



“Tonight I can report to the American people and the world, the United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda and a terrorist responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children.”

~ President Barack Obama, May 1, 2011 ~

WASHINGTON REPORT

Military Personnel Subcommittee

On Wednesday morning, the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee rejected the Pentagon plan to raise TRICARE Prime 13 percent and approved a 1.6 percent across-the-board pay raise for active duty personnel at a NDAA markup.

Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) said, “It is my goal to ensure that we are doing everything possible to ensure that they (service members) have the benefits and support that they deserve.” The Subcommittee would bar for one-year any increase in fees for participants in the TRICARE Prime health program.

However, the Subcommittee’s mark (version of its NDAA personnel and quality of life provisions) faces an uncertain future. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon (R-CA) and Ranking Member Adam Smith are at odds with Rep. Wilson.

It is broadly reported that the Committee Chairman and Ranking Member support an amendment that would increase TRICARE Prime 13 percent as the Pentagon proposes and tie future increases to the Cost of Living Allowance increases in retirement pay.

To support the NAUS-endorsed Subcommittee’s position, we urge you to contact your elected officials and let them know how you feel. Even if you have done so before, please do it again. This is a crossroads moment in the development of the fiscal year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. Click [here](#) to go the NAUS CapWiz site and send our new message.

Please ask your family, friends and neighbors to become involved too. As we fight hard for your earned benefits, we also need your help to make sure your representatives know how you feel.

Pentagon Brings TRICARE Plan to Senate Armed Services Committee

The Defense Department presented testimony Thursday before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee on its proposal to increase TRICARE rates. Robert F. Hale, the Pentagon's Chief Financial Officer, told elected Senators that the President's plan would "save" at least \$3.2 billion over the next five years.

Describing the plan, Hale said "working age" military retirees under 65 would pay an additional 13 percent monthly for participation in TRICARE Prime, all retirees would pay higher co-payments for prescription drugs, and the Department of Defense would wash its hands of managing TRICARE by attaching automatic yearly fee increases that would likely average, at minimum, 6 percent.

According to the Pentagon CFO, the time is right to raise fees because TRICARE enrollment fees have not increased since Congress appropriated funds for the program in 1994.

The Senior Official told the panel that if the proposal is enacted, the plan would cost certain retirees an estimated \$430 million over the next five years and all retirees and their families an estimated \$2.5 billion in out-of-pocket costs for pharmaceutical increases.

House Committee Begins Medicare/TRICARE "Doc Fix"

The House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Health received testimony Thursday on how to fix the Medicare Physician Payment Formula, called the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR).

The American Medical Association, Academy of Family Physicians and College of Surgeons all called for repeal of the flawed SGR and recommended a variety of plans for transition to different payment models, including pay-for-performance, bundled payments, accountable care organizations home models and inpatient care.

Last year, Congress passed legislation 5 times to block scheduled cuts in physicians reimbursement rates as the SGR scheduled. The current block expires Jan. 1, 2012, at which time the reduction is set to drop payment rates 29.5 percent.

NAUS is encouraged by the Committee's movement early in the session to begin a serious process to replace the SGR and improve access to care through the Medicare and TRICARE programs. At this point, all suggestions are under consideration targeted to keep costs down, maintain quality and provide a permanent, sustainable solution.

Administration-Congress Debt Limit Talks Begin

Thursday, Vice President Joseph R. Biden called Congressional leaders and key Administration officials to start earnest negotiations on raising the nation's debt ceiling.

The issue involves the authority to borrow money beyond the currently approved federal debt limit. As some say, we have maxed out our credit card and can't apply it any more

to pay for certain government programs without changes.

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner told the group that accounts remain available for the present time, but the federal government is coming to a point in time when default would occur in the July-August time period, unless Congress takes action.

In effect, Congress has to raise the country's borrowing authority above the present \$14.3 trillion cap on federal borrowing because we have hit the limit, the cap, that exists today on our borrowing authority.

Our nation's debt is the total accumulation of past deficits and our projected deficit this year is \$1.425 trillion, which is the largest ever, in nominal terms. According to CBO, it is the second largest as a share of the economy, literally, since World War II.

