

Carter opens all military occupations, positions to women

U.S. Department of Defense

Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced today that beginning in January 2016, all military occupations and positions will be open to women, without exception. For the first time in U.S. military history, as long as they qualify and meet specific standards, the secretary said women will be able to contribute to the Defense Department mission with no barriers at all in their way. [READ MORE](#)

Military and veterans advocates address health care benefit reforms

Military Times

Coalition valued associate partners were on Capitol Hill this week to address military health care benefit reforms. House Armed Services personnel subcommittee chairman Rep. Joe Heck, R-Nev., said the committee is "looking to identify areas that need improvement." Heck said, "We are using the same format we used in the successful review of military retirement, which was not driven by budget but by what will produce the best possible benefit to recruit and retain the all-volunteer force." [READ MORE](#)

Lawmakers introduce bill to adjust retiree COLA for 2016

Federal News Radio

Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.) has joined forces with Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) on a bill that would give federal and military retirees a one-time cost-of-living adjustment in 2016 equal to a 3.9 percent increase for most recipients. "The Social Security Administration announced in October that federal and military retirees would receive no COLA in 2016, at a time when Medicare costs were expected to rise. "It would be only the third time in 40 years the federal government would not pay out a COLA." [READ MORE](#)

Survivors mark 74th anniversary of attack on Pearl Harbor

Reuters

A handful of aging U.S. military veterans who survived the surprise Japanese bombing raid that drew the United States into World War Two marked the 74th anniversary of the attack in a somber wreath-presentation ceremony on Monday at Pearl Harbor. [READ MORE](#)

Citing terror threats, Army calls for vigilance during holidays

Military Times

The Army is warning troops and their families to stay vigilant during the holidays in light of the recent terror attacks in France and in San Bernardino, Calif. "Although indications of extremists' violence could be minimal, maintaining an acute situational awareness and vigilance is essential in the prevention, or at a minimum mitigation, of any potential attack," an Army alert says. [READ MORE](#)

Dunford launches 2015 USO holiday troop tour

U.S. Department of Defense

Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, launched the 2015 USO Holiday Tour with stops planned on three continents. "The chairman, along with members of the 2015 USO Entertainment Troupe, will be visiting service members and their families to express the country's gratitude for their service while deployed during the holidays in defense our nation," said Navy Capt. Greg Hicks, the chairman's spokesman. [READ MORE](#)