

# March 13, 2014

1. Dunford pushes for post-2014 US presence in Afghanistan.
2. Navy, Marine Corps leaders detail risks of budget restraints.
3. Navy revises counting rules to add to ship numbers.
4. Senators: DOD ordered \$754 million in unnecessary parts last year.
5. Legislators call on DOD to fully accommodate Sikh troops.
6. Tumult over military sexual assaults far from over .
7. Do more for veterans than thank them for their service (Your letters).
8. Are Veterans Getting the Money They Deserve in Latest Budget?
9. VA: Funding decline for TBI care is good news.
10. Hearings to focus on future Veterans Affairs budget.
11. New bill to allow veterans free treatment for traumatic brain injury.
12. Report: Gulf War symptoms too broad for one definition.
13. Sen. Murray 'concerned' about possible cut to Walla Walla vets home grant.
14. VA seeking to educate vets on unclaimed benefits.
15. American heroes in waiting game for government benefits.
16. Military women's extra trauma: combat stress and sexual assault.
17. Suicide on the homefront in military families.
18. Families of Legionnaires' victims outraged by report on VA outbreak.
19. Boise VA living center quarantined due to suspected norovirus.
20. VA Butler gets top rating in hospice care from vets' families.
21. Fayetteville VA Medical Center receives grant to improve HIV care to homeless vets.
22. Potential Springfield sites for VA clinic being discussed.
23. Maine should preserve and expand its successful Veterans Court.
24. Volunteers assist 114 with claims.
25. City to honor women veterans with week of festivities.
26. Stand-Down for homeless veterans to take place in April.
27. Phoenix's Homeless Veteran Problem Not Solved, Local Homeless Advocates Say.
28. VA official placed on leave after improper spending allegations.
29. VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 13, 2014:
30. Today in History:

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1. [Dunford pushes for post-2014 US presence in Afghanistan.](#) A full withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan this year could precipitate an Iraq-style security breakdown, allowing al-Qaida to regroup there and again threaten the United States, the top U.S. general in Afghanistan told Senators on Wednesday.
2. [Navy, Marine Corps leaders detail risks of budget restraints.](#) Navy and Marine Corps leaders warned lawmakers about the consequences of further defense cuts Wednesday, as the Navy struggles to return to a 300-ship fleet.
3. [Navy revises counting rules to add to ship numbers.](#) With a few strokes on a keyboard, the Navy's top brass avoids shrinking its 280-ship fleet next year by simply reclassifying a couple of hospital ships and its small patrol craft deployed overseas.
4. [Senators: DOD ordered \\$754 million in unnecessary parts last year.](#) The Senate wants answers from Pentagon officials on why the Defense Department spent more than \$754 million last fiscal year on parts it didn't need.
5. [Legislators call on DOD to fully accommodate Sikh troops.](#) A group of legislators is asking the Pentagon for a policy change to ensure Sikh troops are never forced to violate their religion by shaving their beards, cutting their hair or getting rid of their turbans
6. [Tumult over military sexual assaults far from over.](#) The tumult over how to stop sexual assaults in the U.S. military is a long way from over as Congress grapples to find legislative solutions and new details emerge about a high-profile case involving an Army general and a female captain under his command.
7. [Do more for veterans than thank them for their service \(Your letters\).](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Post-Standard:** We, the people of a thankful nation, are going to urge our Congress to increase Veterans Administration funding to give you the care you deserve, treat your PTSD, find you a job and help you to readjust to and enjoy civilian life.
8. [Are Veterans Getting the Money They Deserve in Latest Budget?](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **National Journal:** Although budget requests are routinely dismissed as pie-in-the-sky wish lists doomed to be slashed, lawmakers fear that the Veterans Affairs Department actually might not be asking for enough money to meet its needs.

