



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

Full Committee Markup - FY 2016 Defense Appropriations Bill June 2, 2015 Opening Statement As Prepared

I have long said there is no higher duty for us as Members of Congress than to provide for the safety and security of this nation, and I believe that this bill fulfills that mission in a responsible and effective way.

Threats to our country and to our people continue to increase. It seems that nearly every day, we learn of a new enemy, a new development, or a new risk that has arisen somewhere in the world.

This means that now, more than ever, we must ensure that our troops and officers have the resources they need to protect this great nation and our way of life.

This bill makes the most of a very tight budget, ensuring that our military remains the best in the world and that they are ready and able to protect all of us from those that wish to do harm.

In total, the bill provides \$578.6 billion in discretionary spending for the Department of Defense, including \$88.4 billion for the Global War on Terror.

One of our paramount concerns over the past several years has been troop readiness. I'm proud to say this bill adequately funds key readiness programs that will help make sure our servicemembers are prepared for any mission - combat or peacetime.

Funding for the purchase of and upgrades to equipment and weapons systems will help support these readiness efforts. Procuring new ships and aircraft will allow us to maintain a strong, lethal force and conduct successful military operations. The bill also invests in research and development that will maintain the U.S. military's standing as the most advanced in the world. These investments – like the new Air Force bomber program, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, and the Ohio-class submarine replacement – will help advance the success of missions today, and will help us meet a wide array of threats in the future.

But we must ensure that our brave warfighters receive the support they need to fulfill their missions and keep morale high, and provide for their families as they serve our nation so selflessly.

This includes funding the authorized 2.3 percent pay raise for the military – 1 percent above the President's request – and maintains all troop housing costs. It also includes investments in their health – guaranteeing that they will be provided with world-class health care and cutting-edge treatments. Within the \$31.7 billion provided for the Defense Health Program, funding is

targeted toward traumatic brain injury and psychological health research, suicide prevention outreach programs, and sexual assault prevention and response – all funded above the President’s request.

As I’ve said before, we are operating within the constraints of the Budget Control Act, and that means we must make the best use of every single dollar. But that also means that we have to make some tough budget decisions – reducing funding without compromising the safety or success of our troops and our military operations.

This bill makes these choices in a responsible way that ensures our armed forces have the resources they need to stay safe, prepared, and in peak fighting form.

Congratulations to the Chairman, Ranking Member, and the Subcommittee on their thorough work on this bill. This is a strong, bipartisan piece of legislation that you have put together, and I’m proud to support it today.

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