



### **House committee rejects DoD budget proposals**

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)

On April 15, MOAA chapter and council leaders from across the country visited nearly every congressional office to speak out against the DoD's proposed changes to TRICARE, pay and benefits. MOAA members strengthened this initiative by sending their elected officials nearly 44,000 communications reaffirming this message. The House Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee (HASC-P) listened. None of DoD's proposals to cut pay and benefits were included...The subcommittee rejected DoD's request to reduce the commissary subsidy that would have led to reduced hours and operating days. Before making changes to the commissary system, subcommittee members are waiting for a congressionally mandated study on the effects of price markups in commissaries, which is due in September.

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### **Commissary cuts not supported**

NAUS Weekly Update

The House Armed Services Committee version of the fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill that is now taking shape would reject the DoD recommendation to dramatically phase down spending on commissaries. That Administration proposed reduction would have required most commissaries to reduce operating days and hours. Committee members rejected DoD's request for legislation that would have allowed commissary officials to raise prices in order to pay for some operating costs. Items currently are sold at cost, with taxpayer dollars paying for overhead and employee wages and benefits.

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### **Don't cut commissary budget, coalition tells lawmakers**

Reserve Officers Association (ROA)

Military commissary advocates are urging lawmakers to turn down the Defense Department's request to cut commissary funding. "Based on the high value placed on the benefit by service members, retirees, and their families, no commissary cuts or legislative changes should be approved by Congress that would reduce the benefit," the Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits wrote to House and Senate Armed Services Committee members. The House will begin marking up the 2016 defense bill this week.

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### **House Armed Services Committee to take up Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission retirement recommendations**

Association of the United States Navy (AUSN)

In a surprise move, House Armed Services Committee Chairman, Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) announced this week that the House defense panel will take up the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) retirement recommendations in this year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Senate has also stated that they will follow suit...We at AUSN believe that drafting any of the MCRMC's recommendations into law this year is too rash of a move and puts the benefits of our future service members at risk. Instead, we believe more analysis on these MCRMC recommendations is needed and the House and Senate Armed Services Committees should wait until the possible impact of these recommendations is understood.

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### **Proposal to change commissary workers' status**

Military Times

A significant gap in wages and benefits offered to commissary workers and exchange employees doing the same jobs appears to be rooted in a simple fact: The Defense Commissary Agency is funded by taxpayer dollars, while the exchanges are self-supporting businesses that pay their employees out of store profits. DeCA has been under increasing pressure from defense officials to drastically cut its budget. But the idea of converting government employees to NAF is raising concerns about the effects of lower salaries and benefits on those employees, a group that includes a number of military spouses.

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### **First Lady announces jobs, training for 90,000 vets, spouses**

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

First Lady Michelle Obama announced yesterday that numerous technology and energy companies have committed to hire or train 90,000 veterans and military spouses in the next five years as part of the Joining Forces initiative... Shortly after Joining Forces was launched, President Barack Obama also challenged the private sector to hire 100,000 veterans and military spouses, the first lady said. Now, less than four years later, "America's businesses have continued to race past my husband's initial goal, and together, those businesses who answered the president's call have hired or trained more than 850,000 veterans and military spouses."

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### **Children's program aims to curb obesity, boost nutrition**

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

As concerns persist over ever-rising obesity levels among American children, the Defense Department will bolster its Healthy Children programs to weave fitness, nutrition and tobacco-free living into military children's curriculum, a Pentagon official told DoD News. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity rates in the United States have tripled since 1980, and these statistics portend possible jeopardy to the readiness of future service members.

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