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Army secretary nominee Daniel Driscoll discusses his priorities for the force Jan. 30 during testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. (U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES PHOTO)

Secretary nominee prioritizes readiness

Armey secretary nominee Daniel Driscoll promised to be “the soldiers’ secretary” who, if confirmed by the Senate, would prioritize readiness and modernization to make sure troops have the training, equipment and leadership they need to succeed.

Driscoll, who testified Jan. 30 before the Senate Armed Services Committee, is a third-generation soldier whose father served during Vietnam and grandfather during World War II. After his Army service, Driscoll attended Yale Law School, graduating in 2014, and began a career in finance, he wrote in a written response to senators.

A cavalry scout who deployed to Iraq in 2009, Driscoll said during the hearing that he joined the Army as a “middle-class, public-school kid”

from North Carolina. “The values and experiences I gained through military service molded me into the man I am today and opened the way for opportunities I could scarcely have imagined when I enlisted,” Driscoll said.

He added, “During my time in the Army, I was fortunate to serve and deploy to combat alongside soldiers who represent the very best of America. ... I saw firsthand the immense sacrifices they and their families make to uphold the freedoms we hold dear.”

If confirmed by the Senate as the 26th Army secretary, Driscoll would lead the force during a pivotal time. The Army is working to transform—and transform quickly—for an increasingly challenging battlefield and keep up with fast-evolving technology and capabilities such as drones and

artificial intelligence. It also remains busy, supporting disaster relief efforts at home and missions across the globe, while contending with competition from China and Russia.

The Army also continues to work hard on recruiting talented young people after struggling for the past two years to meet its goals.

Among his top priorities, if confirmed, are readiness and modernization, Driscoll said.

“The world is changing rapidly, and we must ensure the Army is prepared to operate in new, complex and contested environments,” he said. “From advancing our capabilities in multi-domain operations to cutting-edge technologies, my sacred duty to our Army is to ensure our soldiers have the world’s finest training, equip-

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Paper: Ethic, not weapons, remains Army's 'greatest asset'

While the Army advances its plan to confront modern warfare with technology, its most powerful weapon is its code of ethics, according to the author of a new paper published by the Association of the U.S. Army.

"Our Army's greatest asset is not the sophisticated machinery it deploys nor the advanced weaponry it commands. Instead, it is an intangible force," writes Maj. Ryan Crayne. "The moral code binding Soldiers to their purpose and to a higher standard of conduct is known as the Army Ethic."

In his paper, "Our Most Powerful Weapon: The Army Ethic," Crayne points out that the Army ethic is "deeply rooted" in the principles outlined in Army doctrine, which provides a moral compass for every soldier and defines what it means to serve honorably and ethically in the modern military.

The doctrine "does not simply guide individual behavior but rather serves to enable a cohesive force, strength-



In his paper, 'Our Most Powerful Weapon: The Army Ethic,' Maj. Ryan Crayne writes that the Army ethic provides a moral compass for every soldier and defines what it means to serve honorably and ethically in the modern military. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

ening the Army as both a lethal and capable fighting unit and as a unified institution dedicated to protecting and upholding the democratic values of American society," Crayne writes.

Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, Crayne notes, is a broad framework that spells out essential moral and ethical responsibilities for military service and is not simply a collection of rules or standards.

"The Army Ethic, as articulated in ADP 6-22, remains the U.S. Army's greatest asset, even when compared to the technology and weaponry of the modern operating environment," he writes.

As a lieutenant on assignment in Afghanistan, he writes, he saw firsthand that "our ethical conduct in war was paramount, reigning supreme over any tactical or strategic advantage" that could be brought to bear with weapons alone.

Crayne, an Army marketing and behavioral economics officer, has served in leadership roles in the 1st Infantry Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment and the 82nd Airborne Division. He is a fellow with the LTG

(Ret.) James M. Dubik Writing Fellows Program, and he is a senior instructor in the Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York.

