

Association of the United States Army



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



AUSA + 1st Session, 113th Congress = Some Good News

American Soldiers continue their service to the nation and remain its strength for the future. As the United States fights against extremist movements and readies for contingencies, strategic landpower (Army, Marines, Special Operations Forces) will underpin American national defense strategy for the foreseeable future. The Army must provide globally flexible, responsive, regionally engaged forces to meet combatant commanders' objectives across the full spectrum of conflict. In addition, it executes Title 10 responsibilities and provides distinct capabilities such as logistics, intelligence and engineering that only it can provide. In the future, Army formations will be smaller but leaner and more capable than ever before.

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 National Defense Authorization Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Congress provided sufficient personnel for the Army to respond to the demands of the nation's security even as operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere continue. Congress also averted nearly half of the anticipated sequestration cuts for this fiscal year, relieving the worst of the Army's short-term readiness shortages. In addition, critical elements of the military compensation package were protected: health care fees did not increase beyond the annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA); the current military retirement program remains in place; and servicemembers' Basic Allowance for Housing does not require out-of-pocket expenses.

However, Congress did not address several other significant challenges. Servicemembers received a pay raise of only 1 percent—less than the rate of inflation—and working-age military retirees saw their annual COLA reduced by a percentage point, costing them more than \$5 billion over the next 10 years (beginning in 2015). These moves break the repeated pledges from Congress and the administration that any changes to the military compensation package would be grandfathered for the current force and for current retirees. Although Congress restored about \$22 billion in scheduled sequestration cuts for FY 2014 and extended hope for future bipartisan progress, the Department of Defense still faces a shortfall of more than \$30 billion in this fiscal year and the Army still faces \$79 billion in readiness and modernization shortfalls over the next five years. Sequestration has also forced development and fielding delays for vital modernization efforts including the Ground Combat Vehicle, network capability sets and aviation—limiting the Army's modernization efforts primarily to the development of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and the Armored Multipurpose Vehicle.

Congress must take further action to support the Army's effort to balance endstrength, modernization and readiness—especially in the next five years as the sharp, sudden impact of sequestration cuts creates short-term vulnerabilities. **Each member of AUSA is a Torchbearer, carrying the message to our elected representatives and to the American public.** Some of the major objectives achieved during the last legislative session are listed below. Sustaining and improving upon these accomplishments will require continued diligent effort.

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

AUSA and others spoke out for:

- Maintaining an operational Army to support national defense strategy, joint force and Army mission requirements
- Maintaining pay parity between Soldiers and the private sector

Congress responded by:

Authorizing active component endstrength of 520,000

Approving a January 2014 pay raise of only 1 percent for military personnel; targeting working-age military retirees by reducing their annual cost-of-living adjustment by a percentage point

People

People

- Limiting increases in TRICARE fees/deductibles/pharmacy copays Limiting annual increases to no more than the percentage increase in retired pay
- Combating sexual assault in the military Including 30 provisions or reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice related to combating sexual assault
- Achieving affordable, adequate housing for all servicemembers and their families and defending the full value of the Basic Allowance for Housing Authorizing \$556 million for support and expansion of high-quality housing for servicemembers with families
- Funding the Federal Impact Aid Program to preclude children of military families from being disadvantaged in public schools Authorizing funding for Impact Aid of \$25 million for schools with 20 percent or more military dependents and \$5 million for schools that serve military students with severe disabilities

AUSA and others spoke out for:

Congress responded by:

- Funding reserve component endstrength at 360,000 for the Army National Guard and 215,000 for the Army Reserve Authorizing Army National Guard endstrength at 354,200 and Army Reserve endstrength at 205,000
- Funding Army procurement items deemed essential for continuing operations in Afghanistan Authorizing \$323 million for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle modification and \$955 million for equipment and research to defeat improvised explosive devices
- Ensuring adequate stocks of munitions to support training and warfighting stockpiles Authorizing \$1.63 billion for Army ammunition programs
- Maintaining the Army's current force capabilities Authorizing \$374 million for Stryker vehicle procurement and modernization, providing \$200 million for the Rapid Innovation Program and fully funding Army aircraft procurement
- Developing the Future Force Authorizing full funding of the Army's request for further development of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and the Armored Multi-purpose Vehicle; extending development of the Ground Combat Vehicle; providing \$973 million for Warfighter Tactical Network integration, including \$100 million for Army Network Integration Evaluations

Readiness/Modernization

Take up the torch and join our crusade!



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