



AFSA International Legislative Committee Bulletin 2011-047  
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**1. Short-term “Doc Fix” Included in Unemployment, Payroll Tax Cut Bill.** The House and Senate reached agreement yesterday on a bill that would extend the payroll tax cut and unemployment compensation for two months (until March 1<sup>st</sup>). Also in the bill is a two-month delay in a 27 percent cut to Medicare/TRICARE reimbursement for doctors. Congressional leaders say they want to make payroll tax-unemployment compensation extensions go through the end of calendar year 2012 and that they will work toward that when Congress returns after the start of the new year. Many in Congress want the “Doc Fix” to be extended to a two-year period to allow sufficient time to come up with a permanent solution to the Medicare/TRICARE reimbursement problem (caused by 1997 legislation called the “Sustained Growth Rate” which was designed to keep Medicare solvent).

**2. Women in the U.S. Military: Growing Share, Distinctive Profile.** An article by the *Pew Research Center* reports, “The women who serve in today’s military differ from the men who serve in a number of ways. Compared with their male counterparts, a greater share of military women are black and a smaller share are married. Also, women veterans of the post-9/11 era are less likely than men to have served in combat and more likely to be critical of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In other ways, however, military women are not different from military men: they are just as likely to be officers; they joined the armed services for similar reasons; and post-9/11 veterans of both sexes have experienced a similar mix of struggles and rewards upon returning to civilian life.” To read more of this report about the evolving demographics, roles, and status of women in the military, go to:

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/12/22/women-in-the-u-s-military-growing-share-distinctive-profile/>

**3. Defense Bill Provides Force Reduction Tools.** An article by journalist Tom Philpott in the *Kitsap Sun* highlights some of the force reduction tools contained in the FY 2012 NDAA. These include:

“Temporary Early Retirement Authority, TERA, to allow select members a reduced annuity if released after 15 years but less than 20;

“Voluntary Retirement Incentive Pay, payable to "no more than 675 officers' with 20 to 29 years of service can be encourage to leave in return for payments of up to 12 months of basic pay;

“Voluntary Separation Pay and Benefits for select enlisted members or officers who have more than six years' service but fewer than 20.

“Expansion from three months to one year the period that an enlisted member can be discharged early without incurring a loss of benefits. But no pay or allowances would be paid for obligated time not served.”

To read more, go to: <http://www.kitsapsun.com/news/2011/dec/22/tom-philpott-post-iraq-drawdown-plans-replace/>

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