



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

Legislative Update



KEITH'S CONGRESSIONAL CORNER



"A house divided against itself cannot stand."
- President Abraham Lincoln

Well, the fireworks are coming, and they won't just be over the National Mall. They have been and will continue in the halls of Congress as members deliberate the federal budget before they mutually agree to the amount of spending per department.

Two or three spending top lines have consumed the defense bill as congressional negotiators have been deliberating between the defense and nondefense discretionary spending

levels. Complicating the issue is the limit for the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds, which are not restricted in spending cap limits.

Marking last week to the \$733 billion spending level for national security programs, the House passed the FY 2020 Defense Appropriations Act. The bill appropriates \$690.2 billion to the Pentagon--a \$15.8 billion increase from the current level, but \$8 billion less than the President's Budget (PB) request. \$622.1 billion would go to base defense programs and \$68.1 billion would go to the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account.

The President requested, and the Senate is marking to, \$750 billion in national security spending. Both the House and Senate's spending caps are well above the Budget Control Act's spending levels, which means an agreement between both bodies of Congress and the White House is needed to avoid huge sequestration cuts in January 2020. We expect they will reach a compromise agreement at a national security spending level somewhere between \$733 and \$750 billion.

"In order to assure an adequate national defense, it is necessary - and sufficient - to be in a position in case of war to conquer the command of the air."

- Giulio Douhet

In positive news, Air Force readiness improved by approximately 15 percent over the past year. The past two defense budgets have certainly helped arrest the negative glide slope in readiness, indicating that this next FY 2020 budget is pivotal.

The Army's Secretary, Dr. Mark Esper, has 'taken the stick' as Acting Secretary of Defense from Acting Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan. The President has indicated that he will make Dr.

Esper the permanent nominee for the position. Keeping on course with his predecessors, Esper's #1 priority is lethality.

"The enduring responsibility of the United States Air Force is to provide strategic deterrence for the Nation and fly, fight and win as an integral part of the Joint Team. Together with our brothers and sisters in arms, we underwrite the national strategy of defending the Homeland and assuring allies, while dissuading, deterring and defeating enemies."

- Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, 19th Chief of Staff, US Air Force

This week the Senate is expected to confirm Gen. John Raymond as commander of U.S. Space Command. Along with Esper's nomination, the Senate Armed Services Committee will consider the nomination of Ms. Barbara Barrett as the next Secretary of the Air Force—hopefully before the August Recess.

"Not to have an adequate air force in the present state of the world is to compromise the foundations of national freedom and independence."

- Prime Minister Winston Churchill, UK

As we prepare to celebrate our nation's 243rd annual Fourth of July celebration next week, it is important to reflect on those that are serving, or who have served, so that we can enjoy the day peacefully with our family and friends.

Have a safe and Happy Independence Day!

AIR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

"Only air power can defeat air power. The actual elimination or even stalemating of an attacking air force can be achieved only by a superior air force."

- Alexander P. de Seversky

[Two Years, \\$32 Million to Go on Desert Shield, Desert Storm Memorial](#)

AirForceMag.com | 25 Jun 2019 | by John Tirpak

The National Desert Storm War Memorial committee has approval for a site on the National Mall and is hoping to dedicate the new monument on the 30th anniversary of the conflict, but it needs to raise another \$32 million to get there.

[Esper lays out priorities in first message to the force as acting SECDEF](#)

AirForceMag.com | 25 Jun 2019 | by John Tirpak

The National Desert Storm War Memorial committee has approval for a site on the National Mall and is hoping to dedicate the new monument on the 30th anniversary of the conflict, but it needs to raise another \$32 million to get there.

[Two Years, \\$32 Million to Go on Desert Shield, Desert Storm Memorial](#)

"I can tell you one thing: I've always supported the necessity of an independent Space Force."

