Cuts to Armed Forces Network, Stars & Stripes should be ‘off the table’ says American Legion National Commander

INDIANAPOLIS (Dec. 4, 2013)—The head of the nation’s largest veterans service organization warned that “morale is becoming a casualty of sequestration” thanks to the latest budget talk emanating from Washington.

“Just before the Thanksgiving holiday, our troops overseas were greeted with the news from Stars & Stripes that the historic newspaper might be on the chopping block by Pentagon budget-cutters,” said American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger. “Moreover, the Armed Forces Network, which provides American-style programming including sporting events, is also facing cuts. This comes at a time when military commissaries across the country may close, weapons systems are eliminated, brigades are cut and training missions cancelled. The American Legion has been warning against sequestration for years now. We are starting to see the real effects of cutting an additional $500 billion from one of the few parts of the federal budget that is mandated by the Constitution. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel just said the cuts are too steep, too deep and too abrupt. He also referred to sequestration as an irresponsible way to govern. I agree.”

Dellinger pointed out that benefit cuts start a vicious cycle which leads to manpower shortages and higher casualties in combat. “Every time America has cut its forces, we later regretted it. The American Legion is urging our 2.4 million members to contact their congressional delegations and let them know that the madness called ‘sequestration’ must end. The same message needs to be relayed to the president.”

-30-

John Raughter

Communications Director, National Headquarters

Phone 317.630.1253 :: Fax 317.630.1368