



NAVY LEAGUE

of the United States

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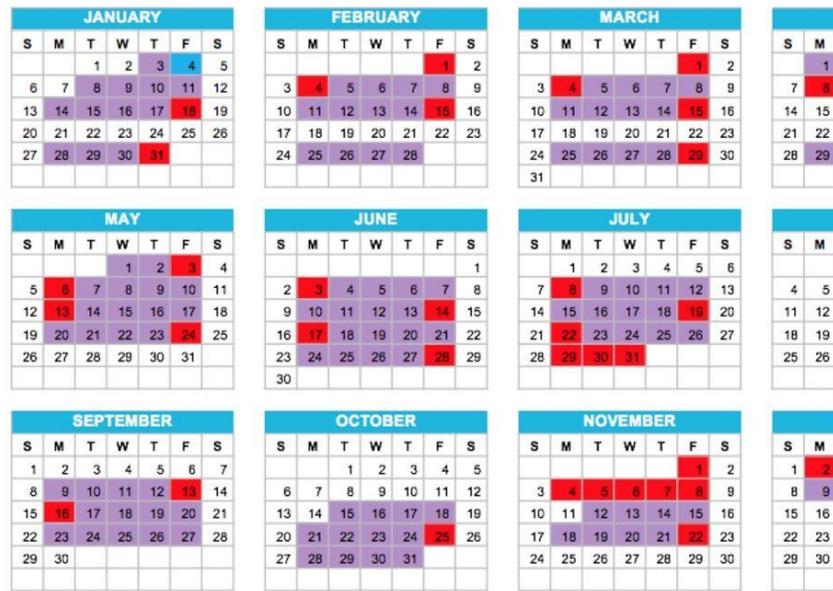
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Leg. Affairs Weekly Round-Up – December 14

Congressional Calendar Released

2019 Congressional Calendar



House only Senate only Both in session

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Government Funding Watch

Eight days to go until a government shutdown and it's looking more likely "we could be headed down the road to nowhere", said Sen. Richard Shelby, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. The most talked about option is another Continuing Resolution (CR), and the question remains open as to how long

temporary funding will continue. According to CQ: "[Incoming Appropriations Ranking Member Kay] Granger added that so-called anomalies - including much-desired additional fiscal 2019 funds for polar icebreaker procurement - were still under discussion if the DHS bill was put on autopilot. "It's possible, we haven't decided," Granger said.

The Senate included \$750 million in its Homeland bill ([S 3109](#)) for the Coast Guard to begin awarding contracts for heavy icebreaker design and construction prior to Oct. 1, 2019. The Coast Guard currently has two aging heavy cutters, but only one is operational; Russia has four heavy icebreakers in use with more in the pipeline, as well as a large fleet of medium-to-light icebreakers.

"Heavy polar icebreakers are essential to securing the national security and economic interests of the United States in the Arctic and Antarctic," Senate appropriators wrote in a report accompanying their version of the DHS bill. Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Chairwoman Shelley Moore Capito, (R-WV), said this week she wasn't sure anomalies could be used to fund the icebreaker procurement."

At the Navy League's Special Topic Breakfast Friday morning Coast Guard Commandant Karl Schultz stressed the importance of a robust Operations and Support budget, increasing the number of reservists. As always he stressed the importance of national needs in the arctic that require six total Polar Security Cutters, including three heavy, three medium, with construction beginning on the first in 2019.

The Navy League [campaign to support funding for a Polar Security Cutter in Fiscal Year 2019](#) is still online, please share with your colleagues or anyone who has not yet taken action.

So far our icebreaker campaign has reached **228 Representatives**, **54 Senators**, and **523 people** have taken action so far to send a total of **868 messages**.

