the military, and then spoke out during his turn saying that the responses of the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) were, "Stunningly bad." In particular, Senator Blunt criticized Admiral Greenert for displaying scant knowledge of how military allies of the United States had dealt with sexual assault in their ranks.

HOUSE PASSES FY14 MILCON/VA BILL

On 4 June 2013, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 2216, the Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MILCON/VA) Appropriations bill by a vote of 421-4. The legislation would fund Military Construction and Veterans programs and address the backlog of Veterans' disability claims in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The bill would provide funds to Veterans' benefits and programs to ensure that all Veterans receive the services they have earned as a result of their sacrifices and service to the country. H.R. 2216 appropriates \$157.8 billion for total MILCON/VA funding for FY14. The bill totals \$73.3 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$1.4 billion above the enacted level for FY13, and approximately \$2.4 billion above the current level caused by automatic sequestration spending cuts, which does not affect Veterans spending. This level is nearly \$1.4 billion below the President's FY14 Budget request for these programs.

H.R. 2216, Title I, provides \$9.9 billion for military construction projects, a decrease of \$646 million below last year's FY13 level and a decrease of \$400 million from the FY14 PB request. H.R. 2216, Title II, provides a total of \$147.9 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The total discretionary funding for Veterans programs in the bill is \$63.1 billion, which is \$2.1 billion above the FY13 enacted level, with \$54.5 billion of this total provided last year in advance funding in the FY13 Appropriations bill. H.R. 2216 continues the tradition of Advanced Appropriations by including \$55.6 billion in advance for Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15). Some of the priority programs funded included \$344 million for a single Department of Defense (DOD) - VA electronic health record, proving \$155 million for the Veterans Benefit Management System, a paperless claims process system, as well as \$136 million for the Veterans Claims Intake Program, which aims to eliminate the paper-based system by digitally scanning existing paper health records.

Notable Amendments adopted during floor debate of the H.R. 2216 include House Amendment 83, by Representative John Culberson (R-TX-07) which requires no funds expended for the development of an electronic health record except for the health record in the Joint Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2013-2015 of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense, Joint Executive Council. Another notable amendment included House Amendment 86, by Representative Jack Kingston (R-GA-01) which prohibits the use of funds to pay more than 75% of any salary of a senior VA official from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2014, unless the percentage of disability compensation claims that are more than 125 days old are less than or equal to 40% by 1 July 2014. Finally, House Amendment 90, by Representative Jon Runyan (R-NJ-03) prohibits the use of funds for proposing, planning for, or executing a new or additional Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

Details can be found at [AUSN's Legislative Analysis of House Passed FY14 MILCON/VA Appropriation Bill](#).

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS, DEFENSE MARKUP OF FY14 DEFENSE BILL

On 5 June 2013, the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense (HAC-D) approved the draft version of the Defense Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14). In total, the HAC-D markup provides \$512.5 billion, a decrease of \$5.1 billion below the Fiscal Year 2013 enacted level and \$3.4 billion below the President's request. This is approximately \$28.1 billion above the current level caused by automatic sequestration spending cuts. It also includes \$85.8 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) for Defense activities related to the Global War on Terror. The Pentagon's request, which came to \$52 billion above the budget caps, deferred hard choices on weapons programs, force structure and other Congressional priorities. Appropriators in both chambers appear to have followed suit, marking up the Defense Appropriation bills, ignoring the cutting that is all but certain to hit the Pentagon. Appropriators appear to have trimmed around the edges, essentially green lighting spending on programs such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), for which the Defense Department requested \$8.4 billion for FY14. Both chambers also are expected to approve development programs for weapons such as the Navy's replacement for the Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN-X), whose annual costs will increase significantly over the next decade. However, some of the reductions made, for cost savings include: \$1 billion in anticipated excess funding; \$437 million for the proposed civilian pay raise; and \$2.1 billion in savings from rescissions of unused prior-year funding.