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9. [VA: Funding decline for TBI care is good news.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Army Times:** Funding for traumatic brain injury care would drop under the White House's proposed fiscal 2015 budget, but Veterans Affairs Department officials say that's actually good news.
10. [Hearings to focus on future Veterans Affairs budget.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Washington Post:** The House and Senate veterans' affairs committees are scheduled to hold a hearings this week to discuss funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs and various issues facing the organization.
11. [New bill to allow veterans free treatment for traumatic brain injury.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KFOR-TV:** A bill allowing Oklahoma veterans to be provided with free hyperbaric oxygen treatment for traumatic brain injury has been approved by the state Senate.
12. [Report: Gulf War symptoms too broad for one definition.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **USA Today:** Gulf War veterans have such a wide array of symptoms and exposures that researchers and clinicians should not apply one definition to everyone, and should instead "select one based on their needs," according to a report from the Institute of Medicine released Wednesday.
13. [Sen. Murray 'concerned' about possible cut to Walla Walla vets home grant.](#) [Hyperlink to Above Article](#) **The News Tribune:** Federal money for a Walla Walla veterans home remains uncertain even after U.S. Sen. Patty Murray raised her concerns at a budget hearing Wednesday in Washington, D.C.
14. [VA seeking to educate vets on unclaimed benefits.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KTAR-AM (Audio):** Calling all veterans in need of health care, education assistance, even home loans. The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs said you could be eligible for more benefits than you think.
15. [American heroes in waiting game for government benefits.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Fox News Channel's Fox and Friends:** In this 3:50 video Peter Gaytan, Executive Director of The American Legion, discusses the Backlog and the Legion's efforts to urge VA to reduce it.
16. [Military women's extra trauma: combat stress and sexual assault.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **MinnPost.com:** Although both men and women are subjected to MST, the Veteran's Health Administration found that 1 in 5 female veterans experienced MST as compared to 1 in 100 male veterans.

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17. [Suicide on the homefront in military families.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **CNN (Video)**: When I married a soldier in June 2001, I knew my life was going to change. I moved from Berkeley, California, to Fort Sill, Oklahoma -- talk about a culture shock. But I was in love, and enthusiastically dove head first into a military life I knew nothing about.
18. [Families of Legionnaires' victims outraged by report on VA outbreak.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**: Families of the men who died after contracting Legionnaires' disease at the Veterans Affairs Pittsburgh Healthcare System believe that two internal reviews that showed the VA knew early on what caused the outbreak of the disease in 2011 and 2012 prove that the agency was more concerned with a "cover-up" of what happened than letting them know what led to their loved ones' death.
19. [Boise VA living center quarantined due to suspected norovirus.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KTVB-TV**: The Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Boise says a long term care facility has been quarantined after several cases of gastroenteritis.
20. [VA Butler gets top rating in hospice care from vets' families.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**: VA Butler Healthcare ranks first in a recent national survey of end-of-life care administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
21. [Fayetteville VA Medical Center receives grant to improve HIV care to homeless vets.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Fayetteville Observer**: With the help of a federal grant, the Fayetteville VA Medical Center aims to improve HIV care to homeless veterans.
22. [Potential Springfield sites for VA clinic being discussed.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Springfield News-Leader**: Veterans' Affairs officials have been narrowing down possible locations for a new outpatient clinic in Springfield.
23. [Maine should preserve and expand its successful Veterans Court.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Kennebec Journal**: Maine lawmakers have several opportunities this year to stand up for veterans. One bill that I've introduced addresses the question: What happens when a veteran comes back from service struggling with post-traumatic stress and commits a serious crime?

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24. [Volunteers assist 114 with claims.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Norman Transcript:** One hundred and fourteen veterans and surviving spouses were assisted with their VA claims and questions Thursday. Of that number, eight received VA ratings of 100 percent for their service-connected disabilities.
25. [City to honor women veterans with week of festivities.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **WAWS/WTEV-TV:** The mayor, along with the Northeast Florida Women Veterans Association, proclaimed next week as Women Veterans Recognition Week.
26. [Stand-Down for homeless veterans to take place in April.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Clarion-Ledger:** Mississippi's first Homeless Veterans Stand-Down will take place April 4 in Mound Bayou on April 4.
27. [Phoenix's Homeless Veteran Problem Not Solved, Local Homeless Advocates Say.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Phoenix New Times:** Despite the headlines, not everyone believes Phoenix has housed every homeless veteran in the city.
28. [VA official placed on leave after improper spending allegations.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Tennessean:** A U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs official who worked in Nashville has been placed on administrative leave pending a probe of allegations he ran up thousands of dollars in inappropriate expenses on a government [credit card](#).
29. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 13, 2014:**
  - **March 13, 2014.** HVAC, Full Committee, "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2015."
  - **March 25, 2014.** SAC-MILCON-VA FY15 Budget Hearing.
  - **March 25, 2014.** HVAC, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity will hold a hearing on Veterans Affairs Bills.
    - H.R. 2942 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to reestablish the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
    - H.R. 3056 — A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on the provision of outreach and support services to veterans pursuing higher education under the Post 9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
    - H.R. 3614 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to improve the recognition by states of skills learned in the military by a Veteran when issuing licenses and credentials.

