

Association of the United States Army



Voice for the Army—Support for the Soldier



AUSA + 1st Session, 114th Congress = Some Good News

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) represents every American Soldier—active, Army National Guard and Army Reserve—as well as the dedicated civilians of the Department of the Army, by being the voice for America’s Army, fostering public support of the Army’s role in national security and providing professional education and information programs. This is our mission. As the premier voice for America’s Soldiers, we are a dedicated team committed to building the best professional and representative association for the world’s best Army.

AUSA works diligently with Congress, the Department of Defense (DoD) and industry and in alliance with our fellow military and veterans’ service organizations to achieve our mission. While there is still much work to be done, we can report some success toward reaching our goals. Below are some of AUSA’s 2015 goals followed by what we accomplished in the last legislative session:

- ✓ **Enact legislation that will remove sequestration from Army budget planning and execution**
Congress responded by enacting a two-year budget deal which provides budget stability for two years at funding levels above the 2011 Budget Control Act and sequestration level, thereby temporarily stabilizing the defense budget and providing some certainty for the department. However, sequestration will return in Fiscal Year 2018 if the law is not changed. AUSA will continue to advocate for sequestration’s repeal.
- ✓ **Provide funding for the Army to develop and field equipment to enhance Soldier survivability and combat effectiveness**
Congress responded by investing in the development of lethality upgrades for Stryker combat vehicles, increasing the survivability for Apache attack helicopter against new threats and authorizing full funding for procurement of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle.
- ✓ **Enact legislation to provide reimbursement rates for TRICARE and MEDICARE providers sufficient to maintain nationwide provider participation**
Congress responded by passing sweeping legislation which: changed the formula the government uses to pay physicians who treat Medicare/TRICARE beneficiaries; replaced current reimbursement schedule with payment increases for doctors for the next five years; and combined existing payment incentive programs into a new “Merit-Based Incentive Payment System” while creating other alternative payment models.
- ✓ **Limit increases in TRICARE fees/deductibles/pharmacy copays to no more than the annual pay or COLA increase. Maintain TRICARE for Life without enrollment fees**
Congress responded by rejecting TRICARE for Life enrollment fees and increases in TRICARE fees/deductibles but did authorize some pharmacy co-pay increases.
- ✓ **Provide funding for Soldier transition assistance to civilian life, particularly as the Army faces budget-driven downsizing**
Congress responded by funding Soldier transition programs and establishing a Job Training and Post-Service Placement Executive Committee within the current DoD-Department of Veterans Affairs Joint Executive Committee.

- ✓ **Fully fund Federal Impact Aid program to address educational needs of military children**

Congress responded by authorizing \$30 million in DoD Impact Aid for schools educating large numbers of military-connected children and authorizing \$5 million to support local public schools educating military children with severe disabilities.
- ✓ **Support initiatives to protect and enhance commissary and exchange benefits**

Congress responded by rejecting the Administration’s proposal to reduce the commissary subsidy and reduce store hours by adding \$281.2 million to continue the current policy and require a “budget neutral” plan to hold the annual subsidy at current level of \$1.4 billion.
- ✓ **Enact legislation to provide the same percentage of annual pay increase for Department of the Army civilians as for military personnel**

Congress responded by providing to Department of the Army civilians the same 1.3 percent pay raise military personnel will receive.
- ✓ **Fully fund Suicide Prevention Programs in the Army base budget**

Congress responded by improving mental health care for servicemembers by collecting best practices from State National Guard and Reserve organizations with suicide prevention and community response programs and by authorizing DoD to develop a policy to coordinate with non-governmental suicide prevention organizations.
- ✓ **Fully fund Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Programs in the Army base budget**

Congress responded by requiring DoD to establish an advisory committee on the investigations, prosecutions, and defense of sexual assault in the Armed Forces. Additionally, Congress required DoD to: establish protections for members of the Armed Forces who intervene on behalf of victims; develop a plan to improve prevention and response to sexual assaults of male members of the armed forces; and enhance sexual assault prevention training for commanders, administrators and instructors of each unit of the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps.

Today’s national security environment is more volatile and unpredictable than ever. Demand for Army capabilities and presence is increasing across combatant commands in response to emerging contingencies. As such, sustaining and improving upon these accomplishments will require continued diligent effort in the following areas:

- maintaining the readiness of the current force;
- developing the future force;
- sustaining the all-volunteer force; and
- enhancing the existing partnerships among industry, academia and the media.

Each member of AUSA is a Torchbearer, carrying the message to our elected representatives and to the American people. Help keep our Army strong. Your voice counts!

Take up the torch and join our team!

BECOME a member

STAY a member

RECRUIT a member



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