From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 1:46:59 PM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Levin won't back Ayotte plan to restore military pension cuts

To view an online version of this email, click **here**.

THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell Congress to overturn cuts to military pensions*

Levin won't back Ayotte plan to restore military pension cuts

Levin's reversal on Ayotte's bill highlights the difficulty that lawmakers have in reversing the military pension cut. **Read more**

Legion news

- **Take action against cuts to military pensions**
- **Legion-backed vets job measures pass Senate**
- **Senate passes budget bill, fails veterans**

Recent news from Capitol Hill

- **Closing in on a budget deal**
- **Pentagon tries to protect R & D funds for FY 2015**
- **Lawmakers say Snowden leaks may endanger U.S. troops**
- **GOP senators want to link military pension issue to unemployment bill**
- **U.S. may send helicopters to Iraq**

Other legislative news

- **Disabled vets likely to be exempted from COLA cuts**
- **NSA dodges Sanders' question on spying**
- **FBI takes on national security as primary mission**
- **Miller unhappy about VA Christmas limitations**
- **Kerry: No U.S. troops for Iraq**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: I am a long time member of the American Legion and a retired Army veteran. I am very angry over Congress cutting our retirement pay COLA. When will the Legion and the other veterans organizations really do something about this?

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations "Vendors in the OR: VA's Failed Oversight of Surgical Implants"
Testifying for the Legion: Roscoe Butler, assistant director, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division

For the Record: On Jan. 1, USA Today published an op-ed by National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger that opposes COLA cuts for military retirees.**Read it here**

SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

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Subscriber Preferences

From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 12:57:59 PM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Legion battles Congress in 'COLA wars'

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THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell Congress to pass the Comprehensive Veterans Bill*

Legion Supports Comprehensive Veterans Bill

S.1950 would restore COLA reduction for military retirees.
Read more

Legion news

- **Legion battles Congress in COLA wars**
- **Legion strongly opposes threat to commissaries**
- **Legion renews call for lifetime DoD-VA records**
- **Legion-backed CORE bill becomes law**

Other legislative news

- **Vets Hit Retired Generals Supporting Pay Cuts**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What provisions are included in the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 (S.1950), and is The American Legion supporting them?

SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 9:30 a.m.
The U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee is conducting a hearing titled "Recent Changes to the U.S. Military Retirement System." The American Legion has submitted written testimony to the senators expressing the organization's strong and continuing opposition to cost-of-living-adjustment COLA reductions in retirees' pensions.
Attending for the Legion: Legion staff members will be on hand to witness and report on the proceedings.

Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs "What Can the Federal Government Learn from the Private Sector's Successful Approach to Hiring Veterans?"
Attending for the Legion: Staff members from the Legislative Division and Veterans Employment & Education Division (formerly Economic Division)

For the Record: Here is a chronology of the "COLA War," that The American Legion continues to fight, starting with President Obama's promise not to balance the federal budget on the backs of veterans – made on Aug. 30, 2011 at the Legion's national convention in Minneapolis:
Read it here

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 12:19:59 PM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Congress praises Legion for vet-hiring efforts

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THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell Congress to vote YES on in-state tuition (The House votes on the bill tonight! Take action NOW!)*

Congress praises Legion for vet-hiring efforts

It was praise for private industry and The American Legion on Jan. 28, as members of the House Committee on Veterans Affair convened.
Read more

Recent news

- **Legion hoped for more from Obama's address**
- **SASC members oppose military COLA cuts**
- **Legion takes COLA war to senators**
- **Legion blasts Pentagon plan to close commissaries**
- **State of the Union address disappoints Legion**
- **American Legion warns that military may lose commissaries**
- **MacDill families fear commissary closings**
- **Are U.S. veterans selfish?**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: Veterans may or may not meet in-state requirements for college tuition, due to their transfers (over which they have no control). Yet it is my understanding that some persons in our country illegally do receive that favored status. Please tell me I am wrong in my assumptions. Also, there appears to be no legislation in California in the works, to give veterans this favored status.

SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

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VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Tuesday, Feb. 4 at 10 a.m.
Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight
"Fraud and Abuse in Army Recruiting Contracts"
Attending for the Legion: Dean Stoline, deputy legislative director

Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 3:30 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
"Beyond Transformation: Reviewing Current Status Effects of VBA Technology"
Testifying for the Legion: Zachary Hearn, deputy director for benefits

For the Record: The Pentagon's Operational Test and Evaluation Office has published its full annual report online: **Read it here**

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To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Legion supports Sanders' huge vet benefits bill

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THE AMERICAN LEGION
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell the Senate to pass S. 1982, the comprehensive veterans bill*

Legion supports Sanders' huge vet benefits bill

The American Legion has declared its "full support" of a newly introduced and massive U.S. Senate bill that would "improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans." **Read more**

Recent news

- **Legion reaffirms support for oil pipeline**
- **VA should keep informal claims option**
- **In-state tuition bill for veterans passes House**
- **VA accused of changing rules to reach goals**
- **Bill would block commissary closings**
- **Vets: Take The American Legion PTSD/TBI survey**
- **Legion starts month-long TBI/PTSD survey**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What is The American Legion position regarding veterans and their 2nd amendment rights?

SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

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Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Tuesday, Feb. 12 at 10 a.m.
Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship (joint hearing with the Special Committee on Aging)
"In Search of a Second Act: The Challenges and Advantages of Senior Entrepreneurship"
Attending for the Legion: Dean Stoline, deputy legislative director

For the Record:
The American Legion's point paper: "Veterans' 2nd Amendment Rights: **Read it here**

Legion's resolution on 2nd Amendment rights, and comments on the Legion's "Burn Pit" blog posting: **Read it here**

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To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Miller faults VBA 'retaliatory' tactics vs. Legion

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THE AMERICAN LEGION
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell the Senate to pass S. 1982, the comprehensive veterans bill*

Miller faults VBA 'retaliatory' tactics vs. Legion

Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., accused the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) of obstructing the work of an American Legion team of experts during its recent visit to the Seattle VA Regional Office. **Read more**

Recent news

- **Dellinger co-authors op-ed on VA funding**
- **Bush plans to breach 'civilian-military' divide**
- **Legion applauds Social Security plan**
- **Dellinger responds to Washington Post columnist**
- **Senate joins House in restoring COLAs**
- **Dellinger recalls Abraham Lincoln's vow**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q:Why was it so important to get the COLA cuts to military pensions repealed?

SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

Press Conference Alert

Tuesday, Feb. 25 at 9 a.m, at the House Triangle.
Topic: Advance Appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs
Speaking for the Legion: Louis Celli, Legislative Director

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Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Tuesday, Feb. 25 at 2 p.m.
Joint House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees
"Legislative Presentation of the Disabled American Veterans"
Attending for the Legion: Louis Celli, Legislative Director

Wednesday, Feb. 26 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Health
"VA Accountability: Assessing Actions Taken in Response to Subcommittee Oversight"
Attending for the Legion: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division staff

Thursday, Feb. 27 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity
"Review of the Effectiveness of VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program"
Attending for the Legion: Veterans Employment & Education Division staff

For the Record:
Read the Legion's complete "Chronology of a COLA War", which ended on Feb. 15, 2014 when President Obama signed S. 25 into law: ***Read it here***

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2014 12:14:59 PM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Legionnaires heading to Washington

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THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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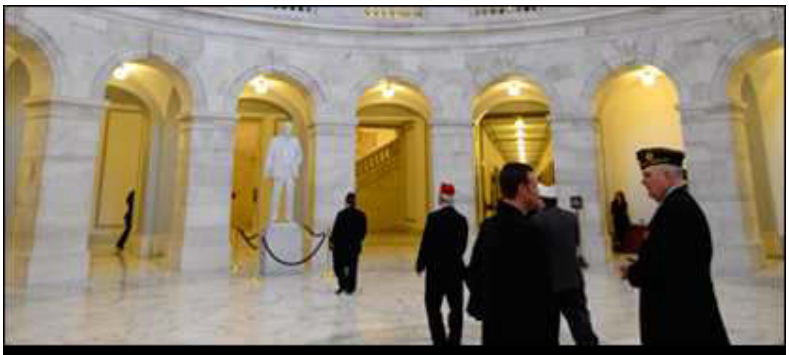
LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell the Senate to pass S. 1982, the comprehensive veterans bill*



Legionnaires heading to Washington

Legionnaires from across the country will converge on Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress to discuss a variety of pressing issues.
Read more

Recent news

- **Legion submits testimony on VA's 2015 budget**
- **The Legion on Capitol Hill**
- **Claims backlog working group issues report**
- **Legion encouraged by VA budget proposal**
- **Dellinger addresses South Carolina Legislature**
- **Legionella outbreak caused by human error**
- **WWII Memorial closed despite inbound Honor Flights**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What action has The American Legion taken to stop the planned increase in TRICARE fees and co-pays?
(**See the Military.com story here.**)

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Tuesday, Mar. 25 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations
Legislative hearing on H.R. 3593 and other draft legislation

Tuesday, Mar. 25 at 2 p.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity
Legislative hearing on several pieces of draft legislation

Wednesday, Mar. 26 at 10 a.m.
Joint House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees to receive Legislative Presentation of The American Legion
Location: G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.