His paper is part of AUSA's new Harding Papers series, which was launched in conjunction with the Army's Harding Project, an initiative from Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George that aims to revitalize scholarship and writing across the force. The Harding Papers exclusively highlight the work and scholarship of Dubik Writing Fellows.

While the Army ethic has strengths, Crayne notes, there are "significant dangers" when an Army fails to uphold its ethical standards.

"The argument against self-imposed just war in an unjust world has been long debated, but its answer lies in our founding principles," according to Crayne. "Without ethical constraints, we lose control over our most powerful weapon—the moral legitimacy of the American Soldier's actions, purpose and mission."

Read the paper here.

ARMY magazine February issue



AUSA Basic Members can now view a selection of articles from the February issue of *ARMY* magazine. To read the articles, click here.

Much work remains for lawmakers on appropriations legislation



AUSA's Government Affairs team will advocate for passage of the 2026 National Defense Authorization Act before Sept. 30. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL PHOTO)

Washington, D.C., and Capitol Hill continue to be busy as the 119th Congress ramps up alongside a new administration.

The House of Representatives and the Senate are both in session this week. The Senate continues to process executive branch nominations and hold confirmation hearings for various appointees.

Government Affairs

On Tuesday, the Senate confirmed Douglas Collins, a former Air Force chaplain, to be secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. You can view his confirmation hearing [here](#).

Secretary of Defense Peter Hegseth was confirmed on Jan. 24. Here is his first message to the force.

Additionally, the Senate Armed Services Committee held a confirmation hearing Jan. 30 for Daniel Driscoll, a third-generation soldier whose father served during Vietnam and grandfather during World War II, to be the next secretary of the Army. You can watch that hearing [here](#).

Congress has a lot of unfinished work with respect to appropriations, as lawmakers passed another continuing resolution in December that

runs through March 14. These stop-gap measures to fund the government and prevent shutdowns have been used repeatedly over the past several years, but they are inefficient, hurt readiness and negatively impact soldiers and families.

The authorization process is in its early stages, and the Association of the U.S. Army's Government Affairs team will advocate for passage of the 2026 National Defense Authorization Act before Sept. 30. This is critical legislation that provides authorizations and policy guidance to the Department of Defense and the Army.

You can help build momentum for quick passage of all 12 appropriations bills and additional funding for the Total Army by contacting your representatives and senators or meeting with them. We encourage you to meet with a lawmakers or their staff as a constituent and AUSA member in support of the Total Army. Advocate for AUSA's Focus Areas and passage of the legislation mentioned above.

We will continue to monitor these and other developments closely as we advocate for the Total Army with Congress.

Mark Haaland is AUSA's Government Affairs director.

AUSAExtra

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PERK OF THE WEEK

Valentine's Day is approaching, and AUSA members receive 25% off a curated collection of gifts or 20% off sitewide with code FORAUSA at popular brands including 1-800 Flowers, Cheryl's Cookies, Fruit Bouquets, Things Remembered and many more. Visit www.ausa.org/gifts for more.



Former AMC commander, AUSA senior fellow dies

Retired Gen. Louis Wagner, an emeritus senior fellow for the Association of the U.S. Army and longtime supporter of AUSA programs, died Jan. 24 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He was 93.

Wagner was an AUSA senior fellow for two decades before becoming an emeritus in 2022. He also was a member of the association's Speakers Bureau. During the 2013 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition, Wagner was awarded AUSA's Gen. Creighton W. Abrams Medal for exceptional service to the Army.

"Gen. Wagner was a frequent participant in AUSA's educational panels and programs. He always brought a great perspective and was very well respected as a soldier/scholar," said retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO.

A native of Jackson, Missouri, Wagner graduated in 1954 from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and commissioned in the armor branch. Following a variety of troop assignments, Wagner attended the University of Illinois where he received a master's degree in theoretical and applied mechanics. He then was assigned as an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Mechanics at West Point.