Other highlights from the HAC-D markup include; for Military Personnel and Pay there is appropriated \$129.6 billion to provide for 1,361,400 Active Duty troops and 833,700 Reserves. This funding level is \$2.1 billion below last year, due to the reduction in troop totals. There also includes a 1.8% pay raise for the military, which is in line with pending National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) legislation. For Defense Health and Military Family Programs there is appropriated \$33.6 billion, which is \$858 million above last year's level, and \$348 million above the President's FY14 Budget Request to provide care for our troops, military families, and retirees. In regards to equipment, the HAC-D markup contains \$15.2 billion to procure 8 Navy ships, including two Virginia Class Attack Submarines (SSN), \$5.1 billion for 29 F-35 aircraft, \$1.9 billion for 21 E/A-18G Growler's, \$2.2 billion for 73 UH-60 Blackhawk and 37 MH-60S/R helicopters and a total of \$1.5 billion for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA).

Details can be found at [AUSN's Legislative Analysis of HAC-D Markup of FY14 Defense Appropriations](#).

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE MARKUP OF FY14 NDAA

On 6 June 2013, at 2:13am, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) approved, H.R. 1960, the Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) by a vote of 59-2, after a marathon 16 hours of debate which began on 5 June 2013. Overall, the House bill would authorize \$638.4 billion for the Department of Defense (DOD) and other national security programs as well as \$85.8 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), \$5 billion more than the President's FY14 request. This is consistent with the levels authorized in FY13 NDAA for the base budget and \$2.7 billion less for war spending. The President's budget request, as well as the House and Senate passed budgets each authorize national defense above the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA) by \$52 billion; while none of them envision applying FY14 sequestration cuts to the military.

Highlights of the bill include an across the board pay raise of 1.8% of annual troop pay, above the 1% from the President's FY14 request, added provisions that would combat sexual assault in the military, rejection of Department of Defense (DOD) proposals to increase or create new TRICARE enrollment fees and raise pharmacy copays. The bill also rejects Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) requests by DOD as well.

Notable amendments adopted included an amendment that would raise the cost-cap for the Ford-Class Carrier (CVN-

78), an amendment which directs the GAO to report to Congress by 30 March 2014 regarding a series of questions on the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and status of the mission modules, an amendment which requests a report from the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) on the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) and expanding its mission, an amendment which recognizes the service in the Reserve Components as Veterans under the law, and finally an amendment which ensures that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and Veterans with better assistance in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses.

H.R. 1960 is expected to come to the House floor for a vote in the next two weeks. A detailed analysis of the bill by AUSN will be done next week once the markup language has been updated and inserted into H.R. 1960.

AUSN ON THE HILL

In addition to monitoring all the House developments with the Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MILCON/VA) and Defense Appropriation bills along with the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), AUSN was busy on and off the Hill this week. AUSN held a meeting with THALES Group to discuss its role in the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program. Later in the week, AUSN went to meet with the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (OSD-RA) to touch base on equipment procurement activities with a follow up next week. Finally, AUSN had a great Second Drumbeat with our over 100 Legislative Liaisons around the country, talking about what is going on this summer on Capitol Hill and what they should be discussing with their Congressional offices back in their respective states and districts. Many delegations have started to meet with their Senators and Representatives offices and have submitted great feedback as to how responsive these offices have been. We look forward to continued reports by our AUSN volunteer Legislative Liaisons.

PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

S. 1089, Servicemembers and Veterans Prescription Drug Safety Act. Introduced by Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), the bill would provide for a prescription drug take-back program for members of the Armed Forces and Veterans.

S. 1078, Keep Faith with TRICARE Prime Act. Introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), the bill would direct the Secretary of Defense to provide certain TRICARE beneficiaries with the opportunity to retain access to TRICARE Prime.

S. 1076, Disabled Military Child Protection Act of 2013. Introduced by Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the payment of monthly annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan to a supplemental or special needs trust established for the sole benefit of a disabled dependent child of a participant in the Survivor Benefit Plan.

S. 1060, Veterans to Paramedics Transition Act. Introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), the bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to facilitate emergency medical services personnel training and certification curriculums for military Veterans.

S. 1032, Better Enforcement for Sexual Assault Free Environments (BE SAFE) Act of 2013. Introduced by Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the Uniform Code of Military Justice related to sex-related offenses committed by members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 2272, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative David McKinley (R-WV-01), the bill would direct the Secretary of Defense to establish an electronic means by which members of the Ready Reserves of the Armed Forces may track their active-duty service.

