

[H.A.S.C. No. 115-38]

HEARING
ON
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018
AND
OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED
PROGRAMS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
—
FULL COMMITTEE HEARING
ON
**MEMBER DAY—NATIONAL DEFENSE
PRIORITIES FROM MEMBERS FOR THE
FISCAL YEAR 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION ACT**
—

HEARING HELD
APRIL 27, 2017



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**MEMBER DAY—NATIONAL DEFENSE PRIORITIES FROM
MEMBERS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2018 NATIONAL DE-
FENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Thursday, April 27, 2017.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:03 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William M. “Mac” Thornberry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM M. “MAC” THORN-
BERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, CHAIRMAN, COM-
MITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

The committee meets today to receive testimony and input from our distinguished colleagues. And let me just say, we are very grateful to the Members who will testify today, as well as the Members who have submitted written testimony, for their interest, for their input, advice and guidance, which always assists our annual defense authorization bill.

Let me ask unanimous consent that the written testimony of those members who are not able to appear in person be included in the record. Without objection, so ordered.

[The documents referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 41.]

The CHAIRMAN. And before turning to our distinguished witnesses, let me yield to the ranking member for any comments he would like to make.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM
WASHINGTON, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED
SERVICES**

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to have this hearing.

This is a very big bill that covers a lot of different subjects, and just because you are not on the committee doesn't mean it isn't important to you. So I think it is always important to hear from other Members throughout the body. I thank the chairman for his leadership in doing his best and our best to include those thoughts and ideas as best we can in our bill.

With that, I yield back. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

And first up we have the distinguished chair of the Small Business Committee, the committee that has made a number of contributions to our bill over the years. We appreciate the working re-

lationship we have had. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for any comments he would like to make.

**STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE CHABOT, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM OHIO**

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Smith. We appreciate the cooperation that we have had with this committee for years.

I would note that our ranking member, who we have a very good working relationship with, Nydia Velázquez of New York, had hoped to be here but, unfortunately, she is tied up on the floor right now, so won't be able to attend personally. But she is here in spirit.

We thank you for the opportunity to share a few thoughts about the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA. Let me begin by thanking your committee, all the committee members, for its longstanding collaboration with the House Small Business Committee. The successful passage of previous years' NDAA's were victories for our national security, for our men and women in uniform, and for our small-business industrial base, which is very critical and something obviously our committee cares about a lot. I look forward to continuing that relationship with this year's bill.

We recognize that this committee has been working with the Department of Defense [DOD] to pursue acquisition reform. Our Nation needs a robust small-business industrial base capable of equipping our military efficiently and at a reasonable cost.

Improving defense procurement is vital to the health of our economy and directly benefits our Armed Forces. Small defense contractors have consistently proven that they are capable, agile, and innovative, providing better quality products and services to our military, often faster and cheaper than their non-small competitors. When there are fewer offers, competitiveness would decrease and choices would become more limited and it would become more expensive.

Unfortunately, the declining number of companies competing for Federal contracts threatens competition and harms readiness. The Small Business Committee has held over a dozen hearings examining these roadblocks. As Chairman Thornberry frequently says, we need to focus on getting more defense for the dollar. Small businesses are part of that solution.

To this end, nine members of the Small Business Committee introduced bipartisan contracting and entrepreneurship bills this year. It is truly impressive to see both parties working towards a common goal.

I would like to take a moment and thank the ranking member again for her dedication and support. As I mentioned, we work in a very bipartisan manner. We have collected these commonsense reforms into two bills, H.R. 1773, the Clarity for America's Small Contractors Act of 2017, and H.R. 1774, the Developing the Next Generation of Small Businesses Act. These bipartisan provisions were marked up and approved unanimously by the Small Business Committee last year. I provided more detail in my written statement. I would like to share with you how these two bills help small contractors.

First, they modernize the Small Business Act to ensure clear and consistent language across Federal procurement programs. It should be easy for the DOD contracting officers to work with small businesses, not more difficult.

