

STATEMENT OF
REPRESENTATIVE MARK E. GREEN, M.D. (TN-07)
FOR THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
APRIL 3, 2019

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Over several years prior to the current administration, the combination of sequestration and administrative cuts to DoD, coupled with the ongoing fight against terrorism forced the military to prioritize readiness over facility maintenance. I am here to provide an innovative solution that will work to keep both sides of the aisle happy, deliver increased efficiency in the use of defense dollars and ultimately strengthen our military's capabilities for success in combat and greater deterrence in peacetime. Clearly we need to make numerous repairs to installation facilities, and I am very glad that this Committee has shown the commitment to improvement by increasing defense spending after years of neglect and decline.

That brings me to my concern with Davis-Bacon laws hampering DoD's spending effectiveness. Davis-Bacon requires federal construction contracts to pay at least the prevailing wage that construction workers in the area are earning on private contracts. Davis-Bacon requirements on military construction and maintenance cause those contracts to pay an additional twenty-two percent higher wages than market rates, according to a Beacon Hill Group study. These costs take dollars from other projects and limit the effective use of military construction dollars. In the near future, I will bring forward an amendment to allow a temporary exemption

from Davis-Bacon for military construction projects in states where there is no living wage requirement. In those states which require a living wage, Davis-Bacon would not be waived.

We do not have time to spare. The Marine Corps' Camp Lejeune is still broken down from Hurricane Florence. Tyndall Air Force Base is still struggling from October's Hurricane Michael. And we need to build more capacities for new projects as our military evolves to face a changing, expanding, and competitive environment. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines rely on home station facilities to refit from war, and to retrain for future fights. If we cannot house, refit and train, our troops – we cannot defend our country, and if we cannot defend our country, we cannot have a country.

I hope that I will have your support in this initiative to help our military, and I ask that you will consider repealing Davis-Bacon going forward.