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3. Report calls for end to 'Cold War autopilot' plan.
4. GAO study: Civilian doctors wary of accepting Tricare.
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6. Braintree man accused of embezzling \$68K from veterans' organization.
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1. [Obama will return 5 percent of salary in sequester solidarity](#). Sharing a bit of budget pain, President Barack Obama will return 5 percent of his salary each month to the Treasury in a show of solidarity with federal workers smarting from government-wide spending cuts.
2. [Hagel: Defense Department must adapt for the future](#). The Defense Department must get its acquisition, personnel and overhead spending under control, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Wednesday in his first major policy speech in the job.
3. [Report calls for end to 'Cold War autopilot' plan](#). Dwindling military budgets and the diminished threat of a nuclear war in Europe dictate that the United States and Russia abandon their Cold War mentality and gradually remove some nuclear weapons from ready-to-launch status, according to a report Wednesday.
4. [GAO study: Civilian doctors wary of accepting Tricare](#). An estimated 620,000 Pentagon health care recipients — a group that includes military retirees, National Guard members and reservists and the children of some active-duty troops — struggle to find private doctors who will accept them as patients, according to a new government study.
5. [Veterans Affairs Officials Offer Reassurance About Troubled Hospital](#). [New York Times](#) Senior officials with the Department of Veterans Affairs said on Wednesday that they have begun taking steps to fix problems at an embattled veterans medical center here, including hiring new senior leadership, adding primary care doctors and reviewing ...
6. [Braintree man accused of embezzling \\$68K from veterans' organization](#). [Boston.com](#) The investigation; undertaken by Bosken through the US Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General; alleged that money the organization received from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences as well as money from ...
7. [Veterans Disability Claims Backlog, Setting the Record Straight](#). [Hyperlink to Story Huffington Post](#): There's a lot of confusion and misinformation regarding the disability claims backlog at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Setting the record straight requires some honest brokering with many years experience in both customer service and writing computer software for moving from paper-based customer service to workflow systems.

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8. [VA Reports Slight Progress as Claims Backlog Drops 2 Percent.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **NextGov:** The Veterans Affairs Department reported yesterday that its disability claims backlog had dropped to 885,068 this week, down two percent from 903,286 last Monday.

9. [Hagan, Burr repeat calls for reducing backlog of Veterans Affairs cases.](#) [Winston-Salem Journal](#) U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, D-N.C., on Tuesday repeated her call for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to reduce a backlog of cases at the VA regional office in Winston-Salem. In a teleconference with reporters, Hagan said she was “frustrated and upset ...

10. [Who pays for a Minnesota veteran’s final wish?](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Star Tribune:** This year, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton has proposed \$400,000 in his budget over the next two years to provide stable funding for the veteran organizations’ honor guards. It’s hoped the greater attention to training and the added funding will attract a younger group of veterans to perform the ceremonies.

11. [Letter: Psych volunteers counsel veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Newsday:** The government provides services for them at the Northport Veterans Affairs Medical Center. As the article states, however, the wait can be long, and it is difficult for the veterans to get to Northport.

12. [Many Older Veterans Suffer PTSD in Silence.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Medscape:** Veterans may continue to suffer with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) long into their golden years, a new study shows. Investigators at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, DC, found that among a cohort of older veterans, 17% endorsed symptoms of PTSD, and about 30% had traumatic brain injury (TBI).

13. [Legionella Not Just a VA Plight.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **ThirdAge:** Reported cases of Legionnaires' disease in the United States have jumped more than 260 percent since 2000, but the true number could make annual cases of the disease more common than brain cancer, leukemia or HIV, a Tribune-Review investigation has found.

14. [Editorial: Leave It - Disabled veterans' benefits don't need fixing.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Fayetteville Observer:** The object of the veterans' scorn is a proposed change in the way government calculates the cost of living. The switch to a "chained" Consumer Price Index would measure not only changes in the prices, but also the quantity of goods being purchased.

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15. [Nashville woman pleads guilty to VA grant theft.](#) [Hyperlink to Above Story](#) **New England Cable News (NECN) (AP):** A Nashville woman has pleaded guilty in federal court to making false claims to the Department of Veterans Affairs and diverting more than \$360,000 in homeless veteran grants to her own personal use.