Second, they strengthen our government's small-business advocates to promote competition and make sure the laws on the books, including the NDAA, are followed.

Third, they increase transparency within our Federal procurement system, allowing Congress to understand which procurement programs are successful and which need a closer look. This will also make it easier to catch fraud and abuse within the programs.

Finally, H.R. 1774 reauthorizes the SBA's [Small Business Administration's] entrepreneur development programs to further the important work being done by your committee. This ensures the SBA is effectively introducing the next generation of entrepreneurs to Federal contracts. By strengthening our small businesses, we are in turn strengthening our industrial base.

I respectfully ask the committee to incorporate these provisions into this year's NDAA, and we look forward to continuing to work with this committee, and we are happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Chairman, I think I stopped right on time there, too.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Chabot can be found in the Appendix on page 21.]

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate it. And without objection, the written testimony of all of our witnesses will be made part of the record as well.

Are there any questions or comments for the chairman?

The gentleman from California.

Mr. KNIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to thank Chairman Chabot and the ranking member for all their hard work. I am honored to be a member of both the House Armed Services Committee and the Committee on Small Business, and I have seen firsthand how important small businesses are to giving warfighters the tools they need in a cost-effective manner.

Our small-business industrial base has a unique ability to strengthen our contracting process by driving innovation and competition in the marketplace. And just as the chairman said, they are very agile so that they can move quickly in times of need. Small businesses tend to be more nimble and can often respond to market needs. A healthy small-business industrial base benefits the taxpayer from increased competition, innovation, and job creation.

I support the work being done by Chairman Chabot and Ranking Member Velázquez to increase contracting opportunities for small businesses and strengthen entrepreneurial development programs that help eliminate barriers of entry and diversify our industrial base.

Part of that diversification must also come from the people who enter the industrial base in the first place and subsequently make it thrive. That is why I offered H.R. 1680, the Women's Business Centers [WBC] Improvement Act of 2017, for which I have advocated for the inclusion of FY18 [fiscal year 2018] NDAA. This bill would make changes to the WBC program, a Federal network of

educational centers that provide resources and counseling to female entrepreneurs.

Currently, the program requires clarification in the areas of oversight and a clearer accreditation process, and this legislation aims to address these problems and increase funding for the program so it can expand and improve service quality.

I look forward to working with the chairman, ranking member, and my colleagues on measures like this and others to increase opportunities for our small-business community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other questions or comments?

Mr. Chairman, thank you. We look forward to working with you again this year as we have before on a bipartisan basis. And we certainly appreciate those Members who are on both committees that will take a particular interest in our work.

So thank you.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next, we turn to the distinguished ranking member on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, a Member who used to be a member of this committee, and I was a little sad to see him go, I have to say. But I appreciate the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota coming back today, and the gentleman is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM MINNESOTA**

Mr. WALZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to Ranking Member Smith, and members of the committee. I, too, am saddened that I am not on this committee, and I would like to extend a thank you to you and your professional staff. There are no stronger public servants, and their willingness to work with everyone in the caucus, whether they are on this committee or not, to strengthen our national defense is truly admirable.

I submit testimony today in my strong support of several efforts within the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. These efforts will serve better the lives of our constituents, and also those serving in the Armed Forces. It will also strengthen our national security as a whole.

Currently we find our military actively engaged in two unconventional wars and preparing for the possibilities of a third or even fourth simultaneous and potentially conventional focused fight. The requirements we as a Nation continue to place upon our military are ever increasing, which for the last almost two decades has necessitated continuous call-up of the Reserve Component. The contemporary National Guard and Reserve Components have increasingly become operationally vital to the conduct of ongoing operations and contingency plans.

To this end, I must insist upon the fair treatment of our Reserve Components and the proper attention and planning for their continued operational tempo. The Reserve Component Benefits Parity Act, introduced by Representatives Palazzo, Franks, Shea-Porter, and myself, is an important step towards ensuring fairness for our Reserve Component troops who are involuntarily mobilized to serve this Nation under Title 10 U.S. Code 12304b. Many Members of

Congress have requested its inclusion as a legislative proposal within this NDAA, and the bill has garnered broad bipartisan support, with over 60 Members committing to cosponsor the measure.