Wagner served two combat tours in Vietnam as an infantry and armor adviser. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second-highest award for valor, for actions between April 29 and May 2, 1972, during his second tour.

Then-Lt. Col. Wagner was serving



Retired Gen. Louis Wagner. (AUSA PHOTO)

as senior adviser to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's 1st Armor Brigade when the brigade was ordered to protect Quang Tri City at all costs against three North Vietnamese divisions supported by two tank regiments. "As the enemy overwhelmed and shattered the brigade, [Wagner] maintained his position at the point of severest contact and was injured when his command personnel carrier was forced to cross a bridge destroyed by enemy artillery. Refusing aid, he assisted in evacuation of his counterpart who had been wounded," according to his award citation.

Wagner, his wounds still untreated, "exposed himself continuously to enemy machine gun and anti-tank rocket fire while directing air strikes" as the North Vietnamese forces encircled the brigade, the citation says.

Knowing that large elements of the North Vietnamese divisions would isolate his position, Wagner chose to remain with his counterpart. Under heavy attack from enemy artillery and tanks, Wagner led the brigade through the enemy encirclement to friendly lines.

"Lieutenant Colonel Wagner's calm and fearless leadership was singularly responsible for preventing the 1st Armor Brigade's complete decimation and saved the lives of many of his South Vietnamese comrades," the citation says.

During his service, Wagner also received the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest award for valor, the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

After promotion to brigadier general in 1976, Wagner served as deputy director for combat support systems in the office of the Army's deputy chief of staff for research, development and acquisition. He also commanded the U.S. Army Armor Center, was commandant of the U.S. Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and served as deputy Army chief of staff for research, development and acquisition.

In April 1987, Wagner was promoted to four-star general and assigned as commander of Army Materiel Command, where he remained until his retirement in September 1989.

In retirement, Wagner remained active and connected to the Army and soldiers, including through his service with AUSA and other military associations.

Driscoll

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ment and leadership to accomplish any mission."

Reinvigorating the defense industrial base is another priority, Driscoll said, as is recruiting.

After missing its recruiting goals for two years, the Army has made

strong progress, meeting its goal for fiscal 2024 and continuing to build on its success this year. Driscoll said the Army can "take the momentum" and build a "backlog and pipeline." He cited as an example the success of the Future Soldier Preparatory Course, which helps potential recruits meet the Army's academic or

physical fitness standards.

Driscoll added that as the Army prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday in June, the service has "a unique opportunity" to tell its story to future soldiers.

"If confirmed, America's soldiers and their families will be my mission," Driscoll said.

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Member Benefits

more about these comprehensive training materials. Click “Re-

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Legal documents

AUSA pays for all members to access LawAssure, a database of legal documents that you can create based on the laws of your state. We subscribe to both the personal and small business packages, so take full advantage.

The service includes personal and business documents to appoint someone to handle your affairs and choose who gets your property; create or revoke a power of attorney; put together a living will or advance directive; sell an automobile; provide a lease agreement, deal with rental deposits and maintain your property; and much more.

Entertainment discounts

Here are some of the great offers at www.ausa.org/entertain for February.

- Ski Resorts: Save up to 40%.



Discounts for entertainment, SAT/ACT test prep, digital security, legal assistance and much more are available with your AUSA membership. (U.S. ARMY/CAPT. CHARLES VORASINGHA)

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- Walt Disney World Resort: Get adult tickets at child prices, includes 20 Dining Dollars.
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Timely reminders

AUSA members save 25% on Tax-Act at www.taxact.com/ausa for individuals or www.taxact.com/ausasmb for small businesses.

Members also save up to 35% on Norton LifeLock for the life of your membership. For comprehensive protection against identity theft, viruses, malware, online tracking and much more, Norton LifeLock is an all-in-one cyber safety solution for your life in the connected world.

AUSA also offers members up to 68% off another digital security option: Aura. Aura provides identity protection, transaction monitoring,

U.S.-based customer support, spam and junk mail removal, a VPN with safe browsing, credit monitoring and credit lock, scam call protection and parental controls.

