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The Honorable Mike Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about my priorities and concerns as a representative for Arizona's 4th District. As you work on crafting this year's National Defense Authorization Act, I ask you to keep in mind some of the issues that will have an impact on my constituents, and for the state of Arizona.

Specifically, I want to raise to the committee today:

- The defense industry in Arizona;
- The federal responsibility we have to help "downwinders" in my state;
- Keeping troops on our defense base safe and cool; and
- Data security

### **Defense industry in Arizona**

Defense, as you know, is a team sport. In Arizona, we have several companies whose prime focus is to produce the equipment and technology that keep Americans safe on the battlefield and at home. The defense industry is a source of pride for the state. These companies are vital to national security. These range from connecting vehicles to low earth orbit satellites, so we do not lose communication with DoD ground vehicles, to manufacturing ENVG-B night vision goggles that enable our troops in the field to stay situationally aware of their surroundings - and safe.

There are also manufacturers in Arizona that create aviation equipment, working with their DoD partners to produce Chinook, Black Hawk, and Apache helicopters. Not only are these products necessary for national security, but these jobs are also essential. They are important for Arizona families and our local economy. Overall our defense industry has an economic impact of \$19 billion dollars—that equals 80,000 jobs!

The authorities, funding, and program improvements in the NDAA year to year keep this economy in Arizona thriving, and as you develop this year's bill, I would ask you to continue to invest in these innovative technologies and production manufacturing.

### **RECA and Downwinders**

One of my top priorities in Congress is to help the Downwinders in my state. "Downwinders" is a term for people who were "downwind" of radioactive pollution from more than 200 weapons tests done in Arizona between 1945 and 1962. As you on this committee are aware, this radiation resulted in cancers and other serious diseases for those living in the polluted areas. While Congress attempted to make amends in 1990 by passing the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA), affected individuals in portions of Mohave County, Arizona, and Clark County, Nevada, were excluded from the program for no logical scientific reason.

Counties to the south and the east of Clark and Mohave were included, while Clark and Mohave were carved up. This is not acceptable. This radiation spread and impacted the health and wellbeing of residents in ineligible areas. My bill, H.R. 4754, the Downwinders Parity Act, would extend downwinder eligibility to those who were present in lower Clark County and lower Mohave County during a period of atmospheric testing at the Nevada Test Site. These Americans deserve justice for their illnesses caused by their own government's atomic testing, and we are running out of time.

The Senate made great headway in the past year on extending RECA and expanding the Americans it covered. But it was not included in the final version of the 2024 NDAA. I am profoundly disappointed that the bipartisan effort to extend RECA and expand it to all Arizonans was left out of the final bill last year.

We, as partners in the federal government, have a responsibility to make amends to downwinders and miners who were exposed to radiation. I implore the committee to include it this year and welcome the opportunity to support Representatives Vasquez and Moylan in their efforts on this committee. Radioactive fallout doesn't adhere to state boundaries. Arizona and New Mexico have both suffered. It is imperative that we expand eligibility to all impacted parties, and I hope that expansion will be included in this year's bill.

### **Heat and Defense**

Arizona has a proud and strong defense base. But, as many on this committee know, Arizona is warming. Last year, Phoenix had 133 days with temperatures at or above 100 degrees. That is harmful to anyone, but those on our military installations can face experience high levels of danger. It impacts our recruiting ability, and our service readiness. In fact, almost 3,000 troops experienced heat-related illnesses last year, a number that has grown 50% in 5 years.

The Marine Corps Air Station in Yuma, Arizona, right on the border, is one of the country's hottest military bases. And when my staff toured Luke Air Force Base in Phoenix last year, they showed us how the air conditioning units retrofitted to their old buildings created tripping hazards, blocked walkways, and *still* were only able to get indoor temperatures down to the mid-80s during an Arizona summer.

As you craft this bill, I ask you to think of weatherizing our defense infrastructure on the front lines of climate change and consider innovations to keep our military men and women cool and healthy as they train to keep us safe.

**Data Security in DoD**

This year has been huge for domestic technology and innovation with the implementation of the CHIPS and Science Act. I was especially proud to have helped bring \$8.5 billion to Intel, which has been manufacturing chips in Arizona since the 80s.

But as we continue to invest in our local, American-made chips and our national security goals, we must also be vigilant in the management of our data assets.

Right now, the DOD purchases many of its computers and printers from companies that are manufactured in China. Healthy trade and global consumerism are important. Yet as we focus on building our own businesses and nearshoring our own technologies, we also need to be mindful about what we are procuring, from whom, and what role that plays in our national security. Specifically in technologies related to CHIPs, we do not want to become over-reliant on our strategic competitors.

And this extends past weapons development and manufacturing- this is even in the computers we use in our day-to-day jobs. Other agencies, including the State Department, prohibited the purchase of goods from select companies starting back in 2007 when they believed procuring personnel equipment from a competitor in this way could be a national security risk.

America's defense system has some of the most sensitive information in the world, and especially now- as we invest in American semiconductor-manufacturing initiatives- I ask you to consider data sensitivity as you craft this year's NDAA.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, for allowing me to speak at this Member Day. I appreciate your leadership and your attention to these important issues. I look forward to partnering with you, the committee, and my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to deliver for the people of Arizona's 4th District.

Sincerely,



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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress