

CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE (TX-18)

STATEMENT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

VIRTUAL MEMBER DAY HEARING ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FY 2022 WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021 11:00 A.M. (EDT)

(Members have 5 minutes and requested to be online 10-15 minutes prior)

Chairwoman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers and distinguished Members of the Committee:

- As a senior member of the Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, let me offer my appreciation and thanks to Chairwoman Smith and Ranking Member Rogers for the difficult work and choices that must be made to produce a truly bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022.
- The National Defense Authorization Act (“NDAA”) is designed to meet the threats we face today as well as into the future. The NDAA for Fiscal Year 2022 should reflect the strong commitment of Congress to ensure that the men and women of our Armed Services receive the benefits and support that they deserve for their faithful service.
- The painstaking care that goes into the annual NDAA reflects the reality that we live in a dangerous world, where threats are not always easily identifiable, and our enemies are not bound by borders. Confronting unique types of enemy requires unique capabilities.
- Mr. Chairman, I understand that my entire statement will be made part of the record so I will keep my remarks brief.

- In the few minutes allotted I wish to highlight several policies and programs that warrant the Committee's strong consideration for inclusion in the FY 2022 NDAA.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language providing that candidates granted admission to attend a military academy undergo screening for speech disorders and be provided the results of the screening test and a list of warfare unrestricted line (URL) Officer positions and occupation specialists that require successful performance on the speech test. Academy students and instructors shall be afforded the option of undergoing speech therapy to reduce speech disorders or impediments and students who did not successfully complete the speech assessment be afforded the option of retaking a speech test each year while enrolled. The test will not determine eligibility for admission to a service academy but will provide transparency to students in making future career decisions.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing the Secretary of Defense to report on the number of military bases, installations, and facilities that are named after African Americans; and directing each service Secretary to establish a review process to consider the naming of military installations and covered defense property under the jurisdiction of that Secretary after African Americans who served in the Armed Forces with honor, heroism, and distinction and are deserving of recognition.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language authorizing Secretary of Defense to establish program providing technical assistance by U.S. military women to military women in other countries combating terrorism, human trafficking and narcotics trafficking and their impact on women and girls.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing the Secretary of Defense to develop measures to defend against deployment of nuclear ICBMs by North Korea to protect against damage or destruction of satellites critical to U.S. national defense and global

communications, International Space Station, and other vital assets.

- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing Secretary of Navy to submit report to Congress on the feasibility of applying desalinization technologies to provide drought relief in areas impacted by sharp declines in water availability for both military as well as civilian purposes.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing Secretary of Defense to submit report to Congress on the feasibility of providing technical assistance in the form of training, equipment and logistics to improve air traffic control systems in African countries where routine U.S. military operations require ground air traffic control.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language authorizing the Secretary of Defense to work with local security partners in facilitating the provision of security at civilian nuclear research centers in educational institutions to ascertain that nuclear weapons do not end up in the hands of terrorists, in promotion of the United States' and its allies' security interests.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing the Secretary of Defense to conduct, and report to Congress within 180 days, results of study regarding whether requirement to notify Voting Action Officer within 10 days of registering to vote in a state where service member resides due to a duty reassignment imposes significant burden on military voters.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing the Secretary of Defense to develop plans for early detection, mitigation, and defense against state sponsored cyberattacks targeting federal public election assets, election administrators, election workers, or voter engagement efforts.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language requiring Secretary of Defense to report to Congress programs and procedures employed

to ensure students studying abroad through Department of Defense National Security Education Programs are trained to recognize, resist, and report against recruitment efforts by agents of foreign governments.

- I support inclusion in the bill of language amending title and section of the “Women’s Business Program” to be the “Minority and Women Business Ownership. “The NDAA includes the creation of a Women’s Business Programs.” There is no similar program for minority businesses. However, there is specific language about helping HUZ and disadvantaged businesses.
- I support inclusion in the bill of language directing the Secretary of Defense to conduct and engagement of minority women owned businesses.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and the Ranking Member for your leadership and for extending me this opportunity to share my major priorities with the Committee.