



Military coalition honors legislative champions

The Military Coalition

The Military Coalition (TMC) – an influential consortium of military and veterans groups – presented its highest leadership awards to Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Rep. Joe Heck (R-Nev.) for their leadership in protecting the vital interests of servicemembers, retirees, veterans, their families and survivors. Senator Inhofe and Senator Mikulski were instrumental in leading the fight against privatization of the commissary benefit. In addition, as Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Mikulski fought to protect the commissary against dramatic cuts and restored \$322 million in funding for the program. As Chairman of the Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee, Rep. Heck led the fight to prevent a reduction in the commissary benefit and an increase in health care fees. The Coalition also honored Mr. Anthony Lazarski, a senior advisor for Sen. Inhofe, who rallied support from other congressional offices to pass the Inhofe-Mikulski commissary amendment to the Senate's version of the defense bill.

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Secretary of Defense remarks to the Air Force Association

Defense.gov

During the Air Force Association annual convention, Secretary Carter outlined the Air Force commitment to: the people of the current force, a national security strategy suited for the new century, and to the force of the future. He also addressed that, "Without a negotiated budget solution in which everyone comes together at last, we will again return to sequestration, reducing discretionary funds to their lowest real level in a decade -- despite the fact that members of both parties agree this result will harm our national security. The alternative to a budget deal, a long-term continuing resolution, is merely sequester-level funding under another name. Much about the future is unclear, but not this: the self-inflicted damage from sequester, a long-term continuing resolution, and continued budget uncertainty would send the wrong message at the wrong time to the world."

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The budget showdown: How did we get here?

Brookings

Among the many items on the agenda for Congress and the White House this fall is how to fund many of the federal government's key programs—including defense, education, science research, and foreign aid—and whether a government shutdown can be averted in the process. There are many ways the two sides might resolve the issues at play but first, let's review how we got here.

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Pentagon should examine troop-relocation costs, McCain says

The Hill

The Pentagon may be wasting millions of dollars a year by not looking at ways to trim moving costs for troops and their families, says Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. In a new [report](#), the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said the average cost of moving troops and their families to new assignments rose 30 percent over the past 13 years, despite a 12-percent decline in relocations. The Pentagon spends \$4 billion per year on relocation. "That's nearly 4 percent of the annual military personnel budget, which is already under intense pressure from skyrocketing costs associated with military pay and benefits," states the report.

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