For the Record:
The American Legion's 54th Washington Conference will be held March 23-26 at the Washington Hilton on 1919 Connecticut Ave. NW. For the conference schedule and other information, **click here**.

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March 18, 2014, Issue No. 028; **Subscribe to The American Legion Legislative Update.**

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2014 2:35:59 PM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Commander to Congress: Prepare for huge wave of veterans

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT ***Tell the Senate to pass S. 1982, the comprehensive veterans bill***

Dellinger testifies at 54th annual Washington Conference

Commander Dellinger called upon Congress to be prepared for a huge influx of new military veterans as deployments end and the armed services shrink. **Read more**

Recent news

- **Dellinger goes to Capitol Hill**
- **'Shall' is better word to use for two VA claims bills**
- **VA admits poor hospital construction planning**
- **Judiciary subcommittee looks at VA backlog**
- **Legion wants vet training program extended**
- **Graham praises Legion for role in COLA cuts battle**
- **Miller, Legion share many views on veterans**
- **Waging war against war monuments**
- **Dellinger addresses Legionnaires at Commander's Call**
- **McKeon: Smaller U.S. defense budget is global problem**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What is The American Legion doing to get the disability/retirement offset repealed?

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

For the Record:
A poll conducted by The Washington Post and Kaiser Family Foundation has found that more than half of 2.6 million veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from service-connected health problems:
(**See The Washington Post story here.**)

Defense News has published an in-depth piece on the Pentagon's five-year projections for spending on its major weapons programs:
(**See the Defense News story here.**)

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Wednesday, April 2 at 9:30 a.m.
Senate Armed Services Committee
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Hearing on military construction and base closure programs.
Attending for the Legion: Dean Stoline, deputy legislative director

Wednesday, April 2 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
"VA and Human Tissue: Poor Practice and Lack of Tracking Endangers Veterans
Attending for the Legion: Jennifer Colaizzi, national field representative for the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division

Thursday, April 3 at 9:30 a.m.
Senate Armed Services Committee
"U.S. Army Overview"
Attending for the Legion: Dean Stoline, deputy legislative director

Thursday, April 3 at 10 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
"Trials in Transparency II: Is VA Responding to Congressional Requests in a Timely Manner?"
Attending for the Legion: Jacob Gadd, deputy director of health for the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division.

Friday, April 4 at 9 a.m.
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Health
Markup of pending legislation

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2014 9:42:59 AM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Legion to conduct town hall meeting on Phoenix VA health care

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell Congress to support the VA reform bill*

Dellinger heads to Phoenix

The Legion's national commander will join members of the Legion's System Worth Saving Task Force at a town hall meeting. **Read more**

Recent news

- **VA's long list of performance failures**
- **VA calls for Shinseki to step down**
- **Legion testifies on VA over-medication issue**
- **Commander disturbed over new VA allegations**
- **Phoenix VA staff place on leave**
- **VA preventable deaths 'will not be tolerated'**
- **VA offers no answers on Phoenix allegations**
- **Legion: VA secret list 'abhorrent'**
- **The best and worst VA regional offices**
- **Legion holds VA accountable for construction delays**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: As a new American Legion member in Colorado, and an Iraq War veteran, I am disappointed in the position the Legion has taken regarding the question of appointment wait times and calling for Sec. Shinseki's resignation. Why is the Legion calling for the secretary's resignation before VA's Office of Inspector General investigation in Phoenix has even been completed?

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

Thursday, May 15 at 10 a.m.
Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs
"The State of VA Health Care"
The American Legion is submitting written testimony for the record.
Attending for the Legion: staff members of the Legislative Division and the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division

For the Record:
The American Legion has compiled an extensive list of specific VA accountability
issues at the national level, as well as at local VA medical centers and regional offices:
See list

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To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: American Legion testifies at South Dakota hearing

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THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell the Senate to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

American Legion testifies at South Dakota hearing

Department of South Dakota commander testifies at a congressional field hearing on necessity of keeping VA care in area. **Read more**

Recent news

- **President Obama signs VA reform bill**
- **Membership gives the Legion a place at Congress' table**
- **Dellinger calls VA reform bill 'an important step'**
- **Legion wants loans to military students reviewed**
- **McDonald confirmed as VA secretary**
- **Legion: Compromise bill is 'critical component' for VA reform**
- **Joint statement by Legion, AMVETS and CVA on VA spending request**
- **Gibson: VA needs $17.6 billion to meet demands**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: Does a new CBO report recommend major cuts to veterans disability benefits?

