

Association of the United States Army



Voice for the Army—Support for the Soldier
America's Army: The Strength of the Nation



AUSA + 2nd Session, 110th Congress = Very Good News, But . . .

Repeatedly tested in this era of persistent conflict, Soldiers have emerged stronger, with a deeper commitment to the Army's core values and beliefs. The era of persistent conflict means persistent engagement in which the demands on the Army—especially its people—will remain high. A well-trained, well-led, adaptive American Soldier—the most potent weapon in the nation's landpower arsenal—must be ready to execute full-spectrum operations alongside joint, multinational and interagency partners.

The Second Session, 110th Congress recognized the demands on Soldiers and their families and worked to restore the readiness of ground forces, which have been strained by extended deployments worldwide, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army received more than \$8.5 billion to replace or repair equipment, with the reserve component receiving \$800 million for additional equipment. The 3.9 percent pay raise marks the eighth consecutive year in which pay for servicemembers exceeded the average increase in private-sector wages. This session also authorized programs to help military spouses with degrees/credentials/licenses to pursue portable careers and expanded preventive health care provisions in TRICARE. And the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill greatly expanded and enhanced the educational benefits provided to those who have served.

Yet challenges remain to meet demands for ground forces and to sustain Soldiers, families and Army civilians as well as to retain hard-earned veteran and retiree benefits. While this session of Congress blocked Department of Defense efforts to offset rising health care costs at the expense of retirees, it did not make necessary decisions on how to ensure affordable health care for those who, even after retirement, continue to serve as key influencers helping to encourage and sustain the nation's all-volunteer force. It did not offer any additional provisions for other categories of concurrent receipt and failed to make retroactive to 11 September 2001 the provisions that reduce the age at which reserve component personnel receive retired pay by three months for every aggregate 90 days of active duty service in support of a contingency operation.

To preserve the all-volunteer force, restore necessary depth and breadth to Army capabilities and build essential capacity now and for the future, it is imperative that the Army continues to grow, rebalance and transform itself—and to receive the necessary resources to do so. Soldiers—the centerpiece of the Army—their families and Army civilians deserve nothing less as they serve and protect the nation.

Each member of AUSA is a Torchbearer, carrying this message to our elected representatives and the American public. Your voice matters as never before!

Here are some of the major objectives for the last legislative session:

AUSA and others spoke out for:

- Providing a modernized G.I. Education Bill for a new "greatest generation" of servicemembers
- Increasing active Army endstrength to 700,000
- Closing the pay gap between Soldiers and the private sector and providing pay increase parity for Department of the Army civilians

Congress responded by:

Authorizing the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill for service-members who have active duty service of at least 90 days since 10 September 2001 that provides up to 36 months of tuition benefits at any public university, provides a generous housing and books stipend, eliminates the \$1,200 enrollment fee, expands the post-service eligibility usage period by five years, and allows some servicemembers to transfer their benefits to a spouse or child



Temporarily authorizing active Army endstrength up to 532,400 and to 547,400 by 2010 but without base budget funding



Decreasing the current pay gap by approving a January 2009 pay raise of 3.9 percent for military personnel and pay increase parity for Department of the Army civilians



People

People

Readiness/Transformation

- Not increasing TRICARE fees/deductibles
- Repealing the law that reduces military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities by the amount of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments
- Funding reserve component endstrength at 371,000 for the Army National Guard and 206,000 for the Army Reserve
- Funding an expanded number of JROTC units
- Achieving affordable, adequate housing for single Soldiers and Soldiers with families
- Increasing Army reserve component full-time Manning endstrength and Army dual-status military technicians
- Funding the Federal Impact Aid Program to preclude children of military families from being disadvantaged in public schooling
- Funding accelerated modernization of reserve component equipment
- Maintaining the Army's strategic advantage and advancing modernization in its Current Force
- Providing funding for Army procurement items deemed essential for continuing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Ensuring adequate stocks of munitions to support training and the warfighting stockpile
- Developing the Future Force for the transforming Army
- Barring the Defense Department from increasing any TRICARE Prime or Standard Fees, pharmacy copays or TRICARE Reserve Select premiums, **but only through 30 September 2009**
- Expanded the special payment to those affected by the offset to include spouses of servicemembers who die on active duty
- Authorizing and funding Army National Guard endstrength at 352,600 and Army Reserve endstrength at 205,000
- Requiring an increase in the number of JROTC units to 3,700 by 2020
- Authorizing \$3.2 billion to support and expand high-quality housing for all servicemembers and their families including improved program management for more than 180,000 privatized family housing units
- Authorizing an increase of 7 percent for Army reserve component full-time Manning and 2 percent for Army dual-status military technicians
- Increased funding level for Impact Aid by authorizing \$35 million for schools that benefit dependents of service members and Department of Defense civilians and an additional \$5 million for schools that benefit dependents with severe disabilities, as well as an additional \$15 million for districts experiencing a change in student load due to rebasing or base realignment
- Authorizing \$800 million for procurement of critical, high-priority equipment to address reserve component unfunded equipment shortfalls
- Authorizing: \$3.1 billion for helicopter upgrades; \$1.6 billion for modernization for Abrams tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles; \$4.9 billion for procurement of Army aviation assets including the Joint Cargo Aircraft and \$1.3 billion for Stryker vehicles
- Authorizing: \$1.7 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles; \$834 million to up-armor additional High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles; \$8.6 billion for Army reset and \$2.2 billion for improvised explosive device defeat equipment and research
- Authorizing \$2.28 billion for Army ammunition programs
- Authorizing \$3.6 billion for the Future Combat Systems

Take up the torch and join our crusade!

BECOME a member

STAY a member

RECRUIT a member



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