

Statement of Congressman Matt Cartwright

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Defense

Member Day Hearing on Department of Defense Appropriations Act

March 9, 2017

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you for holding this Members Day hearing on defense appropriations and for the opportunity to talk about some of our priorities.

The United States military is the greatest military in the world. It can only stay that way, however, with our ongoing support. I want to specifically address a few defense spending matters of the utmost importance. These issues affect both my constituents and the security of the entire country.

Robust military manufacturing is necessary for the sustained strength of our armed forces. I am proud to say that Tobyhanna Army Depot, in my district, has contributed admirably to this effort. This facility has been able to efficiently compete with their private sector competitors.

For this quality of manufacturing support for the U.S. military to continue, we must provide consistent and sustained funding. Every job at the Tobyhanna Army Depot, the army's only Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance depot, generates two and half jobs in the larger local community.

Every dollar invested at Tobyhanna generates \$1.68 in economic activity. This depot provides our troops with state of the art technology, delivers a healthy return on investment to the taxpayer, and serves as a vital hub of commerce in its community. I urge funding support for this essential component of our national security.

Additionally, I want to reiterate the opposition I expressed last Congress to any implementation of new A-76 studies by the Department of Defense. The A-76

process uses faulty, antiquated methodology to determine whether federal civilian jobs should be outsourced – a matter we simply cannot approach so haphazardly. Both the GAO and the Inspector General of the Department of Defense concluded the process could not demonstrate any savings for the tax payer. Using an arbitrary 12% overhead factor cost for federal employees versus contractors, the A-76 process is simply not anchored in reality. We must act sensibly with taxpayer dollars by basing our decisions on fact, not fiction. A-76 has faced bipartisan opposition and been subject to Congressional moratorium since 2010, and I urge the Committee to ensure it stays that way.

I'd also like to stress the importance of several programs that affect the General Dynamics Scranton Operation plant located in my District. Specifically, I hope that funding can be maintained for two artillery ammunition programs. First, the Navy 5/54 gun ammunition, which is fired from cruiser and destroyer types of combatant ships. Second, the 155 millimeter M795, which is the state of the art multi-purpose high fragmentation high explosive projectile fired from 155mm howitzers.

Lastly, I want express my support for sustained funding for two larger programs that impact the General Dynamics Scranton Operation plant as well. First, the Abrams Tank Improvement Program, which applies modifications to the currently deployed Abrams Family of Vehicles to sustain the Abrams fleet by addressing a number of existing performance shortfalls. Second, the upgrades to the Stryker vehicle, which improve the protective hull of the vehicle and improve its lethality by adding a 30 millimeter cannon. All of these programs improve the capabilities of our armed forces, function as a worthwhile investment for the general American taxpayer, and play a major economic role in the communities surrounding the plant. For these reasons, I urge the Committee's continued support.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for having this meeting and allowing me to the opportunity to speak about these important issues.