



Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen

Subcommittee on Defense, House Committee on Appropriations

Full Committee Markup Fiscal Year 2015 Defense Appropriations Bill June 10, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When our Defense Subcommittee started its hearing process several months ago, I laid before them several key questions.

- First, how do we ensure that our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to defend our nation and support their families?
- Second, what are the risks associated with the decisions we make on the size of our military – the size of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines – and what capabilities do we want our military and intelligence community to develop and modernize?
- Third, are those risks tolerable given the threats and conflicts we can reasonably be expected to face as a nation and as a world leader?
- And, fourth, with so many demands and such limited resources, what specifically, do we hope to achieve through the 2015 budget?

People around the world – our allies and our adversaries – are looking at this proposal to see how we answer these questions. And, I believe our response reassures our allies and deters our enemies.

The fiscal year 2015 Department of Defense appropriations measure I present this morning was reported out unanimously by the subcommittee on May 30th, and is the culmination of 13 hearings, 8 official briefings, and countless staff hours.

It is also the product of a bipartisan and cooperative effort, for which I thank my good friend, the Ranking Member Pete Visclosky.

The base funding recommendation is \$491 billion: \$200 million above the President's request, and \$4.1 billion above last year's enacted level.

As you are aware, we have not received the recommendation for Overseas Contingency Operations, so we are forced to present a \$79.4 billion "placeholder." As the Administration finalizes its plans for the enduring U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, this level will be subject to change. (We will talk about this in greater detail in a few minutes.)

I think we would all agree: America must continue to lead and this bipartisan bill adds \$1.2 billion to fill readiness shortfalls to enable that leadership.

Beyond O&M, this recommendation includes the following:

- 534 million to fully fund the authorized 1.8 percent pay raise for the troops;
- \$789 million to begin the refueling of USS George Washington – a vital power projection platform;
- \$5.8 billion for a total of 38 Joint Strike Fighters;
- \$975 million to buy 12 additional Electronic Attack Growlers (EA-18G) – an item high on the Navy’s “unfunded priority list”;
- \$120 million to upgrade M1 Abrams tanks;
- \$351 million for the Israeli Cooperative Program – Iron Dome;
- An additional \$39 million for suicide prevention activities, \$19 million of it targeted specifically to our Special Forces.

These are but a few examples of our commitment to U.S. military dominance across the air, land and sea; our commitment to the service members and their families; as well as our commitment to our allies.

In short, this bill provides the Department with much needed resources to modernize and maintain readiness at the levels which will allow the military and intelligence community to preserve its status as the most capable and superior armed forces in the world...and I urge its adoption.

Finally, before I yield back, let me recognize our great Committee staff, on both sides of the aisle and thank Mr. Visclosky for his hard work and diligence on this bill. He has been an invaluable partner throughout this process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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