

TESTIMONY OF
CONGRESSWOMAN MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO
BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
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Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Visclosky, and Members of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, thank you for allowing me the time to address you this morning. I know you might find it odd to say this but I often find a friendlier audience amongst my friends on the Appropriations Committee than I do with my own authorizing committee. To that end, I do appreciate the work this subcommittee made in developing the FY17 appropriations bill. I believe it makes many good investments in the defense of our country and I thank the subcommittee for their support of some critical programs.

Though it is difficult to make requests without a budget before us, I would like to take just a few minutes to outline a few critical capabilities which I hope to see supported as the appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2018 moves forward.

In particular, I would first like to note my appreciation for your inclusion of \$9.5 million in the Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations bill for the re-establishment of dry docking capabilities in the Western Pacific. This critical funding, which is a tiny fraction of the Navy's ship repair account will enable our forward deployed forces in the region and reduce our reliance on foreign ship repair. This is particularly important in a contested environment with the potential for limited access, so I appreciate the committee's support in appropriating at the authorized level for Fiscal Year 2017. Moving forward, I hope to continue to work together to ensure that the Navy is adequately resourced to operate and maintain their fleet in the Western Pacific especially given that 60 percent of the fleet is to be operating in the Pacific. The threat in our region is very real and grows every day. Funding this capability is essential to having a viable forward deployed fleet.

The second item I would like to raise is my support for full funding of the B-21 Raider program. This next-generation bomber will replace a sorely aging fleet that has provided us with long range strike capabilities for generations. With an ability to strike anywhere in the world, it is the most versatile leg of the nuclear triad, and also provides a tested and proven conventional strike capability. Moving forward, especially at this stage of the acquisition program, it will be important to ensure adequate funding in order to avoid unnecessary and costly delays. On Guam, we recently saw the deployment to the Pacific of all three existing bomber air frames for the first time in history, and the continuous bomber presence at Andersen Air Force Base is a lynchpin for American power projection in the region.

Finally, I also want to briefly touch on the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program. I have appreciated this subcommittee's long standing support to find resources to address the unfunded requirements of this program. The REPI program helps to stop encroachment at U.S. military installations and training ranges across the country. There is a long and growing list of projects that need funding so I would ask the subcommittee continue to address the unfunded requirements to address the backlog.

Thank you again for your time, and consideration of my testimony here today.