16. [Golden Age Games for veterans reinstated.](#) [Hyperlink to Above Story](#) **The Buffalo News:** Following the lawmakers' intense lobbying, the Department of Veterans Affairs has reversed its decision to cancel the games' 27th annual edition. That means more than 1,000 veterans 55 and older will descend on Buffalo, after all, from May 30 to June 4, resulting in bookings for about 5,000 hotel rooms and an approximate \$2.2 million boost to the local economy.

17. [Snow-boarding Wounded Warrior Refuses to Be Sidelined.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **American Forces Press Service:** Yesterday, Cedeno snowboarded down Snowmass Mountain during the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, surprising even himself at his accomplishment. The experience exhilarated Cedeno, one of just two active-duty troops among almost 400 disabled veterans participating in the clinic.

18. [Veterans' Job Fair April 24 at Middletown VFW.](#) [Atlantic Highlands Herald](#) A resume writing class for veterans will be held in advance of the event at 8:30am. Also at the job fair will be a Mobile Health Outreach Unit from the US Department of Veterans Affairs that will provide basic health screenings as well as ...

19. [Female veterans to be honored April 15.](#) [Wgnradio](#) MTSU is the only Tennessee university selected by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for a "VetSuccess on Campus" program. It also has been named a military-friendly institution for three years in a row by G.I. Jobs magazine. TVHS is a tertiary ...

20. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as April 4, 2013:**
 - **(TBD).** The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs will hold a hearing on the Fiscal Year 2014 budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs. 10:00 A.M.; 418 Russell
 - **April 10, 2013.** The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, will conduct a hearing entitled "Sustaining the Sacred Trust: An Update on our National Cemeteries." 2:30 P.M.; 334 Cannon

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- **April 10, 2013.** The House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity is expected to hold a legislative hearing on Educational Benefits and other purposes. 10:00 A.M.; 334 Cannon

The list of bills is as follows:

- *H.R. 357* GI Tuition and Fairness Act (Rep. Jeff Miller (FL))
 - *H.R. 844* VetSuccess Enhancement Act (Rep. Mark Takano (CA))
 - *H.R. 631* Servicemembers' Choice in transition Act of 2013 (Rep. Bill Flores (TX))
 - *H.R. 562* VRAP Extension Act of 2013 (Rep. Jeff Miller (FL))
 - *H.R. 1305* Eligibility under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program
 - *H.R. 1316* Responsibilities of the Directors and Assistant Directors of Veterans Employment and Training
 - *H.R. 1402* Five-year extension of Paralympics program authorities (grant and stipend)
 - Five-year extension of certain work-study authorities (expected to be introduced shortly)
 - Draft bill entitled Improving Job Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2013 (expected to be introduced shortly)
- **April 11, 2013.** HVAC FY14 Budget Hearing. 10:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.; 334 Cannon House Office Building
- **April 16, 2013 (T).** The House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs is expected to hold a legislative hearing on Disability Benefits and other purposes.

The tentative bill list is as follows:

- *H.R. 569* Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2013 (Rep. Jon Runyan (NJ))
 - *H.R. 570* American Heroes COLA Act (Rep. Jon Runyan (NJ))
 - *H.R. 602* Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act (Rep. Jeff Miller (FL))
 - *H.R. 671* Ruth Moore Act of 2013 (Rep. Chellie Pingree (ME))
 - *H.R. 679* Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act (Rep. Tim Walz (MN))
 - *H.R. 733* Access to Veterans benefits Improvement Act (Rep. Jon Runyan (NJ))
 - *H.R. 894* Improve Supervision of Fiduciaries of Veterans (Rep. Bill Johnson (OH))
 - *H.R. 1405* Inclusion of an appeals form in any notice of decision issued for the denial of a benefit claim
- **April 18, 2013.** HAC-MILCON-VA FY14 Budget Hearing. 10:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.; H-140, Capitol
- **April 18, 2013.** SAC-MILCON-VA FY14 Budget Hearing. 2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.; 125 Dirksen

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21. Today in History:

