



## **IN THIS WEEK'S LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:**

[AUSN ANALYZES NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT \(NDAA\) CONFERENCE REPORT](#)  
[AUSN ANALYZES SEQUESTRATION REPORT ON NAVY IMPACT AND 'FISCAL CLIFF' NEGOTIATIONS](#)  
[AUSN ON THE HILL](#)  
[PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK](#)  
[NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS](#)  
[NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK](#)  
[AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE INTERNS FOR 2013](#)  
[AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE LIAISON VOLUNTEERS FOR 2013](#)  
[AUSN CAPITOL HILL RECEPTION](#)

### **AUSN ANALYZES NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT (NDAA) CONFERENCE REPORT**

On 18 December 2012, the Senate and House conferees to the Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) released their conference report on [H.R. 4310](#), the final bill of the FY13 NDAA. Altogether, the bill authorizes \$552.2 billion for base national defense spending and \$88.5 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO). This is an increase of \$1.7 billion above the President's budget request sent last February. Amongst the numerous agreed upon provisions between the House and the Senate was a MAJOR AUSN VICTORY with the successful inclusion of the Space-Available Travel provision that AUSN had been advocating hard for on Capitol Hill through Legislative Alerts, [Legislative Alert #112-3](#), and [Letters of Support](#). The House and Senate are expected to pass the Conference Report to H.R. 4310 by the end of this week, 21 December 2012. Despite a looming veto threat by the President, AUSN will continue to monitor the progress of the NDAA and analyze a final, signed bill once it becomes Public Law.

Details can be found at [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog on Final NDAA Conference Report Provisions](#).

### **AUSN ANALYZES SEQUESTRATION REPORT ON NAVY IMPACT AND 'FISCAL CLIFF' NEGOTIATIONS**

AUSN recently analyzed a report by Jane's Defence Weekly that looks at sequestration's impact. Under the sequester the Navy would lose, on the aviation side, at least one P-8A 'Poseidon' multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft; three F/A-18E/F 'Super Hornet' fighters; one F-35B Joint Strike Fighter short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) variant; one F-35C aircraft carrier variant; two V-22 Osprey medium-lift tilt rotor aircraft; and two E/A-18G 'Growler' electronic attack aircraft. The Navy's shipbuilding would also undergo some hard hitting cuts which would include about \$1.3 billion cut in shipbuilding and conversion. This 1.3 billion cut would result in reductions of at least \$302 million to the Virginia-class submarine (SSN) program, \$287 million to the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer (DDG-51) program, and \$168 million to the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program. While these budget cuts to shipbuilding and conversion will not result in an entire ship, already years in the making, being cancelled they will require much more time in a specific shipyard. This will, in turn, drive the Navy's cost per ship to escalate beyond mission attainable numbers.

There has already been some heated opposition to Speaker Boehner's "Plan-B" idea to halt the 'Fiscal-Cliff' and solve sequestration from the Administration and Congressional Democrats, but some of the most critical voices are coming from conservative House Republicans. With President Obama's pending veto threat of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) still on the minds of many, frustration has grown with the Administration by House members after another such veto threat, in a [Statement of Administration Policy on H.J. Res. 66](#), was issued yesterday for the "Plan-B" legislation if it passes the House. House Republican opposition to Speaker Boehner's "Plan-B," led by Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH-04) and Representative Mick Mulvaney (R-SC-05), has proposed an even more conservative offer in the form of their recently introduced H.R. 6688. This bill would propose tax cuts coupled with spending cuts as, "sequester replacement measures," and shift the brunt of funding cuts to social programs instead of defense programs.

Details can be found at [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog on Sequestration Analysis and 'Fiscal-Cliff' talks](#).

