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| AUSA's Five Things: A Weekly Tip Sheet for AUSA Members |

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| 1 Accelerating NDAA The fate of the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, a major policy bill that authorizes the size of the force and extends, starts and ends programs, has been in doubt since Sen. John McCain of Arizona, the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, announced he has brain cancer. House and Senate aides have been scurrying to work out differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill so it is ready for final approval between McCain’s medical treatments.What to watch: With the House and Senate both in town this week, NDAA negotiators are hoping to make major decisions. The biggest hurdle they face isn’t McCain’s treatment but the failure of Congress to decide how much to spend on defense. Not having a top line will hold up the bill even if other major issues are decided. |

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| 2 Dropping the ‘X' Field testing continues for the Sig Sauer modular handgun system selected by the Army to replace the M9 Beretta. The 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky., the 3rd Cavalry Regiment at Fort Hood, Texas, and a security force assistance brigade will be the first three units to get the new pistol.What to watch: The “X” on the XM17 modular handgun will disappear in November when about 2,000 pistols will be issued to the 101st Airborne Division. All three units will have the M17 by the end of the year.  |

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| 3 A College in Your Pocket As part of a larger soldier education project, the Army is looking at creating a standard-issue computer tablet that would make online professional military education and development resources available around the globe and around the clock. A prototype used by Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey is a small touchscreen the size of a skinny book that includes course material and could be used for taking tests. Dailey says it could have operational and classroom uses.What to watch: Testing is underway to determine if the Army needs to have a common device for everyone or if soldiers could just use their own tablets and smartphones with a Common Access Card reader attached.  |

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| 4 PTSD-Blocking HelmetA new report in Polymer magazine describes success by the Army and Massachusetts Institute of Technology in creating a new rubber-like material that gets stronger when struck but then softens when the impact ends, a result that could lead to a better combat helmet. They tested it by firing microprojectiles at the polyurethane substance, watching how it hardened to absorb the impact.What to watch: Helmets that offer better blast protection might reduce damage to the brain that may cause traumatic injury and post-traumatic stress. It may also have other uses in protective wear.  |

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| 5 Spring Deployments for SFABThe formation of several security force assistance brigades is a key part of Army plans for improving readiness because these units of 500 to 600 soldiers could take on training, advising and assistance missions that would free up combat formations. “We think it’s about time we recognize that fact with force structure specifically designed to train, man and equip organizations that can go forward for those operations,” Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley said during AUSA’s Annual Meeting and Exposition.What to watch: The first brigade has been formed and is expected to deploy in the spring to Afghanistan. Lessons learned in training and deploying the first group will determine how quickly three more SFABs are formed, but the Army would like to have another dedicated to the U.S. Central Command, plus one each for Europe, the Pacific and Africa.  |

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| World War I RememberedOn Oct. 16, 1917, Marshal of France Joseph Joffre concludes two days of visits with U.S. Gen. John J. Pershing at an American training camp where soldier are learning about trench warfare. Widely known as Papa Joffre, he said, “I have been highly gratified by what I have seen today. I am confident that when the time comes to go to the trenches and meet the enemy they will give the same excellent account of themselves in action as they did in practice today.”  |

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