This legislation supports previous Department of Defense efforts to provide parity and benefits under section 12304b, via amendments to title 5, 10, 37, and 38 of the Army Transition Plan, dated November of 2016. It also identifies the rectification of this issue as vitally important to Reserve Component and the military as a whole. Inclusion of this legislation will correct the health, education, leave, pay, and retirement benefits applicable to Reserve Components service members who do mobilize under 12304b.

Increases in readiness must also accompany the increased operational tempo of the Reserve Component. To do so requires more training days annually than have been required in the past, for which this committee has thoughtfully provided authorization and appropriate increases to funding, which I am incredibly grateful for.

This fundamental shift towards an operational reserve force, though resulting in enhanced readiness, comes at a cost to this Nation's employers. Employers are decreasingly likely to hire traditional National Guard and Reserve Component members given their increased utilization over the last several years, which is projected to continue indefinitely. I encourage that the strategic implications of this shift be comprehensively researched by DOD and communicated and worked with our employers across this Nation.

And finally, during the 1990 and 1991 Persian Gulf war, nearly 700,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines deployed to Iraq and the surrounding area answering this Nation's call to arms. Following the war, many veterans began to experience multiple complex and persistent symptoms that have not to date been explained by traditional medical diagnosis. Gulf war illness has become that generation's Agent Orange. This illness could possibly affect as many as 250,000 of these veterans.

It is imperative that DOD coordinate with the Veterans Affairs Administration and the Gulf War Illness Research Program Consortium, part of the congressionally directed medical research program, to declassify specific information necessary to enable the diagnosis and treatment of Gulf war illness veterans. It has been over 26 years since the war ended, and the necessary classified record should be reasonably expected to be declassified in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

I want to thank the committee again for the work you do. Thank you for allowing me to testify in front of you. And thank you for the care that you give to our Nation's veterans.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Walz can be found in the Appendix on page 25.]

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate it and appreciate certainly the care and interest the gentlemen shows and works on for veterans and for Guard and Reserve.

Any questions or comments for the gentleman?

Again, thank you for being with us.

Next, we turn to the distinguished gentleman from Texas, member of the Defense Appropriation Subcommittee, as well as various other hats he wears.

Judge Carter, we appreciate you being with us. You are recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN R. CARTER, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM TEXAS**

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, thank you for allowing me to testify here today on what I believe is a major problem facing the United States Army.

I am the proud representative of Fort Hood, Texas, as well the co-chairman of the Congressional Army Caucus. I work every day to ensure the soldiers I represent and all our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to do their job as safely and as effectively as possible.

I believe the work of this committee is critical to the well-being of our service members and their families. So thank you both for what you do each and every day to serve those who serve us.

Today, the revisionist powers are annexing territory, challenging and probing the post-World War II political world order, and using anti-access and area denial technology to thwart our ability to project power. These nations have also modernized their ground forces and the tactical overmatch that the U.S. ground forces have enjoyed for decades is now gone. As U.S. Army Vice Chief of Staff General Allyn recently stated, we are "out-ranged, outgunned, and outdated."

On our present course, the U.S. Army will not be sufficiently modernized to deter and defeat potential enemies. The Army's current fleet of ground combat vehicles was conceived in the 1970s and built in the 1980s. While multiple upgrades of these vehicles have occurred, they were not designed for the requirements of today's and tomorrow's wars.

In 8 years, the Army will make a decision whether or not to keep the current 35-year-old Bradley Fighting Vehicle. They would keep it for the next 50 to 70 years. The scheduled upgrades for the Abrams tank will take 26 years to complete and completely outfit for the entire Army, while not solving many of the problems of being outgunned anyway. And for many reasons, like having to fund current readiness requirements at higher than expected levels, the Army has no program in place to procure the next-generation ground combat vehicles.

