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Congress of the United States
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HOUSE SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER
PROTECTION AND FINANCIAL
INSTITUTIONS

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
THE CLIMATE CRISIS

April 26, 2022

Thank you to Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, and the Members of the House Armed Services Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony to the Committee as you and your staff work to prepare the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

As we look to our nation's defense and security needs next year, the conflict in Ukraine is certainly top of mind for many. The conflict is devastating from a humanitarian perspective, and I am pleased that the United States and our allies have stepped up our defense aid for Ukraine. However, I'd like to call attention to the conflict for a different reason: how it has highlighted the national security implications of dependence on petrostates like Russia for fossil fuel energy. I applaud President Biden's issuance of Executive Order 14066 on March 8, 2022, to ban the import of Russian crude oil, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), and coal. However, to ensure our nation's long term energy independence, we must double down on our energy-efficiency efforts and our transition to clean, cheap, American-made energy. As the single largest consumer of energy in the United States, the Department of Defense (DOD) must play a vital role in this transition.

Aside from the importance of U.S. energy independence for security purposes, climate change creates a host of challenges that the DOD must contend with and incorporate into their strategic planning and analysis. As early as 1990, the DOD observed that climate change threatens our military readiness.¹ The Department has acknowledged that: climate change will create resource scarcity that can be a driver of global instability, extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change can damage military installations, the melting Arctic is creating a new frontier of geostrategic competition,² and convoys transporting the large quantities of fossil fuels required for operations creates risk on the battlefield.³

¹ Werrell, Caitlin, and Francesco Femia. "Secretary Mattis Clear-Eyed on Climate Security Risks." The Center for Climate & Security, March 14, 2017. <https://climateandsecurity.org/2017/03/secretary-mattis-clear-eyed-on-climate-security-risks/>.

² "DOD climate risk analysis." Department of Defense. October 2021. <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Oct/21/2002877353/-1/-1/0/DOD-CLIMATE-RISK-ANALYSIS-FINAL.PDF>

³ Craft, Lauren. "US Army Seeks Smarter Oil Use, Chases Alternatives." U.S. Army. *Energy Intelligence*. September 21, 2018. https://www.army.mil/article/211458/us_army_seeks_smarter_oil_use_chases_alternatives

Failure to adapt to climate change and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels will diminish our military capability, weaken our alliances, threaten our infrastructure, and limit our opportunities for technical innovation and economic growth.

For these reasons, I implore the committee to prioritize climate change mitigation and the clean energy transition as you craft the FY23 NDAA. Specifically, I request that the committee consider actions including:

- Strengthening the DOD's clean energy requirements by codifying the requirements set forth in Executive Order 14057 for DOD and implementing interim targets;
- Requiring the DOD to submit annual reports to Congress on their progress towards achieving clean energy targets, including the identification of outstanding funding and staffing resources need to implement those activities;
- Granting DOD direct hire authority for climate personnel to carry out activities related to energy independence and climate resilience efforts;
- Increasing support for DOD programs researching new clean energy and energy efficient technologies, as well as those evaluating and leveraging existing private sector technology advancements;
- Mandating a fifth strategic investment focus area for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to address climate-related risks to infrastructure and personnel; and
- Identifying any remaining barriers to the DOD achieving clean energy targets and developing strategies to overcome them.

Clean energy isn't just necessary to protect our planet against climate devastation. Preventing wars and protecting our national security demands investments in clean energy. American energy independence demands investments in clean energy. Lowering costs demands investments in clean energy. The DOD is at the front and center of this fight. We must prompt them to make their energy usage more efficient and accelerate their transition to renewables, while providing them with the tools and resources they require to accomplish this. While the best time for these transitions was 20 years ago, the second best time is now; the future of our nation's security depends on it.

Sincerely,



Sean Casten
Member of Congress