Social Security Lists Nation's Current Top Baby Names

This year's Social Security list of the nation's most popular baby names has just been released in time for Mother's Day! Some names might be a surprise and others expected. Either way, we're sure you will enjoy learning about a number of interesting facts in this [press release](#) from the administration.

Jacob and Isabella are king and queen of the crib for another year. This is the twelfth year in a row on our list for Jacob and the second for Isabella, although 2010 has a new number two for girls, Sophia. NAUS received scholarship applications for our 2011-2012 program from a surprisingly high number of Kayla's! William, as in William Matz, remains a top choice on the boys' side.

For all the top baby names of 2010, go to Social Security's [website](#). Here are the top 5 boys and girls names for 2010: Boys: Jacob, Ethan, Michael, Jayden, and William; and, Girls: Isabella, Sophia, Emma, Olivia, and Ava.

HEALTH CARE NEWS

Next Army Surgeon General Named

Earlier this week, President Obama nominated [Major General Patricia D. Horoho](#) to become the next Army surgeon general. MG Horoho currently serves as deputy surgeon general and chief of the Army Nurse Corps.

The nomination must still be confirmed by the Senate and it includes a promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General. If approved, General Horoho would become the first female and chief nurse to assume the Army's top medical officer position.

PCM Waiver Granted for Tuscaloosa Area

The TRICARE Management Activity has approved a waiver of primary care manager (PCM) referral requirements in the South Region for the Tuscaloosa, Alabama, area. This temporary remission of normal procedure began April 27, 2011, and ends at

midnight on June 15, 2011. The waiver allows TRICARE beneficiaries in the specific ZIP codes around the Tuscaloosa area listed below to seek health care from TRICARE-authorized providers without a referral from their PCM. A list of those Zip Codes can be found [here](#).

ACTIVE DUTY NEWS

Attention Commissary Shoppers

A group of commissary suppliers is conducting a survey to better understand commissary shoppers' needs with the goal of improving the products and service they provide at the commissary. They are looking for single service members and active duty families from all branches of service. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes and participants will be rewarded with a \$10 Amazon.com gift certificate. If you are interested in participating in the survey, go to this [website](#).

Navy Separation Program Extended

The Navy announced the extension of the Enlisted Early Transition Program (EETP) to Sept. 30, 2013, which offers sailors a voluntary early separation option. EETP differs from the Early Career Transition Program, which allows sailors to transition into the Selective Reserve prior to their End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) by submitting a request three to 15 months in advance. Qualified sailors may submit their request for early separation to Commander, Navy Personnel Command via their commanding officer. For more information, call the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC, [1-866-827-5672](tel:1-866-827-5672) or email cscmailbox@navy.mil.

Armed Forces Service Medal for Haiti Ops

DoD officials approved the Armed Forces Service Medal (AFSM) for personnel assigned to Operation Unified Response who participated in humanitarian relief assistance to the people of Haiti following the earthquake Jan. 12, 2010. Members must have supported the operation between Jan. 14 and June 1 and must provide source documents confirming AFSM entitlement to their unit commander or designated representative. Check with your unit personnel office for more information.

Humanitarian Service Medal for Pakistan

DoD has also approved the Humanitarian Service Medal for service members who participated in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in Pakistan following the flooding in Swat Valley on July 31, 2010. Military members must have provided at least one day of humanitarian assistance between July 31 and Dec. 15, 2010, in the immediate area of operation. Aircrews landing in the areas of operation during this period are also eligible. Members must provide source documents confirming HSM entitlement to their unit commander or designated representative.

VETERANS NEWS

VA to Begin New Family Caregiver Program

On Tuesday, NAUS President Matz and Legislative Director Rick Jones participated in a conference call where the VA announced that they had published the final interim rule for the Family Caregiver Program of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act 2010 and that they would begin taking applications for the program on Monday May 9.

Additional services for primary Family Caregivers of eligible post-9/11 Veterans and Service members include a stipend, mental health services, and access to health care insurance, if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health care plan. Comprehensive Caregiver training and medical support are other key components of this program.

Starting May 9th, veterans may download a copy of the Family Caregiver program application (VA CG 10-10) at the [caregiver website](#). The application enables the veteran to designate a primary Family Caregiver and secondary Family Caregivers if needed. Caregiver Support Coordinators are stationed at every VA medical center and via phone at 1-877-222 VETS (8387) to assist veterans and their family caregivers with the application process.

