



United States Army
Warrant Officers Association

The Quiet Professionals®

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Resolution 2017-001

End Sequestration

WHEREAS, sequestration was created by the Budget Control Act of 2011, raising the federal debt ceiling, conditioned on offsetting the increase with corresponding decreases in federal discretionary spending over a 10-year period. Absent agreement – by a bipartisan committee – on which federal accounts to reduce, an automatic 10% across-the-board sequester kicked in, beginning sequestration in the latter half of 2013; and

WHEREAS, the military absorbed fully half of all sequestration cuts to the budget, and the uniformed services were forced to cut critical training and to implement civilian workforce furloughs to appropriately fund ongoing combat operational requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Pentagon had already planned to reduce spending by \$487 billion over a 10-year period. The Army is shrinking from a wartime high of 570,000 active duty soldiers to 450,000 by the end of 2017, and sequestration doubles this budget cut, and would further drop Army end-strength to a devastatingly low 420,000 soldiers; and

WHEREAS, since then, two bipartisan budget agreements have since been signed to temporarily suspend the sequester, but sequestration was not repealed, and will return after a two year delay; and

WHEREAS, five years after sequestration was created the world is if anything even more unstable and the impact of its further cuts threaten not only military personnel pay, benefits, and quality of life programs, but also military modernization, training, and other readiness programs, as the military tries to reset after more than a decade of sustained conflict. With terrorism on the rise, sequestration also gravely threatens the ongoing ability of other agencies such as the Departments of Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs from performing their vital missions; and

WHEREAS, the almost \$1 trillion cut from the Department of Defense's budget is logically a direct threat to our national security; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it strongly urges that the United States Congress – on a bipartisan, bicameral basis – work with the White House to eliminate sequestration in 2017.

Approved by the Members at the USAWOA 44th Annual Meeting of the Members, on 20 October 2016.



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Resolution 2017-002

Properly Fund Our Nation's Armed Services

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution states the following: "The United States shall guarantee to every state in this union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence," and

WHEREAS, the foregoing not only clearly establishes the defense of the nation and her citizenry as her government's Number #1 priority, but in fact establishes it as its only mandatory function; and

WHEREAS, although defense spending only comprises approximately 16% of the total federal budget (the lowest since before World War II), defense spending accounts for nearly half of all discretionary spending, forcing the Department of Defense to absorb half of all sequestration cuts and making it a consistent target for lawmakers attempting to reduce overall federal spending; and

WHEREAS, according to the Congressional Budget Office the FY 2016 defense budget of \$610 billion (including overseas contingency funding) – and the requested \$583 billion for FY 2017 – respectively account for only 3.5% and 3.3% (as projected) of the nation's gross domestic product; and

WHEREAS, even as the military traditionally draws-down at the conclusion of every conflict, the world remains extremely dangerous, and reliant on our nation's ability to defend freedom and continue combating international terrorism, and to lead humanitarian and contingency operations; and

WHEREAS, our nation has both a practical and moral obligation to properly train, equip, compensate, and care for those who serve or have served her in uniform; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it strongly urges that Congress end sequestration, and strongly urges it to commit funding at least equivalent to 5% of gross domestic product to the armed forces, in support of their readiness, training, modernization, and maintenance of current personnel and quality of life programs and initiatives, moving forward.

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Resolution 2017-003

Survival of the All-Volunteer Force

WHEREAS, the nation's All-Volunteer Force has repeatedly proved itself over one and a half decades of sustained conflict, on multiple fronts, without resorting to reinstating the draft. This required implementation of the most aggressive force generation models since World War II, necessitating multiple deployments and cross-leveling of uniformed service personnel, straining recruiting and retention efforts necessary to sustain adequate force structure levels; and

WHEREAS, budget constraints are forcing the uniformed services to cut force structure, threats to America and her allies have arguably increased, with challenges such as the appearance and worldwide growth of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the resurgence of an aggressive Russia, and multiple further instances of global turmoil threatening our nation's interests; and

WHEREAS, uniformed service members are not only exhausted from performing multiple missions – with increasingly constrained force structure and resources – they are concerned about the uncertainty of their future careers and welfare of their families, in light of the shrinking force and reductions in inflation-sensitive pay and benefits. And their leaders are very concerned about potential burnout in a military that is continually tasked to do more with less human and fiscal resources; and

WHEREAS, budget recommendations to further reduce both personnel benefits and force structure are a direct result of service chiefs struggling to perform their constitutionally mandated missions in the middle of a budget crisis that – absent the abolishment of sequestration – will only grow worse. The combined effect of these multiple stressors presents a very real threat to the continued viability and existence of the All-Volunteer Force; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that together with its partners in The Military Coalition, it will continue to work with Congress and the Administration to end sequestration and recommend legislative initiatives designed to strengthen and preserve the All-Volunteer Force, which faces perhaps the most unpredictable and dangerous challenges of its history.