### **AUSN ON THE HILL**

This week, AUSN met with the Under Secretary of Veterans' Affairs for Benefits, General Allison Hickey, at their roundtable discussion on how the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) has made progress on some benefits claims, and working to improve other areas. There were three major areas of discussion: issues with and improvements of the VA claims process, notice to the members of the United States Naval Reserve (USNR) concerning drill pay and VA disability compensation, and lastly, issues with and improvement of the educational claims process. The Under Secretary noted how the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has seen an increase in case officer's claims processing out of the VA; from 0.5 claims a day to 1.7 claims a day (with an error free claims rate skyrocketing from 60% to 97%). When it came to separating United States Navy (USN) members, the VBA was extremely perturbed to find that many separating members were reported being "advised" to not apply for VA disability services if they wanted to continue their service. The VA has assured that they will not force Sailors to choose only one or the other type of compensation on the days that they drill. However, while being able to receive compensation all other days, Sailors will be unable to receive VA disability compensation on their drill days, if they so choose that option. A Sailor can choose to receive VA compensation on his or her drill days, but then they will not be able to receive drill pay for that day. AUSN feels that due to the fact that drill pay per day is apparently higher than VA compensation per day (most of the time), it would be wise for any USNR Sailor receiving VA compensation to choose to receive his or her drill pay for the days they drill. Finally, it is strongly suggested, by the VBA, that institutions make it their utmost priority to employ veteran counselors for student using the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, so that the student veterans can be aware of actions that will adversely affect the waiting time for their student stipend and tuition payments.

Other meetings this week included trips to visit the office of Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), who passed away this week, to offer condolences in a letter to their staff as well as to inform them that AUSN will continue as planned and give the 2012 National Legislative Advocacy Award to Senator Inouye posthumously. Senator Inouye's casket lay in state on Thursday, 20 December 2012, in the Capitol Rotunda as Congress had approved a joint resolution this week to honor him with this ceremony on Tuesday. In addition, AUSN met with staff of Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) as well to look at future work together regarding goals and initiatives in the 113th Congress. Finally, AUSN staff had the opportunity to get a brief at the F-35 Fighter Demonstration Center at Lockheed Martin's headquarters in DC this week. This was very insightful to learn the capabilities of the plane as well as the importance of the Navy's acquirement.

### **PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK**

**H.R. 6688, (*Official title yet to be released*)**. Introduced by Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH-04), the bill would extend tax relief for all Americans, to replace the defense sequester scheduled to take effect on January 2, 2013, with responsible reductions in direct and other spending.

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 were no new legislative alerts this week. Again, 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). Please continue to go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and/or check your e-mail and submit ones you haven't seen yet to your Congressional delegation.

### **NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK**

GERONIMO! That's the sound of the U.S. jumping off the 'Fiscal-Cliff' in two weeks' time if a solution isn't found in the next few days. Already, Congressional leadership has sent memos to Members and staff to expect to be here throughout the weekend and possibly in DC for a vote by Christmas Eve. Part of the 'Fiscal-Cliff' negotiations will be a possible mechanism to delay or even end sequestration all together. AUSN will be closed next week Monday and Tuesday for the holidays, but will be back mid-week to take a look at some of the accomplishments this past year in a [Capitol Hill Blog](#) and start preparing for the 113th Congress.

### **AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE INTERNS FOR 2013**

AUSN is looking for unpaid Legislative Interns to start as early as mid-January 2013 and continue throughout the spring. 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](mailto:Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org) or fax it to 703-683-3647 by December 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](#).

### **AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE LIAISON VOLUNTEERS FOR 2013**

AUSN is seeking TWO VOLUNTEER AUSN MEMBERS per state 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](mailto:anthony.wallis@ausn.org) and copy RDML Graf, at [grafrl@cox.net](mailto:grafrl@cox.net). Once we have enough AUSN Volunteers (two from each State) we will notify you with further instructions before the end of the year/early January 2013.

### **AUSN CAPITOL HILL RECEPTION**

Early next year, 22 January 2013, AUSN will be hosting its annual Capitol Hill Reception in 345 Cannon House Office Building, the historic Cannon Caucus Room, from 1700-1900. The event will kick off with opening remarks by the Congressional Navy and Marine Corps Caucus Co-Chairs, Representative Randy Forbes (R-VA-04) and Representative Susan Davis (D-CA-53). As part of the schedule, AUSN's President will present the annual National Legislative Advocacy Awards to Representative Jeff Denham (R-CA-19) and Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), awarded posthumously, for their work and help this past year. If you're in town or interested in attending, please register at the AUSN Capitol Hill Reception Registration page.

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](mailto:Anthony.Wallis@ausn.org)

Legislative Action Center: [Contact Congress](#)