

To: Earl
From: Kelsey
RE: Testifying at Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
Date: Thursday, March 9, 2017
Time: 11:35am-11:45am
Location: H-140, Capitol

The Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense has scheduled a hearing to take Member testimony on the Defense Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2018. Each Member will have 5 minutes for oral remarks. You are on the schedule to begin speaking at 11:35AM.

Word Count: 592

Talking Points:

- **I have always acknowledged that your job – deciding how exactly to fund national security -- is one of the most difficult tasks in Congress. This year, in particular, I can imagine the job will be all the more difficult.**
- **As you know, the new Administration has pledged to increase defense spending with a \$30 billion defense supplemental request for this Fiscal Year, and most concerning, with a \$54 billion boost above budget caps for next year offset by cuts to discretionary spending.**
- **In contrast, a majority of Americans do not support increased defense spending.**

- **And, many of my Republican colleagues share my concerns with slashing funding to the State Department and our foreign assistance programs. They too understand that American diplomacy and soft power is critical to our national security.**
- **The President has called our military, “badly depleted.” Well, the U.S. has the largest military in the world and spends more on defense than the next seven countries combined.**
- **But I do fear that his claim will become ever more substantiated as we continue the escalation of nuclear weapons proliferation and maintenance spending.**
- **There simply isn’t enough money to pursue this modernization while providing our conventional forces and personnel with what they need.**
- **The Administration is pushing for this dramatic increase without a clear strategy. They say they prioritize the fight against the Islamic State and terrorism, but how are nuclear weapons going to help us with that?**

- **We have far more of these weapons than we need for deterrence. They won't help us deal with the strategic challenges we face and their price tag keeps going up.**
- **Just last month, CBO came out with their latest report projecting the costs of U.S. nuclear forces for the next ten years. The cost estimate is now \$400 billion – 15% higher than CBO's 2015 estimate.**
- **Beyond that timeframe, we're still going to spend over a trillion dollars in the next 30 years on this nuclear escalation.**
- **I truly think there are opportunities here for rational reevaluation, with the new nuclear-armed cruise missile, or with the plan to replace our land-based missiles.**
- **An independent Pentagon cost estimate prepared by the Office of Cost Assessment & Program Evaluation has valued the replacement project for the Minuteman III ICBMs at as much as \$100 billion.**

- **This is a huge increase from the \$61 billion estimate the Department of Defense offered last summer for the replacement project.**
- **Meanwhile, experts argue that it is possible to extend the life of the Minuteman III beyond 2030, and at less cost than the replacement program.**
- **How many ICBMs do we actually need? Let's start a real conversation about this.**
- **The U.S. has moved from 454 to 440, in part thanks to the New START limits. Let's accelerate.**
- **Let's get rid of a squadron, close a base, and look at allocating some of these savings back to the communities that have lost these facilities.**
- **We're going to have to prioritize here.**

- **We need to maintain entitlement benefits for military personnel. We need money for force readiness and training. We need to invest in safety improvements and in a robust command-and-control infrastructure.**
- **We do not need more than 4,000 nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes.**
- **Again, I appreciate the tough job you have. As you work with your colleagues on Armed Services and the Energy and Water Subcommittee to oversee proposals on nuclear weapons from the Administration, I hope you will help us have an honest conversation about fiscal responsibility.**
- **We must maintain appropriate priorities for the military strength and defense of our country.**