

## **Open the NDAA Snap Shot Factsheet**

### Differences Between House and Senate NDAA Process

#### **House Armed Services Committee**

- Releases and posts online the bill the committee will vote on at least 24 hours prior to the markup (voting on the bill)
- Releases subcommittee marks at least 24 hours prior to full committee markup
- Gives the public full access including a live and archived webcast of subcommittee markups (can close for confidential info)
- Gives the public full access including a live and archived webcast of the full committee markup (can close for confidential info)
- The bill as amended and approved by the full committee is posted online within 48 hours.

#### **Senate Armed Services Committee**

- Does not release the version of the bill the committee will vote on in advance of the markup
- Does not release subcommittee markups prior to full committee markup
- Only three out of the five subcommittee markups are open to the public (can close for confidential info)
- The public has no access to the full committee markup
- The bill as amended and approved by the full committee was released a week after the markup.

### Line Items Authorized by the Senate Armed Services Committee in Secret

- More than \$7 billion for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, which is intended to support the Afghan military. Notable examples of wasteful programs funded from this account include purchases of Mi-17 helicopters from a Russian arms dealer that has been supplying the Assad regime in Syria as well as procurement of the C-27A transport plane without sufficient critical parts meaning the aircraft unusable by the Afghan Air Force.
- An increase in the cost cap for the USS *Gerald Ford* aircraft carrier bringing the total cost of the vessel up to \$12.8 billion. This one vessel is far behind schedule, over budget by billions of dollars, and may not be any more capable than the previous class of *Nimitz* carriers.
- More than \$700 million in unrequested funding to purchase an additional Virginia-class submarine that the Navy had not asked for.
- More than \$6 billion for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, an aircraft program that is over budget, behind schedule, and has repeatedly failed to meet key performance goals. This program is now expected to cost around \$1.5 trillion to procure and maintain over its lifetime.
- More than \$2 billion for four Littoral Combat Ships, which the Secretary of Defense has since said he has “considerable reservations” about and has proposed ending the program early.

- Millions of dollars that the Army did not request for the M1 Abrams tank in order to keep the production line open.
- More than \$3 billion for the purchase of 16 Poseidon aircraft, which the Pentagon's top weapons tester recently concluded is not effective in carrying out its two primary missions: surveillance and submarine detection.

#### The Pentagon's Slush Fund: Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Account

- The Senate NDAA authorized more than \$80 million for the war funding account
- Since 2002, the Pentagon has separated account for additional funding relating to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq from its base budget
- After President Obama took office, the war funding account was renamed the OCO account.
- The distinction between war-related activities and base-budget programs has grown increasingly murky.
- OCO has become a gimmick of fantasy budgeting that is used as a slush fund to create an end run around the budget cap for the Pentagon, which is set in law.
- In last year's budget submission, the Pentagon shifted approximately \$20 billion in funding from the base budget to the OCO account.
- Congress subsequently shifted an additional \$10+ billion from base to OCO in the omnibus appropriations act.
- By shifting relatively mundane funding streams, like operations and maintenance, from the base budget to the OCO account, Congress and the Pentagon are able to carve out room and protect funding for controversial programs like the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

#### Critical Policy Debates Stifled During the Senate Consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, S. 1197

Only the 26 members of the Senate Armed Services Committee had an opportunity to offer amendments to the NDAA last year—one of the few bills considered must-pass. But even these senators were encouraged to save policy debates for floor consideration where their amendments would receive a vote. However, ultimately, no amendments were considered when the bill was taken up by the full Senate. As a result, 74 senators were shut out and the following critical policy debates were stifled:

- Detainee policy/Guantanamo Bay
- Increasing Iran sanctions
- Revocation of authorization for use of military force in Afghanistan
- Auditing the Pentagon
- America's response to the war in Syria

#### Finally Public: The Military's Sexual Assault Epidemic

- The epidemic of sexual assault in the military is now widely known. Reports of incidents of assault increased by more than 50% in the last year.
- Last year the Senate Armed Services Committee held part the part of its markup of the NDAA on amendments addressing the military's sexual assault epidemic in an open and televised session.
- This was the first time in more than 15 years that the full Committee voted on any part of the NDAA in public.
- All of the Senators on the Committee attended, and the public saw them engage in an important and thoughtful debate.
- The public deserves to participate in the Committee's consideration of other important laws and policies determined in the NDAA.

#### Billions Authorized in Secret:

During closed Committee consideration of the NDAA, hundreds of billions of dollars were authorized—about half of discretionary spending:

#### **Topline Amounts Authorized by the Senate Armed Services Committee**

- More than \$625 billion in Pentagon spending
- Authorized \$526.6 billion for the Pentagon's base budget
- Authorized \$80.7 billion more for a separate war account/slush fund
- Authorized \$17.8 billion more for nuclear weapons