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Defense Primer: A Guide for New Members

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Introduction

The Constitution provides Congress with broad powers over the Armed Forces, including the power “To raise and support Armies”, “To provide and maintain a Navy”, “To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces”, and “To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States.... ”

CRS has developed a series of short primers to provide Members of Congress an overview of key aspects of the Department of Defense and how Congress exercises authority over it. A consolidated list of these primers is contained in this report, along with links to each document.

For additional information on these issues, please contact the authors of the individual reports. Their contact information is listed at the end of each document.

Congress and the Armed Forces

Congress’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces

CRS In Focus IF10535, *Defense Primer: Congress’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

The NDAA Process

CRS In Focus IF10515, *Defense Primer: The NDAA Process*, by Valerie Heitshusen and Brendan W. McGarry

Navigating the NDAA

CRS In Focus IF10516, *Defense Primer: Navigating the NDAA*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Valerie Heitshusen

Defense Appropriations Process

CRS In Focus IF10514, *Defense Primer: Defense Appropriations Process*, by James V. Saturno and Brendan W. McGarry

The Executive Branch

President’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces

CRS In Focus IF10534, *Defense Primer: President’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

The Department of Defense

CRS In Focus IF10543, *Defense Primer: The Department of Defense*, by Kathleen J. McInnis

The Military Departments

CRS In Focus IF10550, *Defense Primer: The Military Departments*, by Heidi M. Peters

Department of the Army

CRS In Focus IF10544, *Defense Primer: Department of the Army and Army Command Structure*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Department of the Navy

CRS In Focus IF10484, *Defense Primer: Department of the Navy*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Department of the Air Force

CRS In Focus IF10547, *Defense Primer: The United States Air Force*, by Jeremiah Gertler

CRS In Focus IF11495, *Defense Primer: The United States Space Force*, by Stephen M. McCall

Defense Strategy and Budget

Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design

CRS In Focus IF10485, *Defense Primer: Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution Process (PPBE)

CRS In Focus IF10429, *Defense Primer: Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) Process*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Heidi M. Peters

Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)

CRS In Focus IF10831, *Defense Primer: Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Heidi M. Peters

DOD Transfer and Reprogramming Authorities

CRS In Focus IF11243, *Defense Primer: DOD Transfer and Reprogramming Authorities*, by Aaron D. Walenga and Brendan W. McGarry

Defense Working Capital Funds

CRS In Focus IF11233, *Defense Primer: Defense Working Capital Funds*, by G. James Herrera

People

Military Officers

CRS In Focus IF10685, *Defense Primer: Military Officers*, by Lawrence Kapp

Reserve Officer Training Corps

CRS In Focus IF11235, *Defense Primer: Senior Reserve Officer Training Corps*, by Kristy N. Kamarck

CRS In Focus IF11313, *Defense Primer: Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)*, by Kristy N. Kamarck and Xavier L. Arriaga

Military Enlisted Personnel

CRS In Focus IF10684, *Defense Primer: Military Enlisted Personnel*, by Lawrence Kapp

Enlisted Recruiting and Retention

CRS In Focus IF11147, *Defense Primer: Active Duty Enlisted Recruiting*, by Lawrence Kapp

CRS In Focus IF11274, *Defense Primer: Active Duty Enlisted Retention*, by Lawrence Kapp

Personnel Tempo

CRS In Focus IF11007, *Defense Primer: Personnel Tempo (PERSTEMPO)*, by Kristy N. Kamarck

Regular Military Compensation

CRS In Focus IF10532, *Defense Primer: Regular Military Compensation*, by Lawrence Kapp

Military Pay Raise

CRS In Focus IF10260, *Defense Primer: Military Pay Raise*, by Lawrence Kapp

Military Health System

CRS In Focus IF10530, *Defense Primer: Military Health System*, by Bryce H. P. Mendez

Commissaries and Exchanges

CRS In Focus IF11089, *Defense Primer: Military Commissaries and Exchanges*, by Kristy N. Kamarck and Barbara Salazar Torreon

Exceptional Family Member Program

CRS In Focus IF11049, *Defense Primer: Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)*, by Justin D. Ellsworth and Bryce H. P. Mendez

Military Retirement

CRS In Focus IF10483, *Defense Primer: Military Retirement*, by Kristy N. Kamarck

DOD Civilians

CRS In Focus IF11510, *Defense Primer: Department of Defense Civilian Employees*, by Alan Ott

DOD Contractors

CRS In Focus IF10600, *Defense Primer: Department of Defense Contractors*, by Heidi M. Peters and Moshe Schwartz

Equipment

Defense Industrial Base

CRS In Focus IF10548, *Defense Primer: U.S. Defense Industrial Base*, by Heidi M. Peters

CRS In Focus IF11311, *Defense Primer: The National Technology and Industrial Base*, by Heidi M. Peters

Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation

CRS In Focus IF10553, *Defense Primer: RDT&E*, by John F. Sargent Jr.