The risk an overmatched Army presents to the joint force fight is untenable. It is almost indefensible to us as Members of Congress to sit idly by and not give our soldiers the capabilities they will need to dominate the battlefield in future wars.

I have introduced H. Res. 238 to support the U.S. Army and encourage them to expedite their efforts to procure and field the next generation of ground combat vehicles, as well as their current modernization strategy. Our ground combat vehicles are overmatched today, and the longer we wait, the longer our soldiers cannot provide the adequate deterrence or win if deterrence fails without high

cost in blood and treasure, and this is one of the most threatening national security environments our Nation has ever faced.

As you begin your process of drafting the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, I respectfully request that the committee include the report language contained within my resolution in the National Defense Authorization Act.

Thank you both for your staunch support for our military service members and their families. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carter can be found in the Appendix on page 28.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate the gentleman highlighting this issue for the Army. There is no question that we have vehicles that are way past their design life and the Army is in need of updates, as are other services. So certainly between our two committees, I think we can certainly make progress. So I appreciate the gentleman highlighting this.

Are there other questions or comments for the gentleman from Texas?

We appreciate the gentleman being with us.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next, we turn to another former member of this committee, but are grateful that he has returned with us today. The gentleman from Iowa, Mr. Loeb sack, is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID LOEBSACK, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM IOWA**

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank both you and Ranking Member Smith for allowing me this opportunity to testify today. But before I get into the particular topic here, I do want to thank both of you for your leadership. I know that, having served on this committee for 8 years, I have every confidence that you folks know what it takes to keep America safe. And on behalf of my two Marine children in particular, I want to thank you for doing what you can to provide for our troops in all of our services. So thank you for your leadership, and you, Mr. Smith, as well.

Today, I am very happy to have the opportunity to discuss a defense issue of importance, not just to my district in Iowa, but to the warfighter, to the U.S. Army, indeed to the taxpayer. The interests of all are well served by this initiative. And what I am talking about is the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant [IAAAP]. It is one of the Army's six government-owned contractor-operated, the GOCO ammunition plants around the country. Built in 1942, it is a vital part of our munitions industrial base with the production of high-velocity 40 millimeter grenades, C4 blocks, tank and artillery rounds, and missile warheads. And I have visited this particular plant on a number of occasions.

Today the IAAAP—that is a mouthful—employs over 650 skilled professionals and is located in my district near the banks of the Mississippi River by Burlington, Iowa. Historically, however, the IAAAP has not received sufficient modernization funding to upgrade critical manufacturing processes.

An example of this is one of the production lines, Line 3A, which is the Nation's primary large caliber ammunition melt pour facility. Line 3A is a large spread-out manufacturing line, requiring manual touch labor and lacking the adaptability needed for implementing new manufacturing technologies. Its modernization is long overdue.

Modernization of this Army-owned line would yield more precise process controls, automation, environmental controls, and a greatly reduced footprint. My understanding is that the proposed plan to modernize this line would reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and pay for itself in less than 5 years. It seems like a pretty good deal to me.

I hope the HASC [House Armed Services Committee] will find merit in this initiative and will support the modernization of Line 3A at IAAAP that will provide so many benefits to so many stakeholders.

And I thank the chairman again and the ranking member for your time and your consideration. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Loeb sack can be found in the Appendix on page 29.]

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate the gentleman raising this issue. It is certainly something we need to look into further, and we will. And I appreciate the gentleman.

The gentle lady from Missouri.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Yes, gentleman, I appreciate you raising this issue because I have, just outside of my district, I am very supportive of the Lake City Ammunition Facility. Same thing, built in 1940s, and severely in need of modernization.

And so I did have an amendment in NDAA to add \$20 million more for our ammunition in this particular plant. We produce all of the small caliber ammunition for the entire Army. It is right there. And I see you do the large caliber.

But as I have looked into this issue, it is very clear all of these plants need modernization and it is imperative that we take these steps. So I appreciate you raising this issue there. Maybe we can work together on this and try to ensure that we get the modernization that is needed so that we are not vulnerable.

