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AOC ADVOCACY UPDATE: AOC Focuses on FY 2017 NDAA as Congress Prepares for Lame Duck Session

With Congress in recess until a post-election lame duck session, AOC Advocacy is turning its attention to the impending FY 2017 NDAA Conference Report and preparing for a very busy start to the new 115th Congress in January. Ken Miller, AOC Advocacy Consultant, has been engaging Members of Congress and staff, including exchanges with professional staff on the House and Senate Armed Services Committees (HASC and SASC), regarding important EW and Directed Energy (DE) provisions in both House and Senate versions of the NDAA. While there was hope that Congress could agree upon a Conference Report in September 2016, no agreement was reached and the new outlook is for a final agreement late in the lame duck session before the holidays. AOC will update members as soon as information becomes publicly available.

The AOC is monitoring several key provisions, including key DE organization reforms found in Section 216 of the Senate NDAA and Section 220 of the House NDAA. There is strong support to advance efforts in the Pentagon to strengthen organization and strategic planning and accelerate development and fielding of High Energy Lasers (HELs). Additionally, provisions taken from the EW Capabilities Enhancement Act (S. 2486/H.R. 4851) are found in the House and Senate NDAA. The AOC is working with the EWWG and other key EW champions, including Sen. Mark Kirk (IL), to support EW reform language that places Congress on the same page as the Pentagon moving forward, which includes some non-legislative options such as organized briefings and meetings. Depending upon provisions in the final Conference Report, the timing and substance of which may be influenced by the general election, the AOC is prepared to work with the EWWG to update and strengthen the EW Capabilities Act early in the new 115th Congress.

Finally, AOC is preparing for the new Congress by developing a new briefing series for congressional staff to provide common awareness on the science, practice, and policy options for EW/Spectrum Operations, including related disciplines such as DE and Cyber. With a new Congress and Administration starting in January combined with the progress in EW and DE over the recent years, 2017 promises to be an important year for the EW and DE communities. Please do not hesitate to contact Ken Miller at ken@kmsadvocacy.com if you have any questions or need additional information.