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**MILITARY COMPENSATION AND RETIREMENT MODERIZATION COMMISSION
RELEASES REPORT**

BY Edgar Rodriguez, Director of Legislation and Government Relations

On January 30, 2015, the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission released its long awaited report. The report is filled with recommendations that would reform long standing military compensation programs. Overall, the report makes 15 key reform recommendations ranging from a consolidation of the Reserve Component's 30 duty statuses into 6 broader statuses, a consolidation of the military's commissary and exchange systems, and a replacement of the current 20+ year retirement system with a system that would auto-enroll service members in the Thrift Savings Plan, among many other recommendations.

It should be noted that these recommendations would only affect those that join the military after the recommendations have been put into place and ultimately it is up to Congress to determine which, or if any, of the recommendations are implemented. Many Members of Congress have already showed resistance to the report's recommendations and it is possible that many of these recommendations will not be given serious consideration.

We at AUSN will continue to work with Members of Congress and their staffs to ensure that our service members, veterans, and military families are provided with the benefits that they have earned through their years of honorable service to our nation. We will have more on this report as developments continue.

To read the report in its entirety, visit the Commission's website at:

<http://mldc.whs.mil/public/docs/report/MCRMC-FinalReport-29JAN15-HI.pdf>

SENATE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE HEARING ON THE IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATION ON NATIONAL SECURITY

By Jessica Taylor, Legislative Intern

On January 28, 2015, the Senate Armed Forces Committee held a hearing to address concerns regarding the impact of the Budget Control Act of 2011 and sequestration, which led to a \$9 billion cut in the Navy's budget in 2013.

During the hearing Chairman John McCain spoke about how the budgetary impacts of sequestration within the Department of Defense have resulted in a lack of modernization, halted productivity, and forced an overall downsize of the Navy. He stated that if sequestration is once again implemented in 2016, dramatized cutbacks would occur. Throughout the hearing, Sen. McCain called for a bipartisan effort to resolve the budget crisis before the military receives another round of budget cuts.

Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), asked Admiral John W. Greenert about the impact of sequestration on the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, to which he responded that the impact has been underestimated, and will take about five years to recover from the effects. Admiral Greenert noted that public shipyards, such as Portsmouth, are a necessity to the shipping industry.

To view the hearing in its entirety, visit the Committee's website at:

<http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/hearings/15-01-28-impact-of-the-budget-control-act-of-2011-and-sequestration-on-national-security>

SENATE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE HEARING ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND US NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

By Roza Kessaci, Legislative Intern

On January 29th, the Senate held another hearing concerning global challenges and the U.S. national security strategy. Dr. Henry Kissinger, Dr. George P. Shultz, and Dr. Madeleine K. Albright testified before the Armed Services Committee to advocate on complex and diverse conflicts that critically impact U.S. national security. Albright, Shultz, and Kissinger spoke about key global conflicts: Iran's nuclear program, the increase rise of terrorist groups, and Russia's attacks on Ukraine territory. Each testimonial urged towards formulating better strategic and execution plans to resolve these long term conflicts.

Albright, Shultz, and Kissinger agree that it is necessary to provide better defensive weapons to Ukraine, as it will need those weapons to protect against future Russian aggression. In addition, Albright cited the importance of more productive civilian-military efforts to enhance policymaking. Kissinger and Shultz noted the importance of building a stronger military. Lastly, all said that the end of sequestration is imperative for long-term military and foreign policy success.

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QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

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