Just FYI [for your information], 2 weeks ago there was an accident at Lake City. I don't think I have had a chance to share with the chairman about this. In the primer facility there was an explosion and, sadly, we lost a man that had worked there for over 30 years. So they are currently shut down, which I have been in contact with the commander there, and as well as Orbital ATK, that supervises that to make sure that it won't impact our warfighters right now. They are going through an inspection process and hope to get that back up and running very shortly.

But it just shows the vulnerability. And I don't believe—well, they are doing an inspection, we don't know yet the cause of that tragedy. But it is imperative that these facilities have the safety provisions and the modernization they need so that we don't have any accidents or any potential stoppage of production.

Mr. LOEB SACK. Thank you.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you for raising this awareness. I look forward to working with you. And thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. As a matter of fact, I did know about that accident; the staff had emailed me right away, because these plants are so significant for the country's security. And like Judge Carter was talking about with the Army vehicles, we have deferred updating them all way too long. So I appreciate both the gentlelady and the gentleman from Iowa and will work with them on this.

Are there any other questions or comments on the gentleman from Iowa? If not, we thank the gentleman for being here and for raising the points.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you so much.

The CHAIRMAN. Next, we turn to the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas, who is, I believe, chairman of the EOD [Explosive Ordnance Disposal] Caucus.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. We always appreciate the gentleman and the caucus' input on this vital part of our national defense efforts. The gentleman is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD, A
REPRESENTATIVE FROM ARKANSAS**

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you, Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith and distinguished members of the committee. Once again, I am here to testify before the committee regarding explosive ordnance disposal, or EOD, priorities for the 2018 NDAA.

The first priority for the caucus is to reengage last year's EOD acquisition reform. Last year, Representative Davis submitted an amendment that would have established a permanent joint EOD research, development, and acquisition [RDA] program under the supervision of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, or AT&L. During conference with the Senate, this reform measure was changed to enable DOD to examine the current program and provide recommendations.

The Department's findings were to leave the current program as it is. This means DOD's oversight of the EOD technology and training program is performed by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, not the Under Secretary of Defense for AT&L. This is troublesome because the oversight officer's position is scheduled to be eliminated.

Additionally, the current system of acquisition causes the services to coordinate on their equipment needs, but then they each have to compete separately through the four service requirement systems in order to field what is called joint common equipment. This duplication of efforts results in inefficiency and increased costs to the taxpayer.

More importantly, the current acquisition system has completely failed to deliver critical equipment, such as X-rays, robots, and electronic jammers to the field. Instead, each service is buying commercial off-the-shelf items to meet its needs. The Radiographic Imaging System for EOD program is fielding systems that are not compatible with Windows 10 software, are routinely delivered with 50 percent of the systems broken or unusable, and are so poorly thought-out that the Joint EOD Technology Center issued a safety of use message saying that using the system could under certain

threats cause injury to the user. The Army needs an additional \$37.5 million to purchase these commercial systems.

This failure to deliver essential equipment that meets the requirements on schedule has created a reliance on various commercial solutions that are not joint and will create a logistics nightmare for the joint force commander when deployed.

We on the caucus urge the committee to work with your Senate colleagues to develop a real joint EOD RDA program under the appropriate supervision of the Under Secretary of Defense for AT&L with a funding line managed by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency in order to ensure proper accounting and funding of a small but critical capability and appropriate budget justification documentation to ensure proper oversight.

The caucus also continues to be concerned with the capacity of the Army's EOD program. Over the past fiscal year, roughly one-third of the Army's EOD force has been cut. Current military deployments to the Middle East have decreased in the past years, but the threat of IEDs [improvised explosive devices] is not going away at home or abroad. IEDs remain a cheap, easy-to-assemble, and effective weapon that can have a strategic effect. Many briefings talk about the elimination of chemical or biological weapons, but virtually no mention is made of the EOD men and women who are qualified to disable, defuse, and dismantle these weapons.