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- H.R. 4031 — Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act of 2014.
  - H.R. 4037 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to training and rehabilitation for Veterans with service-connected disabilities, and for other purposes.
  - H.R. 4038 — A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements in the information technology of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to process claims more efficiently, and for other purposes.
  - H.R. 4147 — Student Veterans IT Upgrade Act.
  - H.R. 4150 — Veterans Employment and Training Service Longitudinal Study Act of 2014.
  - H.R. 4151 — Veterans Education Survey Act of 2014.
- **March 25, 2014.** HVAC O&I will hold legislative hearing with issues related to construction, health, and other matters.
- *HR 3593* – Mandating arrangement with US Army Corps of Engineers for three major construction projects
  - *Draft bill* – informed consent for psychotropic drugs
  - *Draft bill* – oversight of contracts with service-disabled veteran owned small businesses
  - *Draft bill* –Gulf War Illness
  - *Draft bill* –Improve information security by implementing actions to improve transparency and governance
  - *Draft bill* –Biological implant protocol and procurement
- **March 26, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a joint hearing to receive the legislative presentations of The American Legion.
- **March 26, 2014:** HVAC DAMA will hold a Legislative Hearing on bills related to NCA and VBA.
- HR 2018 – Honor Those Who Served Act
  - HR 2088 – Centers for Excellence
  - HR 2119 – Veterans Access to Speedy Review (Video Hearing)
  - HR 2529 – Veterans Spouse Equal Treatment Act
  - HR 3671 – NCA Medallion Bill
  - HR 3876 – Burial with Dignity Act
  - HR 4095 – Annual COLA
  - HR 4102 – Require Payment for Accrued Benefits to Veterans Estate
  - HR 4141 – Expand Enhanced Use Leases to Cemeteries
  - HR 4191 – Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act (REVISED)

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- **March 27, 2014.** HAC-MILCON-VA FY15 Budget Hearing.
- **March 27, 2014.** HVAC Health intends to hold a Legislative Hearing on health related bills.
  - H.R. 183 – The Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act
  - H.R. 2527 – Veterans counseling and treatment for sexual trauma that occurred during inactive duty training
  - H.R. 2661 – The Veterans Access to Timely Medical Appointments Act
  - H.R. 2974 – To provide for the eligibility for beneficiary travel for veterans seeking treatment or care for military sexual trauma in specialized outpatient or residential programs at facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes
  - H.R. 3387 – The Classified Veterans Access to Care Act
  - H.R. 3508 – Qualifications of hearing aid specialists
  - H.R. 3180 – To include contracts and grants for residential care for veterans in the exception to the requirement that the Federal Government recover a portion of the value of certain projects (Kaptur)
  - H.R. 3831 – The Veterans Dialysis Pilot Program Review Act of 2014 (Roe)
  - H.R. 4198 – The Appropriate Care for Disabled Veterans Act
  - DRAFT – To authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2014 and for other purposes. (VA FY14 Construction Package)

## 30. Today in History:

- **1591** – [Battle of Tondibi](#): In [Mali](#), [Moroccan](#) forces of the [Saadi Dynasty](#) led by Judar Pasha defeat the [Songhai Empire](#), despite being outnumbered by at least five to one.
- **1639** – [Harvard College](#) is named for clergyman [John Harvard](#).
- **1697** – [Nojpetén](#), capital of the [Itza Maya](#) kingdom, fell to Spanish [conquistadors](#), the final step in the [Spanish conquest of Guatemala](#).
- **1809** – [Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden](#) is deposed in a [coup d'état](#).
- **1862** – [American Civil War](#): The [U.S. federal government](#) forbids all [Union](#) army officers to return fugitive slaves, thus effectively annulling the [Fugitive Slave Act of 1850](#) and setting the stage for the [Emancipation Proclamation](#).
- **1865** – [American Civil War](#): The [Confederate States of America](#) agree to the use of [African American](#) troops.
- **1881** – [Alexander II of Russia](#) is killed near his palace when a bomb is thrown at him. (Gregorian date: it was March 1 in the [Julian calendar](#) then in use in [Russia](#).)
- **1884** – The [Siege of Khartoum](#), [Sudan](#) begins, ending on January 26, 1885.
- **1897** – [San Diego State University](#) is founded.
- **1900** – [Second Boer War](#): [British](#) forces occupy [Bloemfontein](#), [Orange Free State](#).

