

**Defense Appropriations Testimony**  
**Congressman Joe Wilson (SC-02)**  
**March 9, 2017**

I am grateful for the opportunity to meet with you today. First, I would like to thank Chairwoman Kay Granger for her leadership as Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. As we face limited resources, I am especially grateful to the Chairwoman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Subcommittee for advocating on behalf of our national security.

I am speaking to you today as both the Congressman from South Carolina's Second Congressional District, and also as the Chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness.

The Second Congressional District is home to Fort Jackson, the largest initial entry training facility in the U.S. Army. Fort Jackson expertly trains tens of thousands of soldiers each year, approximately 53 percent of the Army's Basic Combat Training load, and 56 percent of women entering the Army. The base also trains thousands of soldiers in their Adjutant General, finance, postal, and chaplain schools. Additionally, Fort Jackson supports thousands of active duty military, civilian employees, military family members, and veteran's services.

There is no question that the Second Congressional District is positively impacted by service members stationed here, just as there is no question we hold up to our reputation as a strong, military-friendly community.

I encourage you to continue your support of the unique missions at Fort Jackson and across South Carolina.

As Chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I am tasked with the responsibility of ensuring our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines have the training, equipment, and resources they need to complete their mission. That means appropriating \$640 billion to defense spending so that we can begin the much needed process of resourcing our troops.

As Chairman of Readiness, I have heard testimony from each service branch outlining the negative impacts of defense sequestration and the material effect it has had on each branch. We currently have the smallest Air Force since 1947, the smallest Navy since 1917, and smallest Army since before World War II. Yet, today, our troops are deployed in more than 150 countries around the world.

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The facts are clear. For too long, we've asked our military to do too much with too few resources—forcing difficult decisions and delaying critical maintenance priorities. This is not sustainable and directly limits our military's ability in current and future conflicts.

I respectfully urge the Chairwoman and the committee to support a level of funding that will adequately provide for our military and national defense. Threats around the world are increasing as our military funding has degraded through the harmful policy of defense sequestration. We must change course to promote peace through strength.

The first priority of the federal government is to provide for the common defense, and I support Armed Services Chairmen Mac Thornberry and John McCain in calling for a defense budget of \$640 billion for fiscal year 2018.

Thank you.