While working with HASC staff we noticed very little EOD capacity identified in specific operational plans. We are concerned that the EOD capability is being overlooked in various plans which will result in a lack of capacity when needed. We recommend limiting the further reduction of the Army's EOD forces to match that of other sustainment capabilities.

The capacity cuts and lack of EOD planning is caused by a lack of appropriate EOD senior leaders within the Army. Many of the Army's higher headquarters, such as Corps and Army level, have no EOD officer to conduct planning. Additionally, the lack of an EOD general officer continues to hamstring the further development of this important capability within the Army.

Therefore, the caucus urges HASC to consider establishing an EOD branch within the Army sustainment community with a brigadier general as the chief of that branch. We fully understand the difficulty of creating a new general officer position and recommend, as Congress did with other newly created branches, giving the Army a limited exclusion to the general officer cap for the purposes of manning a new branch.

Finally, the National Guard's Civil Support Teams are the first line of defense for individual States in the instance of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear threat. However, EOD technicians are a missing and much-needed element. The caucus recommends a National Guard EOD program which will authorize full-time national EOD positions, enabling the National Guard to provide 24/7 EOD support to protect our Nation. This will allow EOD techs transitioning out of the Active Components, who currently have limited options, to transition into the National Guard.

Apparently, my time has expired, so I will yield for any questions that you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Crawford can be found in the Appendix on page 30.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate the gentleman raising these points. And obviously your full written statement will be made a part of the record.

The only thing I would mention to the gentlemen is we are in the process of reorganizing the AT&L functions, and so we will want to keep in communication with you on that point.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. But I understand the gentleman's point about emphasis in the Army and having the appropriate attention on this, because IEDs are not going away. There is no question about that.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Correct. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. And so we have to have that capability with the proper priority.

Any other questions, comments to the gentleman from Arkansas? If not, we appreciate again the gentleman being here and his input into our process.

Next, we will turn to one of the newer Members of Congress. We appreciate the gentleman from Florida being with us today. We have already had unanimous consent that your full written statements will be made part of the record. And we would be pleased to hear any comments the gentleman from Florida would like to make.

Mr. Dunn.

STATEMENT OF HON. NEAL P. DUNN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM FLORIDA

Dr. DUNN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Smith, and other distinguished members of the committee. It is my honor to testify today.

I am here to express support for incorporating House Rule 1968, the Military Assets Protection Act, into the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2018. I recently introduced this legislation with Representative Hanabusa of Hawaii, Representative Rosen, and also Generals Bergman and Bacon, both high-hour military combat pilots.

The emerging threat of unmanned aircraft systems piloted by our enemies was brought to my attention by military leaders at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida's Second Congressional District, as well as by General Mike Holmes, the commander of all Air Combat Command, and Lieutenant General Scott Williams, the commander of the First Air Force, who is responsible for protecting the airspace of all North America.

This committee has also received testimony regarding the seriousness of this threat. On March 8 of this year, General John Hyten, the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, stated his concern about "unauthorized flights of unmanned aerial systems over Navy and Air Force installations. These intrusions represent a growing threat to the safety and security of nuclear weapons and personnel."

This is not a theoretical threat. Terrorist groups, including the Islamic State, have increasingly used armed drones against our al-

lies overseas. As the tactics and technology of weaponized drones are proven on battlefields abroad, they will be exported to our shores for attacks and espionage against U.S. military installations here at home. Our Armed Forces face a new threat from drones and the law needs to catch up.

As you may know, the Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] recently regulated drone flights at 133 different military facilities in the form of airspace restrictions. Although this is a good first step, we cannot expect terrorists to follow the FAA's notices to airmen. And importantly, military personnel currently lack the authority and requisite shield against liability to interdict drones that compromise the security of our assets, installations, classified information, and personnel.

