

**Members' Day Testimony (Full Committee) - Rep. Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter (1<sup>st</sup> District of Georgia)**

Thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns and priorities for the First Congressional District of Georgia. It's an honor to represent a district rich in history and home to tens of thousands of active duty military personnel and veterans. I'm here today to discuss my appropriations priorities, both defense and non-defense.

As the home to the Atlantic ballistic missile submarine fleet at Kings Bay, I've seen the dedication of our sailors and their families firsthand. The Ohio-class submarines play a critical role in nuclear deterrence but will soon be reaching the end of their life cycle. With growing threats around the globe, it's important to maintain the undersea leg of the nuclear triad. I fully support full funding for the Columbia-class program to ensure the timely development and deployment of our nuclear submarine fleet.

Additionally, we are looking at the retirement of the SSGNs, which currently provide the largest undersea strike capability for non-nuclear launches. They will soon be replaced, leading to a gap in our non-nuclear undersea strike capabilities. The Virginia Payload Module (VPM) is a cost-effective way to preserve our

capacity and offset the loss of our guided missile submarines. For that reason, I am submitting language to understand the future of the program and basing decisions.

Our soldiers have always been able to depend on the close air support provided by A-10s, such as those operated out of Moody Air Force Base. The A-10's capabilities and survivability continue to be showcased as these platforms are deployed around the world in support of our combat troops. Their role in supporting our ground forces and servicing search and rescue operations cannot be understated. I am requesting full funding for the A-10 platform and any upgrades.

Lastly, the STARBASE program and the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program have helped to better the lives of thousands of kids across the country. These programs help our youth pursue new opportunities in their lives and help them get their lives back on track. For that reason, I support robust funding to ensure these programs continue to benefit future generations.

For non-defense, I have a number of priorities. Under the Energy & Water Committee, continued funding for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is a top issue for me. Once completed, it will provide over \$200 million in additional economic benefits for the region and the country. As one of the most significant Corps of Engineers projects underway in the United States, it is critically important this project is funded to completion.

Under the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee, I have several priorities. Funding for Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education, the National Institutes of Health, and several research programs are included in my submissions. In addition to these, requests for the CDC, ASPR's BARDA programs, and the Strategic National Stockpile are also included. There are a significant number of critical programs that falls under this subcommittee's jurisdiction and I urge your support for their inclusion.

Finally, military construction and veterans projects are significant priorities within my district. That is why I have submitted several requests for military construction and mental health programs. With the recent release of the unfunded requirements list, I have included several requests addressing impacted installations in the First Congressional District of Georgia. Our installations need the funding to meet the goals and objectives associated with our warfighters. Additionally, we must take care of those who have served our nation in our military.

I appreciate your attention to these requests and thank you for the opportunity to provide input.