- The Honorable Matt Donovan, Acting Secretary of the Air Force

[Interim Air Force secretary: I've always supported the Space Force](#)

DefenseNews.com | 21 Jun 2019 | by Valerie Insinna

Now that Heather Wilson is no longer Secretary of the U.S. Air Force, we should expect service leadership to hew much closer to the Defense Department's perspective on the overhaul of military space organizations that includes [the launch of a Space Force](#).

"It's the standard story everybody tells you. The one I didn't see was the one that hit me."

- Gen. David Goldfein, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force

['Start finding me, boys' — inside the rescue of Lt. Col. Dave Goldfein](#)

AirForceTimes.com | 20 Jun 2019 | by Stephen Losey

The cockpit recording is striking for how steady the pilot's voice remains. High above Serbia, [Lt. Col. Dave Goldfein's F-16](#) has just been hit by a surface-to-air missile. His breathing accelerates as warning alerts blare, but with an even voice he informs his wingmen of his trajectory as the Fighting Falcon goes down.

Only a brief, frustrated expletive betrays the pressure Goldfein feels in that moment. And just as quickly, his voice regains its edge as he tells his fellow pilots that he's going to glide as long as he can before he bails out.

Then he issues a call: "Start finding me, boys."

And with that, the mad dash to save the life of a U.S. Air Force pilot was on.

[House Passes \\$690.2 Billion Defense Appropriations Bill](#)

AirForceMag.com | 19 Jun 2019 | by Amy McCullough

The House on June 19 approved a \$690.2 billion 2020 defense spending bill as part of a larger four bill appropriations package that also funds the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, State, and Energy for a total package worth \$982.8 billion.

The defense portion of the legislation marks a \$15.8 billion increase from the 2019 enacted funding, but it's still \$8 billion less than the President's budget request. Of the \$690.2 billion, \$622.1 billion will go to base defense programs, while \$68.1 billion will fund overseas contingency operations.

The bill provides a 3.1 percent pay raise for troops and funds an additional 3,700 Active Duty airmen, which is 600 more Air National Guardsmen and 100 additional Air Force Reservists. The bill does not fully fund a new Space Force, but it does provide \$15 million, "to continue analysis of purpose and structure of a Space Force and alternative organizational constructs," according to a summary of the legislation.

It provides \$142 billion for defense procurement, buying a total of 90 F-35 strike fighters (12 more than requested), eight F-15EX aircraft to recapitalize the F-15C/D fleet, 12 KC-46 tankers, 27 MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft (12 more than requested), and 12 Combat Rescue Helicopters.

In addition, the bill provides \$101.5 billion for research, development, test, and evaluation. This fully funds F-35 Block 4 follow-on development (\$1.5 billion), continued development of the B-21 bomber program (\$3 billion), and development of the VC-25B Presidential Aircraft Replacement program (\$735 million).

[Mark Esper is acting defense secretary. Will Trump make it permanent?](#)

MilitaryTimes.com | 19 Jun 2019 | by Leo Shane III and Joe Gould

The [Mark Esper era](#) will begin at the Pentagon on Monday.

Following the [sudden resignation announcement of acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan](#) on Tuesday, President Donald Trump announced he would appoint Esper, the current Army Secretary, to replace him in the top civilian Defense Department role.

[Report: USAF says debris issues continue to slow KC-46 tanker deliveries](#)

MilitaryTimes.com | 12 Jun 2019 | by Daniel McCoy

While it's happy with the inspection work being done to identify debris left behind in the manufacturing process, the USAF isn't getting the KC-46s at the pace it planned.

[GI Bill transfer ban for older troops could be thrown out](#)

BizJournals.com | 18 Jun 2019 | by Leo Shane

Senior service members would once again be able to share their [GI Bill benefits](#) with spouses and children under a provision included in a [House panel's budget bill draft](#).

The measure was unanimously approved by the House Armed Services Committee during their debate of the annual defense authorization bill on Wednesday. Sponsor Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., said the idea is to reverse, "a truly lousy decision by the Department of Defense last year."