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

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Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

(The House and Senate are out of session until Monday, Sept. 8.).

For the Record:

On Aug. 7, President Obama signed the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act, in response to long wait-times and falsified records at many VA facilities.

Click here to see a fact sheet on the act, published by the Congressional Quarterly.

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2014 10:44:59 AM
To: Library Division
Cc:
Subject: Helm slams lack of VA accountability in letter to Obama

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT *Tell the Senate to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

Helm slams lack of VA accountability in letter to Obama

National commander: 'We are hearing little about pervasiveness of corruption and incompetence.' **Read more**

Recent news

- **VA needs to improve disability claims accuracy**
- **Support for Senate bill on jobs for veterans**
- **Pushing for independent VA investigation**
- **Massachusetts brothers lobby for pause to honor veterans**
- **VA's 'Road to Victory' needs 'concrete accomplishments'**
- **Disappointment over 1-percent military pay cap**
- **Sanders, Miller receive Legion's Patriot Award**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: How will the Department of Veterans Affairs' new Veterans Choice Card work?

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming hearings

The House and Senate are out of session until Wednesday, Nov. 12.

For the Record:
Jerry Hedrick, longtime American Legion National Executive Committeeman and North Carolina native, passed away on Aug. 25 in Charlotte, N.C., during the Legion's National Convention. On Sept. 18, U.S. Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina spoke on the Senate floor in honor of Hedrick: **Read more**

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From: The American Legion
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 5:03:59 PM
To: Trace, Howard C.
Cc:
Subject: Military benefits dispute snags defense bill

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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LEGISLATIVE ALERT ***Tell Congress to protect military and student veterans' benefits!***

Military benefits dispute snags defense bill

Disagreement within the House and Senate armed services committees over benefits for the military is holding up the drafting of a 2015 defense policy. **Read more**

Recent Legion news

- **Legion remains firm on immigration**
- **Legion: No amnesty for illegal immigrants**
- **Veterans Choice Card is not a free pass**
- **Legion salutes former Illinois lawmaker**
- **McDonald reports on VA reforms**

Related articles

- **VA burial delays prompt push for congressional oversight**
- **Obama extends U.S. combat role in Afghanistan**
- **Senators offer bill on suicide-prevention efforts**
- **VA sends out more Veterans Choice Cards**
- **VA seeks proposals for mobile app to schedule appointments**
- **DoD shifts acquisition, tech efforts toward major powers**
- **Pentagon considers changes to recruitment policies**
- **Gender restrictions for combat roles to be lifted by 2016**
- **Veterans' data may never be completely secure**
- **Levin thinks defense bill will pass**
- **Dempsey lays groundwork for larger 2016 defense budget**
- **House passes bill to force pipeline approval**

LEGISLATIVE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What can veterans expect from the 113th Congress in its final weeks?

A: SEE THE ANSWER AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

BE HEARD ON THE HILL

Congress now offers a website where American Legion members can weigh in on legislative action.

VISIT THE CITIZEN COSPONSOR PROJECT

Upcoming congressional hearings

Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 9:30 a.m..
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Nominees will be considered for three assistant secretary positions in DoD, general counsel for the Department of the Army, and commander of the U.S. Pacific Command.

Thursday, Dec. 4 at 10 a.m..
HVAC Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations
"An Examination of Waste Associated with VA's Management of Land-Use Agreements"
Testifying for the Legion: Ed Lilley, assistant director for health, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division

Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 1 p.m..
HVAC Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs
"Timeless Honor: Reviewing Current Operations of our National Cemeteries"

Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 10 a.m..
HVAC Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity
"A Review of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)"

(Note: The 113th Congress is scheduled to adjourn on Friday, Dec. 12)

For the Record:
On Nov. 19, The American Legion testified at an HVAC Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity hearing about State Approving Agencies and GI Bill-eligible education programs: **Read more**

The Legion also submitted written testimony the same day to an HVAC Subcommittee on Health hearing on pending legislation: **Read more**

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