

ORAL STATEMENT OF

THE HONORABLE PHYLLIS L. BAYER

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF NAVY

(ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT)

BEFORE THE

UNITES STATES HOUSE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,

VETERANS AFFAIRS, and RELATED AGENCIES,

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FEBRUARY 27, 2019 at 1000

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL TRANSCRIBED BY THE HOUSE

Good morning Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz, Ranking Member Carter and distinguished members of the Committee. It is an honor to sit before you today with my fellow Service leaders to testify on the readiness of the Department of the Navy's Energy Installations and Environment (EI&E) portfolio. In support of the President's goal to protect our homeland and our National Defense Strategy, Secretary Spencer has focused the Department of the Navy efforts to restore military readiness and increase lethality by taking care of our people, improving our processes, and creating greater capabilities in every area of the Navy and Marine Corps fighting force. Secretary Spencer and I are fully dedicated and committed to ensuring all Marines, Sailors, and their families live in safe, secure housing that meet or exceed health and safety standards. Our commitment stands firm to support our Sailors, Marines and their families.

As a result of the President's national emergency declaration on February 15, 2019, the Department of Defense (DOD) has directed a deliberative decision path that includes decisions by the Acting Secretary of Defense about whether and how to use Section 2808 authority, which was invoked as a result of the President's proclamation. Until such determinations are made, there is only speculation as to potential impacts.

As of today, the DOD has not asked the Department of the Navy to re-direct unobligated funds nor to provide an assessment of the risks and impacts of deferring specific construction projects in the expectation of 2808 authorities. In advance of this, we have few specifics to provide.

Should DOD direct the Department of the Navy to engage in more deliberate planning, we will carefully assess the potential impacts of deferring these projects on fleets and operating forces across the globe. Every dollar appropriated for MILCON to the Department is important and as you are aware, the process of getting a project nominated, competed and authorized for funding and then appropriated is deliberative and extensive. We manage each project carefully and each is of vital importance to the Department of the Navy. We will do our part to support DOD, and I want to assure you we take very seriously the execution of the MILCON projects that you have appropriated.