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- [1920](#) – The [Kapp Putsch](#) briefly ousts the [Weimar Republic](#) government from [Berlin](#).
- [1921](#) – [Mongolia](#) is proclaimed an independent monarchy, ruled by Russian military officer [Roman von Ungern-Sternberg](#) as a dictator.
- [1933](#) – [Great Depression](#): Banks in the U.S. begin to re-open after [President Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) mandates a "[bank holiday](#)".
- [1938](#) – [World News Roundup](#) is broadcast for the first time on [CBS Radio](#) in the United States.
- [1940](#) – The Russo-Finnish [Winter War](#) ends.
- [1943](#) – [The Holocaust](#): [German](#) forces liquidate the [Jewish ghetto in Kraków](#).
- [1954](#) – [Battle of Điện Biên Phủ](#): [Viet Minh](#) forces attack the [French](#).
- [1957](#) – [Cuban](#) student revolutionaries storm the [presidential palace](#) in [Havana](#) in a failed attempt on the life of [President Fulgencio Batista](#).
- [1962](#) – [Lyman Lemnitzer](#), chairman of the [Joint Chiefs of Staff](#), delivers a proposal, called [Operation Northwoods](#), regarding performing [terrorist attacks](#) upon [Guantánamo Bay Naval Base](#), to [Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara](#). The proposal is scrapped and President [John F. Kennedy](#) removes Lemnitzer from his position.
- [1963](#) – Police in [Phoenix, Arizona](#) arrest [Ernesto Miranda](#) and charge him with kidnap and rape. His conviction is ultimately set aside by the [United States Supreme Court](#) in [Miranda v. Arizona](#)
- [1964](#) – American [Kitty Genovese](#) is murdered, reportedly in view of neighbors who did nothing to help her, prompting research into the [bystander effect](#).
- [1969](#) – [Apollo program](#): [Apollo 9](#) returns safely to [Earth](#) after testing the [Lunar Module](#).
- [1979](#) – The [New Jewel Movement](#), headed by [Maurice Bishop](#), ousts [Prime Minister Eric Gairy](#) in a nearly bloodless [coup d'etat](#) in [Grenada](#).
- [1988](#) – The [Seikan Tunnel](#), the longest undersea tunnel in the world, opens between [Aomori](#) and [Hakodate, Japan](#).
- [1991](#) – The [United States Department of Justice](#) announces that [Exxon](#) has agreed to pay \$1 billion for the clean-up of the [Exxon Valdez oil spill](#) in [Alaska](#).
- [1992](#) – An [earthquake](#) registering 6.8 on the [Richter scale](#) kills over 500 in [Erzincan](#), eastern [Turkey](#).
- [1996](#) – [Dunblane massacre](#): in [Dunblane, Scotland](#), 16 Primary School children and one teacher are shot dead by a [spree killer](#), [Thomas Watt Hamilton](#) who then committed suicide.
- [1997](#) – [India's Missionaries of Charity](#) chooses [Sister Nirmala](#) to succeed [Mother Teresa](#) as its leader.
- [1997](#) – The [Phoenix lights](#) are seen over [Phoenix, Arizona](#) by hundreds of people, and by millions on [television](#).
- [2003](#) – [Human evolution](#): The journal [Nature](#) reports that 350,000-year-old footprints of an upright-walking [human](#) have been found in [Italy](#).
- [2008](#) – [Gold](#) prices on the [New York Mercantile Exchange](#) hit \$1,000 per ounce for the first time.
- [2013](#) – [Pope Francis](#) is elected in the [papal conclave](#) to succeed [Pope Benedict XVI](#).