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HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS, MILCON/VA SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON FORCE STRUCTURE

On Tuesday, 5 March 2013, the House Appropriations Committee (HAC), Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (HAC-MILCON/VA), held a hearing titled; "Force Structure Issues and the Impact on Military Construction." The witnesses included Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Jonathan Greenert, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps (USMC), General James Amos. Also attending the hearing was HAC Chairman, Representative Hal Rodgers (R-KY-05), who spoke of his recently introduced legislation, a new Continuing Resolution (CR) in the form of H.R. 933.

The new CR would avert a government shutdown and fund the Department of Defense (DOD) at elevated levels (to help soften the blow of sequestration,) while leaving all other agencies at last year's funding levels. It would also include full-year Defense and Military Construction/Veterans Affairs (MILCON/VA) Appropriations bills. Chairman Rodgers stated that, "It is clear that this nation is facing some very hard choices, and it's up to Congress to pave the way for our financial future, but right now, we must act quickly and try to make the most of a difficult situation. This bill will fund essential Federal programs and services, help maintain our national security, and take a potential shutdown off the table. This CR package is the right thing to do, and it's the right time to do it."

CNO Greenert testified that the two primary components of today's Navy are "operating forward" and being ready. He continued to say that the Navy and its two primary components have already been put at great risk, as the Navy has had to operate under last year's budget levels due to the CR. He continued to say that if the current budgetary concerns persist, the Navy's ability to "operate forward" and stay at a level of "maximum readiness" would be severely threatened. HAC-MILCON/VA Chairman, Representative John Culberson's (R-TX-07), asked the CNO a question pertaining to China building 10 submarines (their version of our Virginia Class Submarines) and our ability to maintain our current two subs a year plan. Admiral Greenert voiced a deep concern with the long-term viability of a two Virginia Class Submarine-a-year building plan. He went on to state spoke the importance of keeping this plan in place and voiced his hopes that the new CR, in the form of H.R. 933, would help to alleviate the funding problems in the Navy's shipbuilding plan. In addition, he also spoke of the importance of H.R. 933 as it pertained to being able to start the refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) of the USS Abraham Lincoln, as well as beginning the construction of the new USS John F. Kennedy. Chairman Culberson went on to General Amos if he could talk about the importance of passing

a complete Defense Appropriations bill and a MILCON/VA bill in the new CR. General Amos responded that no new appropriations will impede Marine Corps operations and maintenance. He then spoke of how hundreds of millions of dollars in losses have cut aircraft training and maintenance, along with cuts or complete operational cancellations in SOUTHCOM, NORTHCOM, or in the Pacific.

Finally, Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL-25) asked Admiral Greenert how a new CR would change the financial scenario the Navy is under, particularly with South America counter drug efforts. Admiral Greenert responded that with the new CR, the Navy could get back to operations including Operation Continuing Promise (OCP) that involves interdicting drug smuggling.

AUSN SUBMITS WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR JOINT HVAC/SVAC HEARING ON VSO PRIORITIES

On 6 March 2013, AUSN submitted written testimony to a Joint Hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. The testimony consisted of AUSN's notable veteran priorities discussed and amended at our National Conference last October 2012, which forms the basis of our Legislative Objectives for the 2013 year. Highlights of the testimony included our concern for the over 857,000 unemployed Veterans (mostly Vietnam Veterans) throughout the country. In 2012 alone, the unemployment rate for OIF and OEF Veterans hovered at 10%. In the testimony, AUSN emphasized that there must continue to be prospects for Veteran employment by extending and strengthening incentives for businesses to employ Veterans. In addition, there are alarming cases where Veterans are afraid to put 'Veteran' on their job applications in fear of employer's not wanting to hire them due to some of the complex burdens some of these Veterans may carry. This discrimination is something that should be monitored and discouraged. AUSN stated its support for legislative efforts that seek to improve the employment of Veterans and encourage preferential hiring practices in businesses. One such bill is S. 6, the Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act, which provides assistance to small business owned by Veterans and provides a tax credit to businesses of up to \$5,600 for hiring Veterans who have been searching for a job for more than six months, as well as a \$2,400 credit for Veterans who are unemployed for more than a month but fewer than six.