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Resolution 2017-004

Support the Army Staff Senior Warrant Officer and Army Senior Warrant Officer Council

WHEREAS, in 1999, a Command Chief Warrant Officer (CCWO) program was approved by the National Guard Bureau, for implementation in the 54 states and territories of the United States. The duties of the CCWOs included addressing Warrant Officer strength problems and Warrant Officer recruiting; coordinating professional development; and serving as a technical advisor to the State Adjutants General on Warrant Officer management and career development; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, the ARNG CCWO position was authorized as the Senior Warrant Officer Advisor to the Director, ARNG, and soon after the Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council (WOSAC) was chartered – as the body of all ARNG CCWOs – to collectively develop and work Warrant Officer-specific issues in the ARNG; and

WHEREAS, also in 2000, the USAR CCWO position was authorized together with CCWO positions at each USAR Regional Support Command; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the CSA-approved recommendations from the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP Phase III – Warrant Officer) mandated resourcing and appointment of CWOBs, RCWOs, and Warrant Officer Advisors in each of the offices of the Secretary of the Army (SA), the CSA, and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army VCSA; and

WHEREAS, on 1 November 2005, the Senior Warrant Officer Advisory Council (now the Army Senior Warrant Officer Council [ASWOC]) was chartered, with the mission to serve as an enduring body to introduce, review and address potential issues concerning Army systems, policies, strength issues and programs designed to produce ready and relevant Warrant Officers who are capable of supporting the Army mission in their roles as soldiers, officers, leaders, and technicians across the full spectrum of operational environments; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the CSA decided to appoint the ARSTAF SWO, when the AXO duties of the CSA's O11A CW5 position obviated any real ability of the CW5 in it to function as anything other than an AXO. Recommendation to do this was made in a G-1 whitepaper included in the Warrant Officer Continuum of Learning (WOCLS) study. Following this, the original Warrant Officer advisor/AXO position was switched to an MOS-specific Human Resources Technician (420A) slot, as a full-time AXO position; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it will support and assist – in any way we can – the collective mission of these senior Warrant Officer leaders, which is vital to the Army.

Approved by the Members at the USAWOA 44th Annual Meeting of the Members, on 20 October 2016.

* *Professionalism* * *Representation* * *Recognition* *



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Resolution 2017-005

Fair Uniformed Service Member Pay Increases

WHEREAS, The associations in The Military Coalition (TMC) worked with dedicated members of Congress to raise uniformed service member pay and allowances to a level, in 2011, commensurate to the compensation received by comparable employees in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, since then, as the Department of Defense has struggled with crippling sequestration, service member pay raises have not kept pace with those in the private sector (as measured by the Employment Cost Index [ECI]); and

WHEREAS, service members deserve the pay raises mandated by current law, keeping pace with the average increase in pay enjoyed by comparable employees in the private sector; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it will work with Congress to ensure service members receive the pay raises they are entitled to under current law, as measured by ECI, and to recover the more than 3% in pay raises they have lost, since 2011.

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Resolution 2017-006

Oppose Reductions to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

WHEREAS, the military basic allowance for housing (BAH) has long been considered a staple of military compensation and included in calculations comparing service member pay and allowances with compensation received by their counter parts in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 (NDAA 2017) proposed: the lesser of the applicable rate or the member's actual cost; compensating dual military couples and roommates their normal rate divided by number of BAH-eligible occupants (CONUS and overseas) and giving service secretaries the option to pick a rate applicable for geographic bachelors; and

WHEREAS, the Senate's NDAA 2017 also removes service authority to both pay BAH for single E-5s and below on sea duty; and to pay the difference between with and without dependent BAH to members in quarters who pay child support.; and

WHEREAS, these provisions would take effect for members entering service or PCSing after Jan 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Senate unsuccessfully previously recommended similar cuts to BAH in their NDAA 2016 proposed legislation; and

WHEREAS, the Senate's provisions in NDAAs 2016 and 2017 would impose dramatic compensation cuts, in many cases more than \$10,000-\$20,000 per year; and would discriminate severely against service members who marry other service members rather than civilians, and severely penalize service members who take roommates as a way to save money; and

WHEREAS, the new retirement system requires more savings from service members, and this measure would punish them for pursuing one of their primary options to generate more savings; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it will join other great military/veterans service organizations in opposition to any cuts to this staple element of individual uniformed service member compensation.

