

Testimony to Appropriations Cmt by Congressman Trent Franks 3/9/2017

I would first like to thank Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Visclosky for the opportunity to add my voice to those of many others concerned about the crisis facing our military.

Mme. Chairwoman, as you are no doubt aware, our guardian class has consistently set before us the devastation Sequestration has wrought upon our military, and the doubt it has cast upon our ability to defeat existing and emerging threats, let alone deter them.

For my part, I am here today to alert you to the dangerous state of our nation's missile defense capabilities, and what the Obama years have done to our ability to deter and defeat the deadliest weapons known to humanity.

North Korea has evolved from an eccentric regional problem with nuclear weapons, into an extremely dangerous nuclear threat to America. They are very close to mastering the physics required to range the entire continental United States and are able to threaten our forces in the Pacific. Just yesterday, the Strategic Forces Subcommittee held a briefing which laid bare the nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities of the Kim Dynasty: I cannot discuss the details of what we learned in an open forum, but the growing threat posed by North Korea is shocking and I urge you, Mme. Chairwoman, to bring in the Missile Defense Agency and the CIA to brief you and the Members of this Committee on the nature of this growing threat.

Furthermore, President Obama's policies placed Iran, the world's largest financier and enabler of terrorism, on track to *legally* build a nuclear weapons capability within the confines of the JCPOA. Unlike the Soviet threat, nuclear Jihad cannot be deterred by fear of retaliation. It is an existential threat to the peace and security of the entire human family.

While the Obama administration debated whether or not we should develop and maintain a missile defense against such threats, our near-peer adversaries – who never had any such qualms – were working tirelessly to exploit weaknesses in our missile defense architecture.

Under President Obama, the MDA's budget was cut drastically below the Bush Administration's planned \$9 Billion+ budget even as China and Russia were rapidly developing and test-flying High-Speed Maneuvering Weapons (HSMWs) including hypersonic glide vehicles. These

weapons present an entirely new capability we must counter as they are specifically designed to exploit the “gaps” and “seams” in our existing missile defense architecture, thus defeating the systems we currently have in place.

These new weapons are capable of traveling more than 1 mile per second, and fly at a flat (non-ballistic) trajectory to prevent our missile defense systems from tracking them. The threat has out-paced us and we must invest the appropriate resources to defend against the new threats or lose our ability to deter potential adversaries.

There are a number of specific measures which Congress must pursue if we are to remain capable of defeating, let alone deterring, our near-peer adversaries. To this end, I urge this Committee to support the development and deployment of a multi-mission space sensor layer. This capability is a massive force multiplier for our entire missile defense architecture and is absolutely essential to allow us to accurately identify and target the newest and most advanced missile threats.

In recent years Directed Energy technology has matured to such a degree that were this Committee were to invest in some of the most promising Directed Energy programs – especially Boost-Phase defense – we would see some game-changing capabilities developed in the next few years. These Directed Energy programs will allow us to complete what the Reagan Administration began and allow the United States to “leapfrog” the missile threat.

I hope this Committee will continue funding of the RKV and also provide resources requested by the MDA for the MOKV, which will ensure our Mid-Course Defense is capable of meeting the most advanced nuclear threats.

Finally, I urge the Members of the Committee to not cut the MDA budget item “Special Programs – MDA Technology.” This program is critical to our Homeland defense, but given the nature of the program I cannot get into greater specifics in an open forum. I encourage all of you to receive a brief from the Missile Defense Agency on the program before any decision is made to cut funding below the requested amount.

The threats to our Homeland and our deployed forces from irrational regimes armed with nuclear weapons are real and growing, and we must respond by investing the resources in our missile defense architecture to ensure we are capable of mitigating these threats.

In order to revitalize our military – to build a missile defense architecture capable of meeting identified emerging threats – we require a defense budget topline of \$640 Billion.

The \$603 Billion topline, visits a modest 3% increase above Mr. Obama's projected FY18 defense budget of \$584 Billion, and, if we intend solve our readiness crisis, a budget of this size it will force us to underfund key strategic capabilities. If we are to Make America Safe Again, a 3% increase will not suffice. Furthermore, an MDA budget of anything less than \$8 Billion flies in face of the increasingly dangerous threat environment we are facing, and I implore the Members of this Committee to fund our missile defense programs commensurate to this growing threat.

May history judge that this Congress was one that did all that could be done protect the innocent in our own generation and to further ensure that American generations yet unborn will continue to walk in the sunlight of freedom. Thank you and God bless you all.

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