



## **Veterans' Groups Clash Over Proposed Changes to Military Benefits**

Military.com

Veterans' advocacy groups are clashing with each other over proposed changes to military retirement, health care and other benefits. The Military Coalition (TMC), an umbrella group of almost three dozen military, veterans, and uniformed services organizations, couldn't reach an accord on the recommendations of the congressionally mandated Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission. Even as TMC members debate the recommendations with lawmakers, they plan to push back against parts of the Pentagon's proposed fiscal 2016 budget. "Congress has to deal with the budget this year," said Michael Hayden TMC co-chair and director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America. "They don't have to deal with the MCRMC recommendations."

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## **Rubio, Cotton want to boost defense spending**

The Hill

Sens. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Tom Cotton, R-Ark., are pushing for an increase in defense spending. The pair used projections for fiscal 2016 included in a 2012 defense budget proposal by then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates. "I believe defense spending is the most important obligation of the federal government," the Florida Republican said. "This is the worst possible time to be reducing our defense spending ... and we are setting ourselves up for danger," Rubio said.

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## **Bill would let Pentagon blunt impact of sequestration**

The Hill

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) put forward a bill that would give the Defense Department the authority to move around up to \$50 billion within its accounts to lessen the effects of sequestration. The measure – known as the Military Sequester Flexibility Act – comes the same day House Budget Committee [backed](#) a plan to keep in place the \$523 billion spending cap for defense spending imposed by the 2011 Budget Control Act.

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## **Budget battle could have substantial impact on national security and benefits**

Fleet Reserve Association

One of the battles over the FY 2016 budget resolution is whether to include drastic cuts to the Defense budget mandated by the Budget Control Act (BCA), better known as sequestration, or to provide more robust defense spending beyond these limits. The spending limits are being considered as part of the budget resolution for FY 2016. The budget resolution serves as a blueprint for spending in the next fiscal year and should exclude the Defense budget from sequestration cuts. These budget cuts mandate that half of all sequestration cuts come from Defense even though the Defense budget only makes up only 17 percent of the budget. Members are urged to use the Action Center to ask their legislators to exclude the Defense budget from these across-the-board "mindless" sequestration budget cuts.

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## **Community turns out to prevent cuts at Hood**

Fort Hood Sentinel

Fort Hood, state and local community leaders presented their case to Army officials to keep Fort Hood at its current levels during an Army-hosted Force Structure and Stationing Listening Session Wednesday evening in Killeen. More than 700 community members attended the session which was held to provide officials from the Army's Force Management Office with input about why the massive Central Texas post should not be down-sized. The session in Killeen was one of 30 Army-directed meetings held at or near installations potentially facing personnel reductions as the threat of continued sequestration and \$95 billion in budget cuts looms.

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## **Veteran hiring by federal government hits record high**

Federal Times

Nearly one-third of the federal government's new hires in fiscal 2014 were veterans – a record high, according to the administration. About 33.2 percent of new agency hires were veterans – up from 31 percent in fiscal 2013 and the highest in the more than five years since the establishment of the Veterans Employment Initiative, according to the administration.

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