



ASSOCIATION OF OLD CROWS CAPITOL HILL UPDATE May 25, 2021

Budget Deal Faces Uphill Battle and NDAA Delayed

by Ken Miller, AOC Director of Advocacy and Outreach

No Budget Resolution?

Last week, House Budget Chair John Yarmuth stated that a budget resolution to govern Fiscal Year 2022 spending was unlikely due to deep disagreements on defense spending. In his budget blueprint released in April, President Biden proposed a 1.7 percent increase in defense spending. Defense hawks have criticized the plan as insufficient, while Progressives in Congress are firmly opposing any increase.

A budget resolution is a procedural document that sets revenue and spending targets for annual appropriations bills. It is non-binding and is not signed into law by the President, but it can forecast areas of unity and faction on a range of spending priorities.

It is not unusual for Congress to fail to complete a budget resolution in either one or both chambers. In fact, the last year that both the House and Senate agreed on one was FY 2018 (see Table 1), and even this agreement wasn't passed until

four weeks into the new fiscal year. The House and Senate have reached an agreement on a budget resolution only three times in the last ten years. If a budget resolution is not passed this year, House and Senate leaders will work with appropriators in their respective chambers to set spending targets. It will likely not significantly impact the appropriations process, but it foreshadows a more intense fight on defense spending than in years past.

NDAA Delayed

Last week, both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees (HASC and SASC) gave an updated timetable for when they will consider their respective versions of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Historically, May and June are hectic months with

Fiscal Year	Passed HCmte	Passed House	Passed SCmte	Passed Senate	Bicameral Agreement
FY 2022	?	?	?	?	?
FY 2021					
FY 2020			X		
FY 2019	X				
FY 2018	X	X	X	X	X
FY 2017	X			X	
FY 2016	X	X	X	X	X
FY 2015	X	X			
FY 2014	X	X	X	X	X
FY 2013	X	X			
FY 2012					

Table 1

ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER

NDAAs committee mark-ups and floor consideration in both chambers. This flurry of activity usually follows a couple of months of back-to-back hearings on the defense budget, including posture testimonies from the Service Chiefs. So far, in 2021, it has been relatively quiet. HASC Chair Adam Smith stated that his committee would likely not be able to mark up the NDAA until possibly September. SASC Chair Jack Reed said that he is targeting July but gave no roadmap on committee plans to meet that goal. Still, neither the Senate nor the House will likely consider the NDAA on the floor before Labor Day – only a few weeks before the end of the fiscal year.

These delays are unprecedented. While a final bicameral agreement on the NDAA, a Conference Report between the House and Senate, has often been pushed until later in the year. The HASC and SASC complete their work with relative predictability (see table 2). President Biden has mentioned that he is set to release his budget request, on or around May 27. Once the request is formally received, the HASC and SASC can begin posture hearings and inviting senior Department of Defense officials to testify in support of the budget request. Depending on each committee's adjustments to its traditional hearing and mark-up process, it will be challenging to consider the NDAA in either chamber before the August break. This is not alarming, per se, but does make one question if it signals an acceptance that an NDAA agreement is not necessary before the end of the calendar year.

Fiscal Year	SASC Mark	HASC Mark	Senate Floor	House Floor	Public Law
FY 2022	-	-	-	-	-
FY 2021	Jun 23	Jul 9	Jul 23	Jul 21	Jan 1
FY 2020	May 22	Jun 13	Jun 27	Jul 12	Dec 20
FY 2019	May 24	May 10	Jun 18	Jul 26	Aug 13
FY 2018	Jun 27	Jun 28	Sept 18	Jul 14	Dec 12
FY 2017	May 18	Apr 28	Jun 14	May 18	Dec 23
FY 2016	May 14	May 5	Jun 18	May 15	Nov 25

Table 2

For questions, comments, or additional information on any of the above topics, please contact Ken Miller, AOC Director of Advocacy and Outreach, at kmiller@crowds.org.