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Resolution 2017-007

Adequately Fund Retirements of the Future Force

WHEREAS, a sufficiently robust uniformed service retirement system is crucial to retaining well-trained, highly skilled volunteers (in combination with their patriotism, equitable compensation, and expectation of service in a dynamic and respected force); and

WHEREAS, past and projected drawdowns of overall force structure and continuing high OPTEMPO continue to strain the capabilities of the total force, it remains crucial to recruit and retain an all-volunteer force of trained career professionals in our active duty and reserve component formations; and

WHEREAS, beginning on January 1, 2018, the new blended retirement system cuts the uniformed service defined benefit retirement of new service entrants by 20% in exchange for a 1%-of-base-pay government contribution to Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts and then up to 4 percent more through a government match beginning in year 3 of service (ceasing at 26 years of service); and

WHEREAS, the original recommendation of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) had recommended a government match of 5% (20 % more), beginning in year one (vesting at the end of year two); and

WHEREAS, the new blended retirement system represents nothing but a 20% cut in retirement benefits as applied to time spent by reserve component soldiers when drilling in return for retirement points only; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it will work with Congress to increase the government's TSP contribution to the level originally recommended by the MCRMC (and payable throughout a career); work to correct the unfair disparity imposed on reserve service conducted in exchange for retirement points; and closely monitor the impact of this system on the all-volunteer force, moving forward.

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Resolution 2017-008

**Provide Complete Concurrent Receipt of Military Retirement and VA
Disability Compensation**

WHEREAS, the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA 2004) allowed for the gradual phase-in of full concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation for service-connected wounds, illnesses or injuries; and

WHEREAS, the 10-year phase-in period ended in 2014, resulting in 20-year (or more) uniformed service retirees with VA disability ratings of 50 percent or higher no longer having their retirement pay offset by the amount of their VA disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, the law did not provide the same equity to service-connected disabled military retirees with VA ratings of 40 percent or below, or to Chapter 61 retirees who were medically retired with less than 20 years, regardless of VA disability rating; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it supports legislation for the full concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation, without offset – to include vesting of earned retirement credit for Chapter 61 retirees with less than 20 years of service – and regardless of rating percentage.

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Resolution 2017-009

Oppose TRICARE Beneficiary Cost Increases

WHEREAS, the Pentagon' FY 2017 budget submission proposes new enrollment fees for TRICARE For Life (TFL) beneficiaries (that currently have none) and replaces two existing Tricare programs for working age military retirees, imposing significant additional beneficiary cost; and

WHEREAS, TRICARE Prime would be renamed TRICARE Select, and increase annual enrollment fees (both single and family rates) by 25%, and copayments by up to \$100, with a cost-share of up to 25% for non-network providers (after a deductible is met); and

WHEREAS, the new "TRICARE Choice" would replace TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra – which currently have no enrollment fees – and would impose new annual enrollment fees of \$450 (single) and \$900 (family), and higher out-of-pocket costs; and

WHEREAS, USAWOA has joined its partners in The Military Coalition – over the past several years – in successfully arguing against Pentagon proposals that would have increased beneficiary costs by as much as 400% over a five-year period (in NDAA 2013); and

WHEREAS, any real or perceived erosion of benefits for career-minded personnel will undermine long-term retention; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it opposes all Tricare fee increases and the dismantlement and renaming of TRICARE Prime, Standard and Extra; will support a comprehensive health care benefit for all eligible uniformed services beneficiaries – active duty, National Guard and Reserve, retirees, eligible family members, and survivors; and will continue seeking to ensure that implementation of national health reform legislation does not adversely affect the unique uniformed services and VA health benefits, and uniformed services and VA beneficiaries are not subjected to taxation of those benefits.

