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| **Suggested NDAA provision** | **Purpose and Rationale** |
| *The Secretary of Defense is directed to provide Stars and Stripes direct appropriations for Fiscal Year 2021 at the same level of Fiscal Year 2020 ($15.5 million). The Secretary of Defense will ensure the undiminished continuation of theStars and Stripes mission of providing independent news and information to members of the military community.* | Restores DoD direct appropriation for FY21 at FY20 level, without which Stars and Stripes’ ability to perform its mission is fatally damaged.Directly instructs DoD not to discontinue Stars and Stripes, and blocks steps already under way to dismantle journalism operations, such as DMA telling the Army and Navy to cancel military reporter billets at Stripes.This provision would preserve Stars and Stripes at current funding while a longer-term solution is developed (below). |
| **Suggested House Report language** | **Purpose and Rationale** |
| *The Secretary of Defense will provide a plan to establish direct appropriations to Stars and Stripes in the future at the target rate of 65% of annual operating expenses, consistent with the established standard for community support activities.* *Further, to resolve the long-standing natural conflict of interest, the Secretary of Defense will provide a report to the Committee on the feasibility and implementation of reassignment of the Stars and Stripes organization to an agency, other than public affairs, for oversight.*  | Stars and Stripes is a Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentality in Category B, defined as a community support program substantially supported by appropriated funds, with limited ability to generate non-appropriated funding revenue. As cited in GAO report 18-424 to HASC in 2018, DoD Instruction 1015.10 sets the Category B appropriated fund target at 65% of total expenditures. By that measure, DoD has chronically underfunded Stars and Stripes O&M (FY15-FY20 ranged from 30% to 52%). This language would direct the Secretary of Defense to provide a plan to achieve the 65% target rate.Public Affairs’ mission of supporting command messaging inherently conflicts with Stars and Stripes’ mission of providing independent news. A realignment process was under way in 2019, with Defense Media Activity and Stripes leadership concurring that Stripes be reassigned to another agency. DMA’s FY20 Annual Performance Plan projected that the agency would be determined in Q2 of FY20 (now). That process envisioned a study by the DoD Enterprise Management of Community Services Task Force, which was not undertaken. Instead, DoD and DMA “orphaned” Stars and Stripes by defunding it in FY21. This language would direct the Secretary of Defense to conduct such a study and report to the Committee. |