



This past week, Congress held numerous Appropriations, Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee hearings investigating everything in the FY13 Budget Request from changes to TRICARE rates, to BRAC, to the newly proposed reorganization of the Defense Health System into a Defense Health Agency and the effects all these changes will have upon possible recruitment and retention.

On 8 March 2012, the House Ways and Means Committee approved H.R. 452, the Medicare Decisions Accountability Act, introduced by Representative Phil Roe (R-TN-01). The bill would repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), which would consist of unaccountable “experts,” given the authority to meet and make its decisions behind closed doors, all the while not considering perspectives of Medicare patients, TRICARE beneficiaries or their health care providers. With Committee approval, the bill now waits for full House floor consideration, possibly as early as the week of March 19.

Along with this significant movement on legislation, H.R. 452, there was also the introduction of new bills to address a few of the issues and concerns raised with the FY13 Budget Request.

NEW PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

HR 4142, The American Heroes COLA Act. Introduced by Representative Jon Runyan (R-NJ-03), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities.

HR 4140, The Restore the Promise GI Bill. Introduced by Representative Christopher Murphy (D-CT-05), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the time limitation for use of eligibility and entitlement to educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill.

HR 4164, The Space Available Travel Act. Introduced by Representative Don Young (R-AK- At Large), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize space-available travel on military aircraft for members of the reserve components, a member or former member of a reserve component who is eligible for retired pay but for age, widows and widowers of retired members, and dependents.

HR 4155, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Jeff Denham (R-CA-19), the bill would direct the head of each Federal department and agency to treat relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy training or certification requirements for Federal licenses.

LEGISLATIVE ALERTS

Three Legislative Alerts went out this week to mobilize our Members on these new bills and alert Congress to the importance of the actions of Congress in regards to concerns of the Navy community. If you have not seen them, please go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and see the following:

Legislative Alert #112-1: TRICARE RATES

Legislative Alert #112-2: SUPPORT H.R. 452, Medicare Decisions Accountability Act

Legislative Alert #112-3: SUPPORT H.R. 4164 and S. 2112, Space Available Travel Act

In addition, AUSN held meetings this week with key staff of Member and Senate offices. Some offices AUSN met with include Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) regarding their “I Hire Veterans” initiative as well as Representative Tim Walz (D-MN-01) regarding upcoming FY13 priorities. These priorities can be found by going to the [Legislative Goals and Agenda](#) section on the AUSN webpage, updated for FY13.

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 also 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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