If you are starting to think about spring travel plans, make sure to browse your AUSA travel discounts at www.ausa.org/savings#travel.

Finally, AUSA members may use their exclusive Brookdale Senior Living discount for spouses, parents, stepparents, siblings, in-laws, adult children or stepchildren, grandparents and others who may need a little help. The AUSA discount is a regular monthly discount, so the savings can be substantial.

The association also partners with A Place for Mom, providing members with an exclusive \$350 benefit for senior living move-in.

Visit www.ausa.org/savings to access all savings programs. If you have any question, please contact me at srubel@ausa.org.

Susan Rubel is AUSA's Association and Affinity Partnerships director.

Chapter supports Battle of the Bulge commemoration

Volunteers with the Association of the U.S. Army's GEN Creighton W. Abrams chapter in Wiesbaden, Germany, supported the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of World War II's Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, Belgium.

To mark the occasion, the 101st Airborne Museum in Bastogne set up an "Airborne Village" featuring historical displays, items from World War II and more.

"Our team provided World War II and modern-day military vehicles for the event, both for displays and the

GEN Creighton W. Abrams

Bastogne military vehicle parade," said Gemma McGowan, the chapter president. "We also organized a

daylong bus trip for members from our military community in Wiesbaden to come for the day, run by chapter leaders."

Soldiers assigned to U.S. Army Europe and Africa volunteered all weekend to help at the AUSA information table and take photos with museum visitors, she said.

The museum also hosted a special event to honor visiting World War II veterans, which McGowan said she found especially meaningful. "The most rewarding experience for me was meeting the veterans and hearing their stories firsthand," she said. "Thanks to the organization Walk Among Heroes, I met World War II veteran and Battle of the Bulge hero Dennis Boldt, who just turned 100 years old. I truly cherish the time I was able to spend talking with him."

"We really enjoyed having AUSA being a part of our Airborne Village for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. It truly shows the excellent partnership we have with the chapter," said Johnny Bona, the museum's historian.

In Bastogne, the yearly commemoration of the battle—the deadliest for U.S. forces in World War II—is known as "NUTS" weekend.



Members of AUSA's GEN Creighton W. Abrams chapter volunteer at an 'Airborne Village' hosted by the 101st Airborne Museum in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of World War II's Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, Belgium. (AUSA PHOTO)

The phrase "Nuts!" became famous during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, specifically during the Siege of Bastogne. A key town in Belgium, Bastogne was surrounded by German forces as part of a larger offensive. The 101st Airborne Division, along with other allied units, was holding out in Bastogne, despite being heavily outnumbered.

On Dec. 22, the Germans sent a message to the American command-

ers demanding their surrender. The message read: "The fortune of war is changing. There is no possibility of success. All the serious civilian casualties in the area are a result of the continuing resistance." They demanded the immediate surrender of the American forces, or they would be destroyed.

Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, acting commander of the 101st Airborne Division, famously replied with one word: "Nuts!" It was a defiant and bold response, showing the Americans' determination not to surrender.

The defiance of "Nuts!" became a symbol of the division's resilience, and the siege of Bastogne ultimately ended in a victory for the allies when German forces were forced to retreat. The phrase remains one of the most iconic moments of the Battle of the Bulge, embodying courage and stubborn resistance in the face of overwhelming odds.

"Our chapter's military history team did an excellent job bringing authentic modern-day and World War II vehicles for display to enhance the NUTS weekend," said Stefan Deisenroth, the AUSA chapter's first vice president.



Amelia Huskey, left, daughter of Maj. Donald Huskey from U.S. Army Europe and Africa, recreates the AUSA logo with Sgt. 1st Class Colt Dickerson, a volunteer with AUSA's GEN Creighton W. Abrams chapter, during a commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge in Bastogne, Belgium. (AUSA PHOTO)

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