CRS In Focus IF10834, *Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering*, by Marcy E. Gallo

Procurement

CRS In Focus IF10599, *Defense Primer: Procurement*, by Heidi M. Peters and Brendan W. McGarry

CRS In Focus IF10968, *Defense Primer: Lowest Price Technically Acceptable Contracts*, by Heidi M. Peters

CRS In Focus IF10609, *Defense Primer: The Berry and Kissell Amendments*, by Michaela D. Platzer

Maintenance

CRS In Focus IF11466, *Defense Primer: Department of Defense Maintenance Depots*, by G. James Herrera

Emerging Technologies

CRS In Focus IF11105, *Defense Primer: Emerging Technologies*, by Kelley M. Saylor

Military Installations

CRS In Focus IF11263, *Defense Primer: Military Installations Management*, by G. James Herrera

CRS In Focus IF11362, *Defense Primer: Arlington National Cemetery*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon

Types of Forces

Ground Forces

CRS In Focus IF10571, *Defense Primer: Organization of U.S. Ground Forces*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Airpower

CRS In Focus IF10546, *Defense Primer: United States Airpower*, by Jeremiah Gertler

Naval Forces

CRS In Focus IF10486, *Defense Primer: Naval Forces*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Special Operations Forces

CRS In Focus IF10545, *Defense Primer: Special Operations Forces*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Strategic Nuclear Forces

CRS In Focus IF10519, *Defense Primer: Strategic Nuclear Forces*, by Amy F. Woolf

Ballistic Missile Defense

CRS In Focus IF10541, *Defense Primer: Ballistic Missile Defense*, by Steven A. Hildreth

Reserve Forces

CRS In Focus IF10540, *Defense Primer: Reserve Forces*, by Lawrence Kapp

Employment of Forces

Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces

CRS In Focus IF10539, *Defense Primer: Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

Commanding U.S. Military Operations

CRS In Focus IF10542, *Defense Primer: Commanding U.S. Military Operations*, by Kathleen J. McInnis

Combatant Commands

CRS In Focus IF11479, *Defense Primer: United States Transportation Command*, by G. James Herrera and Hibbah Kaileh

Command and Control of Nuclear Forces

CRS In Focus IF10521, *Defense Primer: Command and Control of Nuclear Forces*, by Amy F. Woolf

Multi-Domain Operations

CRS In Focus IF11409, *Defense Primer: Army Multi-Domain Operations (MDO)*, by Andrew Feickert

Cyberspace Operations

CRS In Focus IF10537, *Defense Primer: Cyberspace Operations*, by Catherine A. Theohary

Information Operations

CRS In Focus IF10771, *Defense Primer: Information Operations*, by Catherine A. Theohary

Electronic Warfare

CRS In Focus IF11118, *Defense Primer: Electronic Warfare*, by John R. Hoehn

Military Use of the Electronic Spectrum

CRS In Focus IF11155, *Defense Primer: Military Use of the Electromagnetic Spectrum*, by John R. Hoehn

U.S. Policy on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

CRS In Focus IF11150, *Defense Primer: U.S. Policy on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems*, by Kelley M. Saylor

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

CRS In Focus IF11324, *Defense Primer: Defense Support of Civil Authorities*, by Amelia Litynski and Lawrence Kapp

Intelligence Community

National and Defense Intelligence

CRS In Focus IF10525, *Defense Primer: National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine

Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence & Security)

CRS In Focus IF10523, *Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security*, by Michael E. DeVine

Intelligence Support to Military Operations

CRS In Focus IF10574, *Defense Primer: Intelligence Support to Military Operations*, by Michael E. DeVine

Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence

CRS In Focus IF10524, *Defense Primer: Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine

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