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Navy Readiness Hearing

Wednesday morning the Senate Armed Services Committee held a joint hearing of its Readiness and Seapower Subcommittees to examine the state of the Navy and Marine Corps. The hearing generated numerous headlines including a [\\$3.6 billion recovery price tag for Camp Lejeune](#), and continuing ship maintenance delays. As military leaders have done for years now Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer pleaded with members of the committee for stable, consistent funding, noting that a return of sequestration would result in a \$26 billion cut to the Department of the Navy. He likened the readiness recovery to relearning to ride a bicycle, which the services have done over the last several years saying, "We'll be knocked off just as we're getting going." He promised the Navy was making progress with the investment from Congress over the past several years, and said in eight weeks they have increased maintenance throughput by 40-percent. Secretary Spencer did admit however that [three attack submarines are not qualified to dive](#) and have been idling while waiting for dry-dock availability that is a third short of requirements.

The Government Affairs Office GAO reported that since 2012 the [Navy lost more than 27000 days of ship and sub availability](#) due to maintenance delays, and wasn't meeting it's own training requirements with [some sailors still working 100 hour weeks](#). They have issued 45 recommendations to the Navy and Pentagon to improve force readiness since 2012, said GAO Director of Defense Capabilities and Management John Pendleton. Committee Chair Roger Wicker (R-MS) noted that the last time sequestration kicked in it resulted in five cancelled ship deployments; \$2b in deferred procurements, 30-percent cut to facility sustainment, maintenance backlogs, and half of the home-stationed Marine Corps units had unacceptable readiness. Responding to a question from Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) regarding the plunge in readiness over the past decade, Pendleton said, "Demand didn't slow down with shrinking fleet and budgets cutting resulting in a ripple effect." He also warned that depot capabilities are more than six years behind and there are problems sustaining older aircraft while incorporating new ones into the fleet, calling into question Defense Secretary Mattis' goal of 80%

readiness for aircraft.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your councils, as well as friends and potential Navy League members!



ARABIAN SEA (Dec. 12, 2018) Naval Aircrewman (Helicopter) Erick Smith, assigned to the "Blackjacks" of helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 21, rides in an MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter while conducting flight operations with the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2). The John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group and the Essex Amphibious Ready Group are conducting integrated operations in the Arabian Sea to ensure stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and the Pacific through the western Indian Ocean and three strategic choke points. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Adam Brock/Released)

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Other stories of interest:

Top Stories

[Trump Picks Milley For Joint Chiefs Chairman: A Bold Reformer - But Will They Clash? - Breaking Defense/Dec 7](#)

While previous Army chiefs, all admirable men, tended to be quiet, bland, or outright inarticulate, General Milley erupted into the job in 2015 with a gift for rhetoric and tremendous energy for reform. In the three years since, he won over National Guard activists who'd feuded bitterly with his predecessor, created new advisor brigades and experimental units, launched the biggest reorganization of the Army in 40 years, and set clear R&D priorities - Thousand-mile missiles! Robotic tanks! Super-fast helicopters! Bigger bullets! - that Trump's political appointees then embraced with big budget boosts.

[Democrats scoff at GOP's shifting defense budget - Defense News/Dec 11](#)

"Until it comes here, it's irrelevant," Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., and the soon-to-be chair of the House Appropriations Committee, told Defense News at the Capitol on Tuesday. "When they sit and negotiate with us, then we can talk about it."

[Five Marines Declared Dead After Aviation Disaster - New York Times/Dec 11](#)

The deaths follow a growing number of recent American military accidents, including two deadly collisions involving American warships in 2017, and will likely sharpen the spotlight on the country's military operations in Asia.

[Last-Ditch Effort to Pass Blue Water Navy Bill Fails in Senate - Military.com/Dec 11](#)

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act would extend eligibility for disability compensation and health care to "Blue Water" Navy veterans -- service members who were aboard aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other ships, some of whom have fought for years to prove they were exposed to Agent Orange. The dioxin-laden herbicide has been found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson's disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

[Arctic Report Card Documents 'Cascading Effects' Of Warming Ocean Temperatures - NPR/Dec 12](#)

The annual report released Tuesday says rapid warming over the past three decades has led to a 95 percent decline of the Arctic's oldest and thickest ice.

