

Congress must tackle key defense bills before summer break

Military Times

Lawmakers return to Capitol Hill on Tuesday with a list of critical defense bills to advance before their extended summer break begins July 15, even if none of them has a chance to become law before this fall. Most of that work requires Senate action, with the defense appropriations bill awaiting floor debate and the defense authorization bill needing procedural approval to move ahead. [READ MORE](#)

Obama: 8,400 U.S. troops to remain in Afghanistan through January 2017

Department of Defense News

The situation in Afghanistan remains “precarious,” President Barack Obama said here today, and that is why he will keep 8,400 U.S. service members in country through the end of his term. Obama had planned to draw down the number of American troops in the country to 5,500 by the end of the year.

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Michelle Obama: Great progress on military spouse jobs, but more work ahead

Military Times

Five years ago, only three states allowed military spouses to transfer their professional licenses when their families moved. As of this week, all 50 now accept them. This milestone is the culmination of four years of work by Joining Forces, led by first lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden. “Our military families already sacrifice so much on our behalf, and to ask them to sacrifice their livelihood as well was absolutely unacceptable.” [READ MORE](#)

Stopping the civilian-military drift

USA Today

While we commemorate our nation’s birthday just as President Adams espoused – it’s all too easy for us to forget the great sacrifices. Yet for almost four million Americans, many of whom are millennials, July 4th has a deeper meaning. While proud of their service, it is hardly a surprise they feel a separation from the rest of us. Less than 1% of our fellow citizens serve in our active military today and only about 7% of Americans living every served, whether in wartime or peacetime. [READ MORE](#)