

Testimony of Rep. Earl L. “Buddy” Carter
NDAA Member Day 2022

- Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify before the committee today.
- I have the honor and privilege of representing the First Congressional District of Georgia, which houses all branches of our great Armed Forces.
- It was no mistake that great installations, such as Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield, Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base and Moody Air Force Base were placed along the 110 miles of beautiful coastline in southeast Georgia.
- Our proximity to the Port of Savannah, Port of Brunswick and warm climate were important to our military leaders when they chose the First District.
- In addition, our community is also home to the Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) at the Air Dominance Center in Savannah.
- However, it may not be home to this critical CRTC for much longer if the President’s budget prevails.
- Unfortunately, the President’s Fiscal Year 2023 Budget provides no funding in Military personnel (MILPER) and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) for the CRTC in Savannah.
- Consequently, the Air National Guard intends to soon close the Savannah CRTC, citing budget concerns.

- Now, with Russia's military aggression in Europe and China's increased engagement in Asia and the Pacific threatening our allies and partners, we cannot compromise our military's combat readiness.
- The Savannah CRTC is the most heavily utilized, unique, and cost-efficient training facility in the Air Force.
- It offers unparalleled opportunities for peer-to-peer air combat training, regional training conferences, classified engagements, and support for regional operations.
- Most notably, the Savannah CRTC, is one of very few locations in the United States that feature an accredited 6,000 square/foot Special Access Program Facility (SAPF) to support our nation's cutting-edge 5th generation fighter aircraft, the F-35 and the F-22.
- Funded by the National Guard Bureau, the Savannah CRTC represents a uniquely cost-efficient taxpayer investment, owing to its shared airfield with the 165th Airlift Wing.
- The Savannah CRTC is also already a site with considerable federal investment.
- Just a few years ago, Congress, at the request of the National Guard Bureau, chose to invest \$25 million in military construction funding for a hangar to support 5th generation fighter maintenance.
- This project is already well underway and is scheduled for completion in August of this year!
- Closing the CRTC would pointedly undercut the usefulness of this investment.

- This is exactly the type of waste that frustrates taxpayers. We need the Savannah Air Dominance Center's CRTC, now more than ever, and we cannot treat \$25 million in investments like its pocket change.
- I am calling on President Biden to invest in our combat readiness and keep this center open, so that our world-class military servicemembers have the world-class training they deserve.
- Furthermore, I would ask this Committee to add \$5.0M to Operations and Maintenance of the Air National Guard, to support training and operations of Savannah CRTC in your FY23 NDAA
- In addition, \$6.5M is needed in support of the Air Force National Guard Personnel who support those who are assigned to the CRTC in Savannah.
- As members of Congress, I know we recognize that budgets have limits and hard decisions must be made to protect our country's bottom line.
- But our military's capacity to conduct realistic, live training sets us apart from our adversaries.
- We can see from Russia's tactical incompetency in Ukraine just how disastrous it can be if a nation does not properly prepare its warfighters.
- That is exactly why the Savannah CRTC must remain open—it provides high quality and cost-effective training.
- As you prepare the FY23 NDAA, please consider keeping the Savannah CRTC open, as it is so beneficial to our nation.