This research comes as world leaders convene at the U.N. climate summit in Poland this week where they are debating whether to embrace the findings of an October report by the International Panel on Climate Change.

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Seapower

[Navy Leaders Will Hold Program Managers More Accountable for Cutting Time, Cost - USNI News/Dec 10](#)

ARLINGTON, Va. - Even within the regular acquisition system, the Navy expects that all of its program managers will find ways to shave time and money off their programs. Anything less is a failure of leadership, the principal military deputy for the Navy acquisition chief said at an engineering conference last week.

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Surface and Submarine Warfare

[Second Zumwalt Destroyer Arrives in San Diego; Third Launches in Maine - USNI News/Dec 10](#)

Monsoor too had challenges on its path to commissioning into the fleet. The ship completed its acceptance trials in February - after electrical problems halted the original December 2017 testing - and was partially accepted by the Navy in April. The Navy disclosed months later, though, that during those sea trials the ship damaged blades in the main turbine engine, forcing the shipbuilder to replace the entire engine before Monsoor could begin its voyage to California.

[Following deadly 2017 collisions, Navy revamps surface training - WTKR/Dec 10](#)

The revamped Junior Officer of the Deck course is taught at the Surface Warfare Officer School in Newport, Rhode Island.

The training purposefully puts students in situations to increase their stress levels and teach them how to get out of difficult ship-maneuvering scenarios.

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Aviation

[Navy's Operational F-35C Squadron Declared 'Safe for Flight;' Can Prepare for Evaluations, IOC - USNI News/Dec 12](#)

The "Argonauts" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147 completed their carrier qualifications today aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70) and can now

independently conduct flight operations as a squadron, without the assistance and oversight from a fleet replacement squadron.

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Homeland

[Coast Guard Commandant Boosts Plan to Outfit Cutters with ScanEagle Drones - Military.com/Dec 10](#)

All Coast Guard National Security Cutters should have ScanEagle drones aboard and available for launch to boost high seas surveillance and aid in drug interdictions and arrests, according to Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz.

[Navy Bombing Range Expansion Could Limit Public Access - Military.com/Dec 10](#)

RENO, Nev. - Conservationists are leading opposition to a proposal to triple the size of a U.S. military bombing range and training grounds in northern Nevada in a move that could gobble up more than 900 square miles (2,330 square kilometers) of public land across five counties.

[Army stifles Navy's offense to win 3rd straight in historic rivalry - Military Times/Dec 9](#)

PHILADELPHIA - The No. 22 Army Black Knights jumped out to an early lead Saturday evening against their longtime rivals from Annapolis - and they never looked back, beating Navy for the third straight year and retaining the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy in front of President Donald Trump and 66,729 fans at Lincoln Financial Field.

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Jones Act

[Latino Legislators Call for End of Jones Act, Cannabis Decriminalization, Gun Safety in Landmark Resolutions - National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators/Dec 11](#)

WASHINGTON, DC / SAN DIEGO, CA - The National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL) took bold stances on issues that affect the Latino community, and for the first time waded into the gun safety issue, calling for universal background checks and other important gun reform measures in one of a series of resolutions approved by the group at its 16th Annual Summit, which was held in San Diego this weekend. NHCSL also passed a resolution calling for the repeal of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones

Act, which imposes higher prices on consumers as well as outdated and anti-competitive requirements that burden US citizens in non-contiguous jurisdictions, such as Alaska, Puerto Rico, and others.



FUNCHAL, Portugal (Dec. 8, 2018) A tugboat assists the Arleigh-Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109) as the ship arrives in Funchal, Portugal, for a scheduled port visit, Dec. 8, 2018. Jason Dunham is deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of regional allies and partners as well as U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jonathan

Clay/Released)

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**Navy League of the United States
2300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22201
703-312-1571**