

Opening Statement of Chairman Rogers

WASHINGTON— The House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing today on [Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request for Atomic Energy Defense Activities and Nuclear Forces Programs](#). Chairman Mike Rogers (R-AL) made the following opening statement as prepared for delivery:

Witness testimony can be found on the [Committee Document Repository](#) or linked below. All witness testimony is as prepared for, and embargoed until delivery.

"Welcome to the Strategic Forces subcommittee hearing on the President's Fiscal Year 2014 budget request for Atomic Energy Defense Activities and Nuclear Forces Programs. I want to thank our witnesses for being here today. We have a crowded witness table because we have a lot of ground to cover in this hearing. I appreciate you taking the time to prepare for this hearing, and we always appreciate the contributions you each make to U.S. national security.

"Turning to the issues, let me start with the good news. First, the Department of Defense has made clear that its top two priorities to protect from the effects of sequestration—beyond those that are exempt by statute or Presidential direction—are operations in Afghanistan and operations and sustainment of U.S. nuclear forces. These are the correct priorities.

"Second, the budget request would continue the major modernization efforts for the OHIO-class replacement submarine and the long-range strike bomber.

"Third, the budget request would provide a significant boost to the National Nuclear Security Administration's nuclear weapons work. I commend the Administration for trying to get back on track with nuclear modernization at NNSA. But I also want to highlight several very serious concerns.

"For starters, the budget request does not account for the effects of sequestration continuing into FY14—which would gravely endanger programs across the DOE and NNSA nuclear enterprise. Furthermore, for FY12 through FY14 we still find ourselves a total of around \$1.6 billion short of the NNSA funding levels that were committed to by the President to win Senate ratification of the New START treaty. So while the Administration is trying to get back on track with the FY14 request, the nuclear deterrent has still been shortchanged the past several years.

"We also find ourselves behind on some key capabilities and programs. The OHIO-class replacement program, the B61 life extension program, the W78/W88 life extension program, the long-range standoff cruise missile—these and others have been significantly delayed. Worse, the Administration has effectively and unilaterally canceled the plutonium facility at Los Alamos.

"Reviewing the budget request, we have identified \$75 million for the Navy and the Air Force for implementing the New START treaty. This is rather strange, because the Administration still has not complied with the FY12 defense authorization act, which required the Administration to submit a report 18 months ago on how it would implement New START. In my view, Congress cannot provide funds to carry out reductions it does not have enough information to understand.

"We also find that the Air Force would use \$1.5 million to begin an Environmental Impact Study on shutting down one or more ICBM wings. We've heard no explanation for this study and why the Administration thinks it needs to shut down an ICBM wing to comply with New START.

"On the policy front, in the next few months the Administration is expected to finally complete its long-delayed review of the nation's nuclear war plan. Based on press reports, this 18-month long "90-day study" is likely to recommend significant further U.S. nuclear force reductions. So, while the Administration has not yet decided how to implement the reductions required under New START, it is now pushing for even more.

"Equally concerning are reports that the Administration may seek to avoid Congress and undertake further nuclear reductions outside of the formal treaty process or without affirmative approval by Congress. This approach is a non-starter.

"Let me reiterate something I have said before: As the stockpile shrinks in size, we have reached the point where further reductions take on immense importance to the nation's security and international stability. Avoiding Congress because the President is unwilling to debate the merits of his policy choices is unacceptable and should be intolerable to anyone who cares about our system of government.

"Congress must be a full and equal partner for these hugely important national security decisions, and I intend to see that my colleagues and I fulfill our constitutional role.

"As I said at the outset, we have a lot of ground to cover in this hearing. I expect we'll continue this subcommittee's discussion of management and governance problems at NNSA and DOE. I also expect we'll review the important work of the Defense Environmental Cleanup program. DOE is doing great work in this area, but technical and management problems continue at some of their biggest and most visible projects."

Witnesses

The Honorable Madelyn Creedon

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Department of Defense

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]

Dr. John Harvey

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs, Department of Defense

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]

Mr. David Huizenga

Senior Advisor for Environmental Management, Department of Energy

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]

General C. Robert Kehler, USAF

Commander, U.S. Strategic Command

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]

The Honorable Neile Miller

Acting Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]

Dr. Peter S. Winokur

Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board

- Witness Statement [[PDF](#)]
- Witness Biography [[PDF](#)]