



Testimony of  
The Honorable Don Young  
Before the House Armed Services Committee  
FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act Member Request Day

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Thornberry, and distinguished colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee, thank you for holding this hearing, and for giving me the opportunity to testify as the lone Representative for the State of Alaska. Though I am not a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am proud to represent the most strategic state in our country, with the largest number of service members and veterans per capita in the nation. I appreciate your consideration of the following provisions for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. I will keep my remarks today brief, and my staff will be happy to follow up with you to provide additional information on all of these issues, if needed.

**Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) Modernization**

Alaska is home to the nation's largest air training range—the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). This range complex is nine times larger than the Nevada Test and Training Range at Nellis Air Force Base, and more than twenty times larger than the Barry Goldwater Range near Luke AFB in Arizona. While this range complex provides unmatched training capacity for the Air Force, much of its infrastructure (including its threat emitters) was developed for 4th generation aircraft. Given Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's two F-22 squadrons, the decision to base two F-35A squadrons at Eielson Air Force Base, as well as Eielson's annual Red Flag and biannual Operation Northern Edge exercises, the Air Force should modernize the range complex to continue to provide our Joint Air Forces with the best training possible.

I request a provision which authorizes and supports all actions needed to modernize JPARC. This modernization must ensure that the JPARC can accommodate and support multiple squadrons of fifth generation aircraft and beyond, allow them to train to their maximum potential in a realistic environment versus a near-peer adversary. Additionally, it must be able to support annual Red Flag- Alaska exercises and biannual Operation Northern Edge exercises.

**Arctic Center of Excellence**

As a Nation, we have continued to be late to the ball game that is Arctic defense. Our adversaries in the region are lining up to knock out home runs while we are still in the dugout. First and foremost, Russia's build up the Arctic should be distressing to everyone. In 2014, President Vladimir Putin stated that Russia must "pay more attention to issues of development of the Arctic and the strengthening of our position," and since then he has been building up Russia's presence in the Arctic at an alarming rate. In addition to creating a new Arctic Command, the Northern Fleet Joint Strategic Command (also known as the Arctic Joint Strategic Command), he has established new Arctic brigades, opened new military installations along with reopening closed ones, deployed an early missile warning radar, and has conducted more training exercises in



the region. This buildup includes a growing presence of operational airfields, the deployment of a K-300P Bastion coastal defense cruise missile system on the New Siberian Islands, and a deployment of surface vessels armed with the modular KALIBR-NK cruise missile system.

Furthermore, the economics of the region cannot be forgotten as that is what is driving much of the new activity in the region, predominantly from China. With the increasing ease of access to the Arctic, it opens new avenues of commerce, from tourism to resource extraction, particularly in rare earth minerals. The latter of which should be worrisome to many, as now there will be tremendous aggression from our military and economic adversaries as they compete for an estimated 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of its natural gas.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee, U.S. Northern Command commander, General Terrance O'Shaughnessy, stated "It has become clear that defense of the homeland depends on our ability to detect and defeat threats operating both in the Arctic and passing through the Arctic."

This build up is in sharp contrast to our activities and capabilities in the Arctic. To this end, I request a provision which directs the DOD to establish an Arctic Defense Research and Development Program as well as an Arctic Center of Excellence. The purpose of these entities would be to ensure the United States gains superiority in Arctic operations necessary for meeting national security requirements. They would do so by conducting research and testing, including field-testing, of best practices, techniques, and equipment for military operations in the Arctic and developing and facilitating training and education for members of the armed forces for operations in the Arctic and by providing technical support for operations in the Arctic.