H.R. 2249, The Disabled Military Child Protection Act. Introduced by Representative Jim Moran (D-VA-08), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the payment of monthly annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan to a supplemental or special needs trust established for the sole benefit of a disabled dependent child of a participant in the Survivor Benefit Plan.

H.R. 2227, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Kristi Noem (R-SD-AL), the bill would improve the response to and prevention of sexual assaults involving members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 2207, Better Enforcement for Sexual Assault Free Environments (BE SAFE) Act of 2013. Introduced by Representative Michael Turner (R-OH-10), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the Uniform Code of Military Justice related to sex-related offenses committed by members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 2169, Veterans Education Flexibility Act. Introduced by Representative Brian Higgins (D-NY-26), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the time limitation for use of eligibility and entitlement to educational assistance under certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2150, Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs Reauthorization Act. Introduced by Representative Paul Cook (R-CA-08), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless

Veterans reintegration programs.

H.R. 2138, Ending VA Claims Disability Backlog and Accountability Act. Introduced by Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23), the bill would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to resolve the backlog of disability claims of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2133, Veterans Back to Work Act. Introduced by Representative Ted Poe (R-TX-02), the bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the work opportunity tax credit for Veterans and to allow an exemption from an employer's employment taxes in an amount equivalent to the value of such credit in the case of Veterans.

In the advocacy section of the website, you can click on [Bills of Interest](#) to get daily revisions on Congressional action for all AUSN priority bills. We 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 [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 Alerts 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 #113-15: SUPPORT H.R. 1971 & S. 1078, The Keep Faith with TRICARE Prime Act

NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK

Next week Congress will be in session, this time, turning to the Senate side as they look to catch up with the House's work on Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Appropriation bills and National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) will begin with Subcommittee markups, some OPEN and some CLOSED to the public, which AUSN will monitor, however the SASC Full Committee markup will be CLOSED to the public both Wednesday and Thursday, thus an analysis won't be provided until after SASC passes and releases its final mark. In addition, AUSN has follow-up meetings with the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (OSD-RA) as well as the staff of the co-chairs of the Congressional Navy and Marine Corps Caucus, Representative J. Randy Forbes (R-VA-04) and Representative Susan Davis (D-CA-53).

AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE LIAISON VOLUNTEERS FOR 2013

AUSN has received numerous volunteers for the Legislative Liaison program and is grateful for everyone who has thrown their hands up to help in our grassroots efforts in the states. AUSN's Legislative Director and National Vice President of Government Relations have spoken recently on our current volunteers and are finalizing details which will be released before the end of the month. The program officially launched on 1 April 2013 and we have already had our volunteers out in the field engaging their Members of Congress in their state and district offices.

However, AUSN is still seeking TWO VOLUNTEER AUSN MEMBERS per state, (PARTICULARLY to fill remaining gaps from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming) to act as AUSN Legislative Liaisons and meet with their Members of Congress AT LEAST TWICE a year, preferably once in the late Spring and once in the early Fall. The goal will be to have AUSN Members engage their Congressional Delegation and report to the Legislative Director at the AUSN Headquarters on what transpired and what they need. AUSN Headquarters will provide necessary copies of Legislative Alerts, Fact Sheets, Priorities/Objectives Cards and any other information in preparation for meetings upon request.

To qualify for being a 2013 AUSN Legislative Liaison, you must;

- Be an Active AUSN Member (and be a permanent resident of State you wish to liaison with)

- Be willing to meet with your Senators' offices TWICE a year (which have District offices throughout your State)
- Be willing to engage with at least ONE House Member District office TWICE a year
- Report to AUSN Legislative Director, Anthony Wallis, and/or the NEW National Vice President of Government Relations, RDML Robin Graf, USNR (Ret), on meetings and important highlights via e-mail
- Stick STRICTLY to FEDERAL issues of concern (AUSN Priority Card) to AUSN that are nation-wide and benefit all members of the Navy community

IF INTERESTED, please contact AUSN'S Legislative Director, Anthony Wallis, at anthony.wallis@ausn.org and copy RDML Graf, at grafrl@cox.net.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

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Legislative Action Center: [Contact Congress](#)