



AFSA view on the NDAA conference report

Air Force Sergeants Association

The FY 2016 NDAA conference agreement just announced by congressional leaders once again witnesses the fact that our elected officials view the benefits of servicemembers, military retirees, veterans, their families, and survivors as ripe, easy targets to help balance the federal budget. We believe three things are being callously forgotten in this approach: (1) Military members live unique, extraordinary, challenging lives fraught with sacrifice and risk; (2) Our civilian elected officials continue to relentlessly task our forces without pause; and (3) We are now regularly witnessing indications of declining morale among those serving and hearing persistent and repeated questions about lack of appreciation and respect.

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NDAA pay and benefits

National Association for Uniformed Services Washington Report

Lawmakers rejected proposals to overhaul the military commissary system and ordered the Defense Commissary Agency to plan for making the system self-funded by 2018. They asked officials to submit a report by March 1 on how the commissary, which receives \$1.4 billion a year in taxpayer funding, could find savings by privatizing operations, working with grocers to provide military discounts, closing stores or combining the commissary and exchange systems. They also blocked the commissary from making changes in how produce is shipped to stores in Asia.

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House passes defense bill compromise, despite veto threat

Navy Times

House Republicans passed a compromise \$612 billion defense authorization bill on the first day of the new fiscal year, which includes a pay raise for troops and an overhaul of the military retirement system, over objections from the White House that the measure uses budget gimmicks to avoid fully funding military needs. President Obama has promised to veto the measure if it is approved by the Senate, which could happen as early as next week.

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Obama to Congress: Lift budget caps now

The Hill

President Obama urged Congress to find a compromise to lift the budget caps on defense and non-defense spending, known as sequestration. "Now is not the time for games that lock in sequester," he said at Fort Myer in Arlington, Va., during a retirement ceremony for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey. "That's not good for our military readiness, it's not good for our troops, it's not good for our families, and it's not good for our country," he said.

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Pentagon moves into uncharted waters

The Hill

While lawmakers only intend for their stopgap funding measure — known as a continuing resolution (CR) — to last through mid-December, the Army is bracing for the possibility that funding is eventually put on auto-pilot for a whole year, according to official documents obtained by The Hill.

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