VA programs for veterans and their Family Caregivers include:

- **In-Home and Community Based Care:** This includes skilled home health care, homemaker home health aide services, community adult day health care and Home Based Primary Care.
- **Respite Care:** Designed to relieve the Family Caregiver from the constant challenge of caring for a chronically ill or disabled Veteran at home, respite services can include in-home care, a short stay in one of VA's community living centers or an environment designed for adult day health care.
- **Caregiver education and training programs:** VA currently provides multiple training opportunities which include pre-discharge care instruction and specialized caregiver programs in multiple severe traumas such as Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Spinal Cord Injury/Disorders, and Blind Rehabilitation. VA has a Family Caregiver assistance healthy living center on the My HealtheVet [website](#), as well as caregiver information on the VA's main Web page health site; both Websites include information on VA and community resources and Caregiver health and wellness.
- **Caregiver support groups and other services:** Family Caregiver support groups, offered in a face to face setting or on the telephone, provide emotional and peer support, and information. Family Caregiver services include family counseling, spiritual and pastoral care, family leisure and recreational activities and temporary lodging in Fisher Houses.

- Other services: VA provides durable medical equipment and prosthetic and sensory aides to improve function, financial assistance with home modification to improve access and mobility, and transportation assistance for some Veterans to and from medical appointments.

Counseling for Veterans in NY State

Adjustment counseling services are being provided for combat veterans and their families in Potsdam, New York, at the Watertown Vet Center's satellite center in the basement of the Potsdam Public Library. Counseling services are offered every Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. To make an appointment, call the [Watertown Vet Center](#) at [315-782-5479](tel:315-782-5479). Walk-ins are also welcome.

New Army Museum Fund Raising

The Army Historical Foundation is progressing in its efforts to raise money to build The National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The Foundation has raised \$55 million of the \$155 million needed to build the facility. The museum's centerpiece will be a major exhibition facility where the stories of soldiers will be joined with thousands of artifacts, documents and images, tracing its history from Colonial times to today. More Information is available from the [Army Historical Foundation website](#).

Navy Destroyer Honors MOH Recipient

Tomorrow the Navy will christen its newest guided-missile destroyer, the USS Michael Murphy, during a 10 a.m. EDT ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine. The new destroyer is named after Navy SEAL Lt. Michael P. Murphy who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during Operation Red Wings in Kunar Province, Afghanistan on June 28, 2005.

NAUS NEWS

NAUS on the Road

Everett Naval Station: Veterans Benefits Advisor Mike Plumer will present a Legislative Update at the Everett Naval Station, WA, Retiree Seminar day on May 21. The seminar starts at 8:00 a.m. at the base Commons Club. Come by and say hi and bring a friend to join.

Happy Mother's Day!!

We wish all moms a very a happy Mother's Day on Sunday. We also urge you to pass on these greetings to all military moms whose husbands are deployed and also to all the moms who are also survivors. Have a great day!

Armed Forces Day

This year Armed Forces Day is Saturday May 21. There are many bases around the country that will be holding open houses and other types of celebrations. Click [here](#) to see the official Armed Forces Day site or [here](#) to see what some bases are doing this

year.

New NAUS Member Benefit!

A new education partnership between NAUS and Excelsior College, a nonprofit, accredited distance education college in Albany, NY, provides NAUS members with access to reduced tuition and fees for associate and bachelor's degree programs. In addition, the education agreement benefits extend to NAUS members' spouses who wish to begin or complete their college education. [Learn more here.](#)

Job Well Done!

On behalf of NAUS President Matz and the entire staff and membership of our organization we congratulate the members of Seal Team Six and all members of the military and intelligence community who participated in the operation which led to the death of Osama Bin Laden. A big BRAVO ZULU to all! And may God continue to bless America.

Not a NAUS Member Yet? [Join online.](#)

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Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen stand in harm's way around the globe to defend our nation and our cherished liberties. NAUS asks you to please pray for their continued strength and protection—and pray as well for their families, who daily stand in support of their spouses, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters.

GODBLESSAMERICA

[1-800-842-3451](tel:1-800-842-3451)

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