



## **DoD no longer pursuing commissary-exchange consolidation**

AFSA Headline Roundup

The *Military Times* also tells us, "Defense officials have concluded that a merger or consolidation of the military's commissary and exchange systems is not necessary," said the official leading the efforts to find taxpayer savings in the department's resale operations. "We believe we can get efficiencies without consolidation," said Peter Levine, the Defense Department's deputy chief management officer, speaking to the annual convention of the American Logistics Association.

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## **Budget deal may head off pay freezes, furloughs**

Stars and Stripes via Military.com

A budget deal struck late Monday by Congress could avert a government shutdown this winter and protect troops and Defense Department civilians from pay freezes and furloughs. Republicans and Democrats agreed to raise caps on federal spending for two years, though the new defense spending limit of \$607 billion is \$5 billion less than was requested for the coming year. "This is a good deal for our troops, for taxpayers and for the American people," outgoing House Speaker John Boehner said.

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## **Study: Uncertainty top issue for troops, families**

Military.com

Troops and their families continue to feel very uncertain about the future of the military as a career and their own military benefits, according to the results of an annual survey released yesterday. Among active-duty service members and spouses, each group ranked "military pay and benefits" and "change in retirement benefits" as their top two issues, just as they did in 2014.

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## **The civilian-military gap is more of a drift than a divide**

Task & Purpose

With less than 3 million men and women currently wearing the uniform (one percent of the population) in an all-volunteer force, coupled with a continued decline in military experience in the halls of Congress, America risks the potential circumstances articulated by RAND authors. Some have argued that reinstating the draft would reconnect America to its military, but doing so only recruits a different one percent.

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## **VA benefits chief Allison Hickey resigns**

Military Times

Allison Hickey, the Veterans Affairs Department's top benefits official stepped down from her post amid renewed attacks from her critics. As undersecretary for benefits, Hickey oversaw more than 20,000 VA employees and the delivery of benefits to more than 12 million veterans and their families. She was frequently praised by top officials for her efforts to modernize the department and her dedication to veterans.

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