### **Cold Weather Training**

U.S. capabilities in cold weather environments have atrophied over the past several years, understandably our attention has been drawn to the Middle East, but it truly calls into question our capabilities in extreme cold weather environments. The National Defense Strategy calls out Russia, China, and North Korea, all three of which have extremely cold weather areas, which we are not prepared to handle. For example, when the U.S. Marine Corps started rotations to Norway, they faced a multitude of cold weather problems, not the least of which being their packs breaking from the extreme cold. Typically, one could argue that this is what training is for. However, that should not be that case when part of the reason they were there was to show Russia we can compete in that environment. Everything in extreme cold is different – how vehicles and equipment operate, the types of lubricants you can use, the gear you use and how you store it. Even the way you shoot is different. From Napoleon in Russia to Task Force Smith in Korea and the Marines in the Chosin, history has shown us what can happen if you are unprepared to fight and operate in the cold.

Therefore, I request language that would direct DOD to develop a plan to expand cold weather training opportunities.



### **Strategic Seaports Study**

The ability to deploy a military force, and sustain and support them, is critical to DOD operations. The Strategic Seaport Program which is administered by the DOD in conjunction with the MARAD plays an essential role in ensuring DOD success in that movement of forces and supplies. It is vital to U.S. interest that these designated seaports remain viable and successful entities. The FY 2012 NDAA required a DOD study on Strategic Seaports, including an assessment of facilities, improvements needed, effects on operational readiness if improvements aren't met, and potential funding sources.

In the seven years since 2012, the world looks remarkably different. No longer are we solely focused on threats from the Middle East. Now, we must contend with threats from our near-peer adversaries in China and Russia. These new threats, coupled with DOD's Pacific shift, and new domains like the Arctic, require us to evolve and update continually. Therefore, I request a provision which would direct DOD to relook at and update the Strategic Seaport study.

### **SUSV Replacement Strategy Briefing**

The Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUSV) is a critical vehicle when it comes to Arctic movement. However, it has not been a program of record since the 1980s and are becoming harder and harder to maintain. Unites have been cannibalizing parts from other SUSVs and in some cases have been manufacturing their own parts to keep the fleet running. Given the vital nature of these vehicles and the slow replacement process

Therefore I request the following language:

*The committee understands that extreme cold weather, as well as, challenging and demanding terrain found in the Arctic makes military operations, especially maneuverability, extremely difficult. Key to any U.S. military maneuver success in the Arctic can be greatly attributed to the Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUSV) fleet. However, due to the age of these vehicles, the lack of repair parts, and the fact that it has not been a program of record for some time, the committee is concerned about the viability of the SUSV fleet before a replacement is fielded. Therefore, the Committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 4, 2020, on the status and timeline for acquisition and fielding of the Joint All-Terrain/All-Weather Support Vehicle (JAASV) to replace the SUSV.*

### **Domestic Non-Availability Determination Waiver Language**

Our Nation's dependence on foreign sources of critical minerals has continued to grow. In fact, during testimony before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Dr. Steven M. Fortier, the Director of the National Minerals Information Center, stated that "...our country continues to rely on foreign sources for some raw and processed mineral materials. In 2017, the country was 100 percent import-reliant for 21



mineral commodities. For comparison, in 1984, the country was 100 percent import-reliant for just 11 mineral commodities.”

For example, our Nation is completely dependent on foreign sources of graphite, which is one of the 35 critical mineral commodities that the U.S. Geological Survey found to be “critical to the economic and national security of the United States.” Our reliance on foreign sources of graphite is alarming enough; however, those concerns are exacerbated when you couple that with the fact that graphite is critical to our defense technologies and that China accounts for 67 percent of the global market. Not only was China named as one of the central challenges to U.S. prosperity and security in the most recent National Defense Strategy, but a recent report found that China had infiltrated the computer chip supply chain and directly affected secure government operations. Currently, if in the acquisition/procurement process a contractor cannot locate a domestic source then they must seek a waiver. However, there is no requirement for long term planning to attempt to find or develop domestic sources.

Therefore I request a provision to add a requirement for a Domestic Non-Availability Determination (DNADs ) waivers that mandate they must include a new section outlining steps the petitioner will take to encourage a new domestic supply of the requested metal/mineral.

