

Sequester At A Glance:

The Impact on our National Security & Defense Community

Despite warnings from our nation's defense and military leaders, House Republicans refused to avoid the irrational and reckless across-the-board spending cuts known as the sequester. Over the next few weeks and months, unless Congress takes action to replace sequestration, our national security will see severe reductions in funding, threatening jobs and impacting programs domestically and abroad. Sequestration will put at risk the Department of Defense's operations, weakening our country's military readiness. Here's a closer look at how the sequester could impact our national security and military programs:

THE FACTS:

- **The Department of Defense will consider the furlough of up to 800,000 civilian employees** (the entire workforce) **for up to 22 days**. This would result in a 20% reduction in pay for civilian employees. [[Military Benefits, 2/21](#)]
- The **Army will release about 1,300 temporary** and term employees and implement an Army-wide hiring freeze [[Army Times, 2/25](#)] and reduce training for 80 percent of U.S. ground forces, which will have grave consequences for troops currently serving in Afghanistan. [[Army Times, 2/13](#)]
- **The Department of Defense is in the process of implementing a hiring freeze**. Under normal circumstances, the Department hires 2,000 personnel per week, **44% of whom are veterans**. [[CNN, 2/4](#)].
- The Pentagon has **cancelled a carrier group's deployment to the Middle East** to save roughly \$300 million, reducing the number of aircraft carriers it has in the Gulf from two to one. [[RT, 3/3](#)]
- **Reduction in capacity equivalent to more than 1,000 federal agents by the FBI and other law enforcement entities.**
"This loss of agents would significantly impact our ability to combat violent crime, pursue financial crimes, secure our borders, and protect national security." [[White House](#)]
- **Customs and Border Protection could reduce work hours by the equivalent of over 5,000 border patrol agents and 2,750 CBP officers.**
"Funding and staffing reductions would increase wait times at airports, weaken security between land ports of entry, limit CBP's ability to collect 4 revenue owed to the Federal government, and slow screening and entry for those traveling into the United States. At the major gateway airports, average wait times could increase by 30-50 percent." [[White House](#)]
- **The Department of Labor's Veterans Transition Assistance Program, which serves over 150,000 veterans a year, could have to reduce operations.**
These cuts translate "into a reduction in the capacity to serve tens of thousands of veterans in their efforts to find civilian employment." [[White House](#)]
- The Marines have announced they have **stopped their Military Education Tuition Assistance Program** immediately as a result of the sequester, which could make it more difficult for active-duty Marines to afford to further their education. [[Navy Live, 3/2](#)]
- **Sequestration could delay approval of U.S. defense exports**, according to experts. Under the furlough of civilian employees, many of the offices that process foreign military sales and requests will have fewer workers on a daily basis. Even if a sale is underway, the civilian furloughs could slow the sales. [[Defense News, 3/2](#)]

- Another **\$20 million would be cut from international peacekeeping missions and \$35 million from efforts to “counter terror, prevent loose and dangerous weapons** from falling into the wrong hands and supervise the safe destruction of conventional weapons.” [[Defense News, 3/2](#)]
- Foreign governments have expressed concerns about how sequestration would affect their military interaction with the Department of Defense and their security writ large. [[Defense News, 3/2](#)]

From our Military Leaders:

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: “These would be the steepest, deepest cuts at a time I would attest is more dangerous than it’s ever been.” [[Washington Post, 2/12](#)]

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno: “We simply cannot take the readiness of our force for granted. If we do not have the resources to train and equip the force, our soldiers, our young men and women, are the ones who will pay the price, potentially with their lives.” [[POLITICO, 2/14](#)]

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano: “[Department of Homeland Security cannot absorb the cuts without] significantly negatively affecting frontline operations and our nation’s previous investment in the homeland security enterprise.” [[Washington Post, 2/14](#)]

Former senators Norm Coleman and Joe Lieberman, former defense secretary Bob Gates, Bill Kristol, and others: “Sequestration will result in unacceptable risk for U.S. national security. It will degrade our ability to defend our allies, deter aggression, and promote and protect American economic interests. It will erode the credibility of our treaty commitments abroad. It will be a self-inflicted wound to American strength and leadership in the world.” [[2/11](#)]

Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta: “I have got to use this opportunity to express again my greatest concern as secretary, and frankly one of the greatest security risks we are now facing as a nation, that this budget uncertainty could prompt the most significant military readiness crisis in more than a decade.” [[Voice of America, 2/7](#)]

Marine Corps Gen. James Amos: “We are already a lean and frugal service, thus every reduction that we make from this point forward will cut into bone - we are beyond muscle.” [[USA Today, 3/4](#)]

Senator John McCain: “And if we don't believe our military leaders, then who in the world do we believe? And I think that what we are doing now to the men and women who are serving is unconscionable, because they deserve a predictable life in the military, and also, these federal employees who don't know whether they're going to be laid off or not..” [[CNN’s “State of the Union,” 2/24](#)]

What Republicans Have to Say:

Representative Steve Scalise (LA-1): “We asked him to commit to us that when the cuts actually came on March 1, that he would stand firm and not give in, and he’s holding to that. I think Friday will be an important day that shows we’re finally willing to stand and fight for conservative principles and force Washington to start living within its means. And that will be a big victory.” [[New York Times, 3/1](#)]

Representative Mick Mulvaney (SC-5): “The problem is serious enough that it must be addressed, even with an imperfect solution.” [[CNN, 2/25](#)]

Representative Paul Gosar (AZ-4): “We either have a spending problem or we don’t. Going back to the military budget of 2009 — we’re still going to have the biggest military in the world. If we can’t go over this bump, we’ll never be able to get anything big done. ... A little pain allows the medicine to go down. We’ll at least be treating the problem in order for us to get well again.” [[POLITICO, 12/11](#)]