



## Coalition and Valued Associates Advocacy and Actions...

With Congress out for their August recess and not due back until 8 September, the likelihood of them passing the 2015 defense appropriations bill before the September 30 deadline seems unlikely. A Continuing Resolution to allow the government to operate after October 1 is the more probable scenario. In his President's Message, Retired General Gordon Sullivan, president of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), a Coalition valued associate member, warned about the effects of a continuing resolution on defense spending, stating:

*Continuing resolutions create enormous risk to our national security because of the fiscal uncertainty they bring. Spending is frozen at the previous year's levels – combat training center rotations are cancelled, maintenance of equipment is delayed, civilian hiring is frozen and new contracts cannot be issued. The bottom line is that training and readiness suffer and fiscal uncertainty reigns. In our dangerous world, defense spending uncertainty is a recipe for disaster. As I have said many times before, regular order in the defense appropriations process must be restored.*

Gen. Sullivan also called again for the permanent end to sequestration. In an earlier president's message, Gen Sullivan stated, "The automatic, mindless cuts imposed by sequestration weaken our nation in many ways. It has created successive years of defense budgetary instability that has caused program cuts, civilian employee furloughs, compromised military training and readiness and a reduced ability to retain highly-qualified military personnel."

He also stated that the President's budget:

*Reflects the folly of sequestration in its funding of a Total Army that is too small to protect the nation in very uncertain times and in its proposals to limit pay raises, while increasing the costs of medical care, housing and commissaries for the 1 percent of Americans who volunteer to serve in our armed forces – Active, National Guard and Army Reserve...*

*Without sequestration, fiscal pressure on the defense budget would be lessened so that there would be no need to target Soldier and military retiree benefits in misguided attempts to solve our financial problems on the backs of Soldiers.*

AUSA and many of our Coalition valued associates, and other military and veterans service organizations have repeatedly called on Congress to end sequestration, rallied their members to storm the Hill, and continue to urge the military community to contact their Members of Congress and let their voice be heard! Last week, the National Defense Panel also denounced sequestration in its independent and non-partisan report on the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, calling sequestration a "serious strategic misstep."

If sequestration continues in fiscal year 2016 and beyond, military and veterans service organizations warn that we will once again be facing drastic cuts to military and civilian personnel; compromising military readiness; and jeopardizing critical earned benefits and programs for our service members and their families – to include Commissary and Exchange benefits, and essential Morale, Welfare, and Recreation programs.