### **Applicability Sister Subsidiary Past Performance Consideration for Native Small Business**

The current evaluation of an Alaskan Native Corporation (ANC), Tribal, or Native Hawaiian company’s use of sister subsidiary experience is being increasingly restricted and is inconsistently implemented across agencies. Non-consideration of such subsidiary experience severely restricts these companies’ ability to compete. Without having this past performance considered, ANC/Tribal companies cannot compete. With DOD’s greater emphasis on BVTO procurements and limiting the use of LPTA procurement to specific situations, eliminating or severely restricting an ANC/Tribal company’s use of sister-subsidary experience hamstrings that company’s ability to compete equitably on non-price factors.

Therefore I request the following language:

*The committee is aware that current FAR and DFAR language is open-ended and flexible in its guidance of the use of past performance for predecessor companies of Native Small Business, also known as “sister subsidiaries”. The committee also recognizes that the current evaluation of an Alaskan Native Corporation (ANC)/Tribal/Native Hawaiian company’s use of sister subsidiary experience is being increasingly restricted and is inconsistently implemented across agencies. Non-consideration of such subsidiary experience such as of an ANC direct and indirect subsidiary corporation, joint venture, or partnership that meet the requirements of section 1626 (e) of title 43, United States Code, severely restricts these companies’ ability to equitably compete on non-price factors.*



*The committee believes that a change to the FAR and DFARs may be required to recognize sister subsidiary past performance for Native Small Businesses and to ensure that it is equitably considered in proposals. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to work with the FAR Council to modify FAR 15.305(a)(2)(iii) to ensure that the proposal evaluation shall take into account for Native Small Businesses past performance information of predecessor companies. The Committee also directs the Secretary to ensure that solicitation language for future DOD contracts include standardized language for past performance of Native Small Business to include consideration of otherwise relevant projects performed by the parent, sister, or subsidiary companies, predecessor companies, or satellite offices (i.e., any offices of a Native Small Business other than the one submitting the current proposal) of the offeror provided the offeror's proposal reasonably explains how the offered experience will be effectively utilized in the performance of the solicited contract. The committee believes if it is unclear how the experience gained through a particular project or projects will be utilized by the Native Small Business contractor for the benefit of the Government in the contractor's performance of the proposed contract, the contractor should be given an additional opportunity to clarify the relevance of the project or projects in question without the Government having to open discussions.*

### **Facility Clearance for Joint Ventures**

Joint ventures provides the government with tremendous value. Not only do they allow the companies involved to complement each other's capabilities, but it also offers the government the best combination of performance, cost, and delivery for system or product being acquired. However, despite these clear benefits, companies still have to fight through unnecessary and redundant hurdles. This includes the need for a joint venture that is formed to perform a classified contract to have its own Facility Clearance even when the companies that make up the joint venture already have the appropriate facility clearances independent of each other. Furthermore, joint ventures require full sponsorship and approval process which can take over 150 days. Additionally, joint ventures are usually created in response to specific solicitations as a prime contractor, therefore they cannot pursue a facility clearance until a solicitation is issued. Considering the general timeline from issuance to the solicitation of a proposal in 30 to 60 days, then it effectively eliminates the ability of joint ventures to compete on classified contracts, as they are not typically eligible with a facility clearance by the proposed deadline.

Therefore, I request a provision that changes the FAR to eliminate the need for a facility clearance when both firms in the joint ventures already each possess the required facility clearance. This allows joint ventures to compete on an equal field and prevents the need for redundant clearance process.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Thornberry, and members of the Armed Services Committee, I again thank you for giving me this opportunity. I encourage all of you, and

The Honorable Don Young



Congressman for All Alaska

your staff, to come to Alaska to see firsthand all that we offer the Department of Defense. A strong defense presence in Alaska is not only vital to the state, but also vital to our national security.