[GAO: KC-46 Delays Causing USAF to Shift Money to KC-135s](#)

AirForceMag.com | 12 Jun 2019 | by Brian Everstine

The Air Force is taking money out of the [Boeing] KC-46 program to keep older KC-135s flying because of delays to the Pegasus program, while some Air Force commanders are hesitant to let their aircraft be refueled by the new tanker—further delaying the schedule, according to a new Government Accountability Office report.

[Concurrent Receipt Rules – Concurrent Retirement Disability Pay \(CRDP\)](#)

theMilitaryWallet.com | 24 Apr 2019 | by Ryan Guina

Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP), also known as Concurrent Receipt, allows military retirees to receive both a full military retirement pension and full [VA Disability compensation benefits](#), provided they meet eligibility requirements (listed below).

The CRDP program, which began on January 1, 2004, replaces the VA disability offset, which was previously required by law (and still is for some retirees). There is a 10-year phase-in period in which military retirement pay was increased 10% each year until the recipient began receiving full military retirement pay (there was no phase-in period for retirees with a VA

disability rating of 100%). The phase-in period lasted until January 2014. [More from DFAS on Concurrent Retirement Disability Pay \(CRDP\)](#).

Note: *AFA has been advocating for improvements in Concurrent Receipt.*

YOUR AIR FORCE – DID YOU KNOW?

Combat Controllers: “Some of the military’s most difficult missions are carried out by Combat Controller (CCT) specialists who operate in remote, often hostile areas. Acting as a one-man attachment to other special forces teams, these highly specialized Airmen are trained in a wide range of skills, including scuba, parachuting and snowmobiling, as well as being FAA-certified air traffic controllers in order to establish air control and provide combat support on missions all over the globe.”

Air Force Civilian Service: “Without question or debate our United States Air Force is the mightiest the world has ever seen. It is admired and respected by friend and foe alike and we’re committed to keeping it that way.

We are the 170,000 civilians who support and sustain the Air Force with our talent and our dedication—a dedication to the same mission as those in uniform—to defend our nation and protect the values that make America great.

While our work is vital to national defense, we also contribute in innovative and even life-changing ways to the well-being of every American. We’re the team that developed and the team that continues to maintain the global GPS satellite system that has revolutionized the way we live and communicate, and that’s just one example of how we have contributed.

We manage an impressive array of research facilities around the country where new discoveries are made and remarkable innovations are designed. They are developed in order to maintain the world’s most powerful airborne force and ensure it succeeds in its mission in air, space, and cyberspace.”

The American Pyrotechnics Association claims that there will be approximately 15,000 fireworks displays taking place for the Fourth of July holiday. Most small towns will spend \$8000-\$15,000 for a fireworks display, while large cities will spend millions.

QUOTES TO NOTE

“I recently learned something quite interesting about video games. Many young people have developed incredible hand, eye, and brain coordination in playing these games. The air force believes these kids will be our outstanding pilots should they fly our jets.”

- President Ronald Reagan

“All that I am ... I owe to the Air Force.”

- Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager

KEY DATES TO WATCH

2019

- Jul 10 Mitchell Nuclear Deterrence Series Breakfast with Madelyn Creedon, President, Green Marble Group, LLC, and Lt Gen Frank Klotz, USAF (Ret), Former Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security, Department of Energy at Capitol Hill Club
- Jul 12 Mitchell Institute Strategic Deterrence Breakfast-Missile Defense: A Review and Assessment Breakfast with Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL-5), Member, House Armed Services Committee at Capitol Hill Club
- Aug 23 AFA Breakfast with Gen. James Holmes, Commander, Air Combat Command at Key Bridge Marriott
- Sep 14-15 AFA National Convention at Gaylord National Hotel, National Harbor, MD
- Sep 16-18 AFA's Air, Space & Cyber Conference at Gaylord National Hotel, National Harbor, MD
- Oct 1 FY 2020 Begins

If you have questions, please contact:

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