

## NMFA urges Senate committee to hold DoD accountable

National Military Family Association

The National Military Family Association testified last week before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Personnel. In addition to the live testimony, NMFA also provided a detailed written testimony addressing health care, child care, spouse employment and education, and the importance of protecting the commissary and exchange benefit for military families. To learn more, read the executive summary (pgs. 2-3) and commissary section (pgs. 20-21). [READ MORE](#)

## Military families and SNAP benefits

National Public Radio

This week the White House proposed a \$17 billion budget cut to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which helps millions of low-income Americans feed themselves and their families. An estimated 23,000 U.S. military families are among those who receive SNAP benefits. NPR talks with Amy Bushatz, reporter at Military.com, about how the White House's proposed budget cuts to SNAP might affect military families. [READ MORE](#)

## Pentagon may struggle to spend more, faster

Bloomberg Government

Secretary of Defense James Mattis is facing a financial challenge now that the Pentagon will be receiving a large amount of funding. The White House and Congress increased the cap imposed on defense spending for fiscal 2018 to \$629 billion from \$549.1 billion in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA), which President Donald Trump signed into law on Feb. 9. The Defense Department needs to spend a good portion of the funds before the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, or it could lose some of it. [READ MORE](#)

## It's official: DoD releases new 'deploy or get out' policy

Military Times

The number of individuals who are not healthy enough to serve overseas has swelled in recent years, and DoD will soon begin separation procedures for letting go a good number of the estimated 286,000 individuals that fall into this category. The [new DoD policy](#) issued by Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Robert Wilkie could affect up to 14 percent of the currently serving military force. [READ MORE](#)

## Reserve, Guard members lose travel-expense tax deduction

Military Times

Reserve and Guard members who travel less than 100 miles from home to military duty won't be able to deduct any unreimbursed travel expenses thanks to the tax reform signed into law in December. This won't affect tax returns being filed this year, but will apply to all 2018 travel and to 2019 filings. [READ MORE](#)

## Veterans groups urge Trump to keep VA Secretary David Shulkin despite travel errors

USA Today

The American Legion, AMVETS and Vietnam Veterans of America are urging President Donald Trump to keep VA Secretary David Shulkin in the post despite his misuse of taxpayer dollars on a trip to Europe last year. Other veterans groups are taking a wait-and-see approach. Shulkin said he was not asked to resign in a conversation with John Kelly, White House chief of staff, and had no plans to step down. [READ MORE](#)

## The real VA scandal: No will to help veterans

The Hill

The scandal that engulfed the Department of Veterans Affairs these past few weeks was sordid and sad. More disturbingly, it has only gotten worse, illuminating the deep-seated problems that still plague the VA. Our veterans deserve better, starting with a full house-cleaning. [READ MORE](#)