

**STATEMENT OF
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MEMBER OF CONGRESS
BEFORE THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
ON
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Good morning, Chairwoman Granger and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for providing me and other Members of the House with the opportunity to testify to the Subcommittee on issues we believe to be critical to our national security.

I'm referring to the U. S. Special Operations Command's basic research into warfighter performance and resilience in extreme environments as planned for fiscal year 2018 as shown in the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request to Congress within the Special Operations Forces Technology Development line. This important research conducted in the USSOCOM Science and Technology, Human Performance Office is aimed at providing greater asymmetric advantage for our Nation's most elite Special Operations Forces.

I feel strongly that to enable the continued supremacy of U.S. Special Operations Forces in the 21st century our warriors need to be the most physically fit, optimally performing and resilient to extreme environments of any force ever assembled. USSOCOM has repeatedly recognized these requirements through programmatic documentation and broad agency announcements for research areas of interest, but an extremely austere budget environment has prevented full funding of these critical requirements. When viewed across the FYDP (Future Years Defense Plan – pronounced f-eye'dip), the SOF Technology Development PE has been underfunded over the past three years by an average of more than \$6m per year. In its 2017 President's budget request to Congress, Special Operations Command estimated needing \$34.5 million in fiscal year 2018 for SOF Technology Development; that's almost \$10m less than was programmed in FY16.

According to the 2017 budget request, this project provides an investment strategy for USSOCOM to link technology opportunities with capability deficiencies and objectives in technology thrust areas that include human performance and endurance. Proposed research areas in support of these SOCOM requirements include:

- Sustaining optimal human performance in austere training and operational environments;
- Identifying meaningful interactions between pharmaceutical and nutritional supplements;
- Establishing heart rate variability's potential for measuring psychological and physical readiness and stress;

- Researching and applying methods to accurately measure nutritional status; and
- Developing technologies that enhance physiological performance, including greater mental acuity, increased strength and endurance, and tolerance to environmental extremes.

This research is of particular interest to me – beyond the future of this critical warfighting capability and doing what is right for our national security. As you know I have several military communities within my district that will benefit directly from this research. I also feel strongly that the health benefits of this research to my district's large retired military community, and to America's civilian population at large, will ultimately be significant.

We haven't yet seen the FY18 President's budget request, but if funded to existing, FY17 request levels, it will limit the development and transition of these technologies that will provide advantages for our Nation's Special Operations Forces.

Additional funding is urgently needed in fiscal year 2018 for competitively bid research to augment Special Operations Forces' training and performance. As you begin work on the fiscal year 2018 Defense Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that your committee appropriate \$39m for the Special Operations Forces Technology Development line, a generic program increase of \$4.5m, for competitively bid research to develop and transition technologies that provide asymmetric training and performance advantage to our most elite special operators.

This funding will help guarantee the development of important technologies and research capabilities to address existing SOCOM requirements. Let me reiterate: if appropriated by Congress, this additional funding will be competitively awarded and address requirements currently established by the Department of Defense.

I commend you, Chairwoman Granger for having this hearing and I urge you and the Subcommittee to look closely at this issue as you develop the Defense Appropriations bill this year. Thank you very much for your time today, and I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important research with the Subcommittee.