



## **Military compensation commission ideas draw bipartisan praise on Hill**

Stars and Stripes

There is rising confidence across the Senate and House armed services committees that 2015 will be the year Congress passes legislation to modernize military compensation. As military folks try to grasp the complex commission plans, Congress this week also received a fresh set of proposals from the Obama administration, part of its fiscal 2016 defense budget request, to continue to dampen growth in basic pay and allowances.

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## **Obama boosts defense spending, but faces uphill battle**

Stars and Stripes

President Barack Obama released his fiscal 2016 budget request, asking for \$534.3 billion for the Pentagon's base budget plus an additional \$50.9 billion for "overseas contingency operations." For those who don't want to scour federal budget documents, here are 8 things you need to know about the president's budget request.

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## **Pentagon seeks increase spending on weapons, cuts in troops**

Military Times

The Pentagon is seeking an overall budget increase next year, but spending on military personnel will remain essentially flat, squeezed by cuts in the size of the force and recent efforts to scale back troops' pay and benefits. The bulk of that reduction stems from a drawdown in the size of the total force, in particular the Army and Marine Corps, which have shed more than 70,000 service members over the past several years and brought the total size of the active-duty force down to about 1.3 million troops. Specifically, this year's budget projects that the total force will shrink by another 11,900 troops.

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## **More out-of-pocket expenses to hit military families**

Association of the United States Army

The fiscal year (FY) 2016 defense budget announced Feb. 2 includes modest increases in military basic pay and housing allowances that could leave some military families holding on a little tighter to their wallets. Commissary subsidies would also be reduced by the 2016 budget, which calls for a \$100 million reduction. Budget documents say the savings would come from "efficiencies and operating changes that do not require legislative changes." Military families should expect to see some reductions in operating days and hours.

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## **White House requests modest pay increase for troops and civilians**

Defense One

The Obama administration's fiscal 2016 plan would give troops a slight increase in pay over last year's 1 percent bump while federal workers would receive their highest pay raise in six years. Since 2011, military pay raises have been less than 2 percent annually, and after a three-year pay freeze in 2011-2013, civilian were given a 1 percent pay raise last year. Raises throughout the Obama administration have been historically small.

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