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Resolution 2017-010

Oppose TRICARE Pharmaceutical Cost Increases

WHEREAS, the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 (NDAA 2017) would roughly double copays by 2025, and raise mail-order generic copayments from zero to \$11 in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the bill would empower the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) with authority to adjust Rx copays after 2025; and

WHEREAS, TRICARE pharmacy copays have already been doubled and tripled over the past 5 years and already approach or exceed median copays for large civilian employer plans; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it opposes further increases to pharmacy copays, and believes SecDef should have authority to reduce or eliminate copays for preferred medications, but that Congress should reserve to itself the authority to increase copays.

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Resolution 2017-011

**Adequate Funding and Appropriate Management Flexibility for the
Department of Veterans Affairs**

WHEREAS, there are approximately 21.4 million living veterans, more than 2.4 million of whom have served in combat in support of the Global War on Terrorism; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Veterans Health Administration will grow to nearly 9.5 million Veterans; and

WHEREAS, USAWOA and its partners in The Military Coalition (TMC) worked hard on a bipartisan and bicameral basis with Congress to pass the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (VA Fix Bill); and

WHEREAS, there are still bureaucratic impediments to the VA Secretary's ability (as supported in the VA Fix Bill) to fire VA employees for incompetence and even criminal behavior, and otherwise manage his workforce; and

WHEREAS, the VA Secretary has requested more autonomy to efficiently manage resources and reallocate unutilized (targeted) funds – within the department – to underfunded priorities, where it makes sense; and

WHEREAS, even though appropriations for VA continue to increase, they have not kept pace with demand and the rate of inflation; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it urges the Congress of the United States to legislatively provide the VA Secretary with requisite authority to efficiently manage his workforce and reallocate unutilized funding throughout the VA; and authorize appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs which fully fund and maintain the integrity and enhancement of Veteran entitlement programs and the health care system.

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Resolution 2017-012

**Unified Medical Recordkeeping System for All Uniformed Services and
the Department of Veterans Affairs**

WHEREAS, the failure to create a joint interoperable electronic health record useable by both DoD and the VA is a well-documented problem, with no viable plan to meet congressional requirements on the horizon; and

WHEREAS, in effect, the Defense Department has effectively abandoned the effort and is pursuing its own new system; and

WHEREAS, as long as this is the case, DoD will continue to disadvantage transitioning service members, and will continue to have great difficulties providing continuity of care and coordinating care provided in military facilities with care obtained from civilian providers; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it urges the Congress and White House to make creation of a joint interoperable electronic health recordkeeping system – useable by both DoD and the VA – a priority, and mandate its development, testing and placement into production over a reasonable, defined timeline.

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Resolution 2017-013

Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act Reform

WHEREAS, in 1981, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *McCarty vs. McCarty* that military retirement pay is not divisible as community property in divorce proceedings; but

WHEREAS, in 1982, the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act (USFSPA) was passed to circumvent the Supreme Court's decision, thereby allowing military retirement pay to be divided in divorce settlements; and

WHEREAS, unreasonable inequities exist in the USFSPA, including the "windfall provision," which grants divorce awards based upon the pay on the date of retirement (versus on the date of divorce), even if the former spouse remarries; and

WHEREAS, an additional provision requires service members with more than 20 years of service to divide their expected retired pay before their actual retirement date; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it asks Congress to reform the USFSPA by basing the divorce award amount on the service member's rank at the time of divorce, not the expected rank upon retirement; and not to require service members with more than 20 years of service to divide expected retired pay before they actually retire; and to terminate payments if the former spouse remarries.

Approved, as amended, by the Members at the USAWOA 44th Annual Meeting of the Members, on 21 October 2016.



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Resolution 2017-014

Recognize All Retired Guardsmen And Reservists As Veterans

WHEREAS, under current law honorably discharged members of the National Guard and the Reserves of the various uniformed services are not recognized as Veterans unless they have been deployed, regardless of their terms of service; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of National Guardsmen and Reservists – who were never called upon to deploy - have retired, having spent more than 20 years standing ready to defend our nation, if called upon to do so; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the United States Army Warrant Officers Association, that it urges the Congress to pass legislation recognizing all retired members of the uniformed services as Veterans, regardless of what component they honorably served in.

Approved by the Members at the USAWOA 44th Annual Meeting of the Members, on 20 October 2016.