AUSN also stated its support for the classification of certain affected groups of our Navy Reservists as Veterans of the Armed Forces, particularly H.R. 679 which would authorize Veteran status under Title 38 for Guard and Reserve members of the Armed Forces who are entitled to a non-regular retirement under Chapter 1223 of Title 10, but never called to active Federal service during their careers through no fault of their own. The bill was written to explicitly include stronger language with a, "Clarification Regarding Benefits," section which states that as a result of passage of this bill, no additional benefits may be conferred by persons receiving status of 'Veterans' under this act. This zero-cost bill also has the potential to help combat high levels of unemployment amongst the Reserve Component community, providing 'Veteran' status for them to be hired by employers that actively seek Veterans in the workplace.

Details of the Testimony can be found at [AUSN's Testimony to Congress webpage](#).

AUSN ANALYZES HOUSE PASSAGE OF CONTINUING RESOLUTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

On 6 March 2013, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 933, the Continuing Resolution (CR) for Appropriations for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) by a vote of 267-151. The bill provides new spending appropriations for the remainder of FY13 for the Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), taken from last year's unfinished FY13 Appropriations bills, however funds the rest of the Executive Branch agencies at FY12 levels. This comes, in an effort to slightly soften the cuts to DOD and help fund programs for the remainder of the year, after the President last week Friday, 1 March 2013, submitted his '[Sequestration Order](#)' to begin implementation upon agencies due to the deadline passing last week.

While some 730,000 civilian employees of the military would face up to 22 days of furlough under sequester, military personnel, who are being exempted from sequester, would see a 1.7 percent increase in pay. In total, H.R. 933 provides \$518.1 billion for defense, an increase of \$2 billion from the President's FY13 Budget Request, and \$87.2 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) for Defense activities related to the Global War on Terror and Afghanistan operations. Highlights of the FY13 CR for both Defense Measures, Division A. of H.R. 933, and MILCON/VA Measures, Division B. of H.R. 933, include: 1) Military Personnel and Pay: \$127.53 billion to provide for 1,401,000 active-duty troops and 837,400 reserves. This funding level is \$927 million below the budget request. This also includes a 1.7% pay raise for the military, which is in line with pending Defense authorization legislation; 2) Defense Health and

Military Family Programs: \$33.2 billion, which is \$1.6 billion below last year's level, and \$1.6 billion below the President's FY13 Budget Request, for Defense health and family programs to provide care for our troops, military families, and retirees which includes \$273 million to fully fund TRICARE benefits, \$194 million for breast, prostate, and ovarian cancer research, \$60 million for traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health research and \$60 million for research into treatment and prevention of traumatic brain injuries; 3) Procurement: H.R. 933 included details on Navy equipment procurement appropriations. The allocation in the CR includes the following increases, \$263.3 million advanced procurement for 1 additional Amphibious Assault (LPD-17) ship, \$777.7 million for additional Virginia Class (SSN) submarine in FY14 (10 total in FYDP), \$1 billion for additional Arleigh Burke Class (DDG-51) destroyer, \$45 million advanced procurement for 15 additional E/A-18G Growlers, \$605 million for an additional 11 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, \$79 million for one C-40A to mitigate Navy Reserve shortfall and \$1.5 billion for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA).

Details (and [AUSN's Analysis Report](#)) can be found at [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog on CR Passage](#).

AUSN ON THE HILL

This past week, in the wake of sequestration's trigger last week, AUSN monitored developments with the new Continuing Resolution (CR) that was introduced on Monday and hearings that were held to discuss the future CR and impacts of sequestration. In addition, AUSN held many meetings with Congressional staff including Professional Staff Members of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), Subcommittee on Seapower as well as staff of Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC-02) and Senator Dan Coats (R-IN). In the meetings Navy equipment needs as well as Reserve Retroactive Retirement Credit legislation to 9/11 were discussed. Some of these items, like the later retirement credit, are difficult conversations to have with Congressional staff due to lack of funding in these fiscally tight times on Capitol Hill, despite Congressional staff knowing it is the right thing to do, but AUSN wants to reassure its members that we are continuing such conversations on Capitol Hill. Finally, AUSN's Executive Director, RADM Casey Coane, U.S. Navy (Ret.), spoke on [WUSA Channel 9 news in a TV interview](#) on Tuesday about the effects sequestration, since last week's implementation, is having on the Navy and will continue to have throughout the near future.

PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

S. 495, Careers for Veterans Act. Introduced by Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to require Federal agencies to hire veterans, to require States to recognize the military experience of veterans when issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.

S. 492, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to require States to recognize the military experience of veterans when issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.

S. 470, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to require that the Purple Heart occupy a position of precedence above the new Distinguished Warfare Medal.

S. 455, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transport individuals to and from facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, and care.

S. 430, Veteran Small Business Protection Act. Introduced by Dean Heller (R-NV), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance treatment of certain small business concerns for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

H.R. 975, Servicemembers Mental Health Review Act of 2013. Introduced by Representative Tim Walz (D-MN-01), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to extend the duration of the Physical Disability Board of Review and to the expand the authority of such Board to review of the separation of members of the Armed Forces on the basis of a mental condition not amounting to disability, including separation on the basis of a personality or adjustment disorder.

H.R. 958, The Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvements Act of 2013. Introduced by Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA-02), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured veterans and their spouses.

H.R. 897, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Janice Hahn (D-CA-44), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the definition of homeless veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 883, Expanding Education Opportunities for Post 9/11 Vets Families. Introduced by Representative Jason Chaffetz (R-UT-03), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to permit certain veterans who were discharged

or released from the Armed Forces by reason of service-connected disability to transfer benefits under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program.

H.R. 833, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA-50), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to require that the Purple Heart occupy a position of precedence above the new Distinguished Warfare Medal.

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 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 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 #113-5: SUPPORT H.R. 671 and S. 294, the Ruth Moore Act of 2013

NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK

Next week, AUSN will be meeting with a few Congressional offices as well as attending a few hearings including a few Armed Services and Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearings on the House and Senate side. In addition, AUSN will be monitoring the Continuing Resolution (CR) as it makes its way through the Senate and deliberations on whether to include other Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Appropriations measures to the new CR or not occur. AUSN will be hosting its first Navy Now Forum of the year at the Navy Memorial in downtown DC next week where VADM Richard Hunt will be speaking about the development of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), details can be found at [AUSN’s Navy Now Forum webpage](#). Finally, AUSN will be attending, as one of the main sponsoring Associations, the [House Guard and Reserve Caucus](#) Breakfast next week where Deputy Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, has been invited to speak.

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. We’re hoping to start the program up in April 2013, right after the President is expected to drop his Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Budget request and Congressional hearings commence.

However, AUSN is still seeking **TWO VOLUNTEER AUSN MEMBERS** per state, (**PARTICULARLY** to fill remaining gaps from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, 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. Once we have enough AUSN Volunteers (at least two from each State) we will notify you with further instructions.

AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING DC METRO AREA AUSN MEMBERS FOR AUSN LIBRARY

The Association of the United States Navy (AUSN) is currently seeking 2-4 Volunteers as soon as possible for cataloging, organizing, and establishing a working document for its Headquarters Library.

AUSN currently has a small library at our headquarters here in Alexandria, VA that is need of updating. The library consists of many Navy and Naval History books as well as modern military history. This position would begin as soon as possible and extend into the summer if need be. AUSN is willing to help cover metro transit costs, but AUSN also offers free parking at our headquarters. Research equipment, i.e. computer stations and supplies, are available at AUSN headquarters. Volunteers, upon completion of organizing the library, will receive their names on a plaque, with AUSN's logo to hang outside the library.

Interested Volunteers should e-mail a cover letter and a resume to Mr. Anthony A. Wallis, Director of Legislation, at anthony.wallis@ausn.org. If there are any questions, feel free to email Mr. Anthony A. Wallis or call him at 703-548-5800. Volunteers will report directly to Mr. Wallis on moving forward.

AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT ACCEPTING LEGISLATIVE INTERN APPLICANTS FOR SUMMER 2013

The Association of the United States Navy (AUSN) is looking for a full or part time unpaid Legislative Intern for their offices in Old Town, Alexandria.

Candidates should have, or be pursuing, an undergraduate degree in Political Science/Government Affairs/ Communications. Strong writing and personal skills a must! An interest and passion for the United States Navy and Navy Reserve is highly desirable. 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. Schedules are flexible/negotiable for the summer and Metrorail travel reimbursement is available to interns as well as free parking at our headquarters off of King Street in Alexandria. Please apply by April 10. More information can be found on [AUSN's Legislative Department Intern webpage](#).

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

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