- [1812](#) – U.S. President [James Madison](#) enacts a ninety-day [embargo](#) on trade with the [United Kingdom](#).
- [1814](#) – [Napoleon](#) abdicates for the first time.
- [1818](#) – The [United States Congress](#) adopts the [flag of the United States](#) with 13 red and white stripes and one star for each state (then 20).
- [1841](#) – [William Henry Harrison](#) dies of [pneumonia](#) becoming the first [President of the United States](#) to die in office and the one with the shortest term served.
- 1850 – [Los Angeles, California](#) is incorporated as a city.
- [1859](#) – [Bryant's Minstrels](#) debut "[Dixie](#)" in [New York City](#) in the finale of a [blackface minstrel show](#).
- [1865](#) – [American Civil War](#): A day after [Union](#) forces capture [Richmond, Virginia](#), U.S. President [Abraham Lincoln](#) visits the [Confederate](#) capital.
- [1866](#) – [Alexander II of Russia](#) narrowly escapes an assassination attempt by [Dmitry Karakozov](#) in the city of [Kiev](#).
- [1887](#) – [Argonia, Kansas](#) elects [Susanna M. Salter](#) as the first female mayor in the [United States](#).
- [1913](#) – The Greek aviator [Emmanouil Argyropoulos](#) becomes the first pilot victim of the [Hellenic Air Force](#) when his plane crashes.
- [1933](#) – U.S. Navy [airship](#), [USS Akron](#), is wrecked off the [New Jersey](#) coast due to severe weather.
- [1939](#) – [Faisal II](#) becomes King of [Iraq](#).
- [1944](#) – [World War II](#): [First bombardment of Bucharest by Anglo-American forces](#) kills 3000 civilians.
- [1945](#) – World War II: American troops liberate [Ohrdruf forced labor camp](#) in [Germany](#).
- 1945 – World War II: American troops [capture Kassel](#).
- [1949](#) – Twelve nations sign the [North Atlantic Treaty](#) creating the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#).
- [1958](#) – The [CND peace symbol](#) is displayed in public for the first time in [London](#).
- [1964](#) – [The Beatles](#) occupy the top five positions on the [Billboard Hot 100](#) pop chart.
- [1965](#) – The first model of the new [Saab Viggen](#) fighter aircraft is unveiled.
- [1967](#) – [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) delivers his "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence" speech in [New York City](#)'s [Riverside Church](#).
- [1968](#) – Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated by [James Earl Ray](#) at a motel in [Memphis, Tennessee](#).
- 1968 – [Apollo program](#): [NASA](#) launches [Apollo 6](#).
- [1969](#) – Dr. [Denton Cooley](#) implants the first temporary [artificial heart](#).
- [1973](#) – The [World Trade Center](#) in [New York](#) is officially dedicated.
- 1973 – A [C-141](#), dubbed the [Hanoi Taxi](#), made its last flight of [Operation Homecoming](#).
- [1975](#) – [Microsoft](#) is founded as a partnership between [Bill Gates](#) and [Paul Allen](#) in [Albuquerque, New Mexico](#)
- 1975 – [Vietnam War](#): [Operation Baby Lift](#) – A [United States Air Force C-5A Galaxy](#) crashes near [Saigon, South Vietnam](#) shortly after takeoff, transporting orphans – 172 die.
- [1976](#) – Prince [Norodom Sihanouk](#) resigns as leader of [Cambodia](#) and is placed under house arrest.

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- [1979](#) – President [Zulfikar Ali Bhutto](#) of [Pakistan](#) is executed.
- [1983](#) – Space Shuttle [Challenger](#) makes its maiden voyage into space ([STS-6](#)).
- [1984](#) – President [Ronald Reagan](#) calls for an international ban on [chemical weapons](#).
- [1988](#) – [Governor Evan Mecham](#) of [Arizona](#) is convicted in his [impeachment](#) trial and removed from office.
- [1991](#) – Senator [John Heinz](#) of [Pennsylvania](#) and six others are killed when a helicopter collides with their plane over an elementary school in [Merion, Pennsylvania](#).
- [1994](#) – [Marc Andreessen](#) and [Jim Clark](#) found [Netscape Communications Corporation](#) under the name "Mosaic Communications Corporation".
- [2002](#) – The [Angolan](#) government and [UNITA](#) rebels sign a peace treaty ending the [Angolan Civil War](#).
- 2002 – In what are known as the [Society Murders](#), Matthew Wales kills his parents in [Melbourne](#), Australia.
- [2007](#) – 15 British Royal Navy personnel [held in Iran](#) are released by the Iranian President.