For this reason, we drafted the Military Assets Protection Act in consultation with the DOD and the Air Force Office of the Judge Advocate General. In the National Defense [Authorization] Act for 2017 this committee made critical progress on this same issue. The Military Assets Protection Act will further clarify and strengthen the Defense Department's legal authority to interdict drones that threaten homeland assets and installations.

I respectfully request that the committee consider House Rule 1968 as it develops the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2018, and I want to thank you all for your time and for the opportunity to speak to you on this important issue.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Dunn can be found in the Appendix on page 32.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate the gentleman's work on this. There is no question within the last year we have seen enemies using armed drones against us, against our allies, as the gentleman points out. And we have issues here at home. And we need to have the laws keep up with the change in tactics and technology, as the gentleman said. So I think that is exactly right.

The gentleman from Louisiana.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Doc, I will just certainly agree with you. Even the FAA doesn't know really what to do with all the drones. There are more drones on the civilian side now than there are aircraft flying. And certainly they can be militarized, weaponized, and they are getting bigger, better, and faster. The optics are impressive.

So good for you guys for highlighting this. I know the chairman has highlighted it in a previous committee meeting. But it is a threat that is going to become more and more critical as time moves on quickly here. Thank you for your input.

Dr. DUNN. Thank you, Dr. Abraham.

The CHAIRMAN. Great. Dr. Dunn, thank you for being with us, and we will certainly take a look at your legislation and continue to work together on this issue.

Dr. DUNN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next, we turn to another distinguished gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Johnson, also a new Member of Congress. We are grateful that you would be with us today. Your written statement is part of the record, and you are recognized for any comments you would like to make.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM LOUISIANA**

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Smith and members of the committee, including my good friend Dr. Abraham from the neighboring district. I really appreciate the opportunity to provide input during this committee's hearing today as we determine the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. I am going to read fast because we have some important information I would love to get into the record today.

I have the honor of representing a congressional district that is home to both Fort Polk and the Barksdale Air Force Base, which are two, as you know, vital military installations for our Nation and our national security interests around the world. As I am sure you know, Fort Polk is home to the Army Joint Readiness Training Center [JRTC] and Barksdale is home to our Air Force Global Strike Command.

As is evident with the actions of North Korea, we know we live in a highly uncertain and incredibly complex time, and it further highlights the importance of our bases.

Due to today's time constraints I will try to focus primarily on just three areas that I think are in essential need of attention by the committee and the Congress: our U.S. nuclear enterprise, our U.S. Army forces, and ensuring appropriate missile defense needs are met for homeland defense and U.S. strategic alliances.

Now, I am new to Washington, but one of the first things I did was meet with the generals based in my district given the importance of the roles they play in our daily global national security and the training of our Army soldiers. From those meetings and continued discussions over the past months engaging with these men and women who are working to ensure our Nation's security, I am even more convinced than ever that America needs these robust strategic deterrent capabilities and we have to continue to invest more in missile defense and ensure our Army has the appropriate levels of funding and readiness to adequately respond when called to fight.

The U.S. should not only invest more in missile defense, given recent missile testing by North Korea and Iran, for our own immediate national security needs, but we should also continue to adequately invest in missile defense cooperation with Israel.

Based on developing hostilities around the world, it is clear we have to step up our level of investment into our U.S. missile defenses, developing leading-edge conventional and non-kinetic capabilities, modernizing our nuclear forces, a surety in our command and control, effective intelligence collection and support, and ensuring our Army force posture is adequately maintained with the right balance of highly trained, well-equipped soldiers to quickly respond when called into action.

Without adequate investment in these platforms and people, America will struggle to provide the necessary levels of U.S. national security at home and to assure the security of our allies and partners around the world.

I would like to briefly speak to the nuclear weapons as they continue to play an integral role in the strategies of Russia, North Korea, Pakistan, India and China, as you know. In fact, according

to many reports and as evidenced from recent aggressive actions, these countries are increasing their reliance upon and modernizing their capabilities, whether it be in their land, air, or sea-based forces. It is also very clear Iran has not given up its nuclear ambitions.

Thankfully, despite ideological differences, Congress has clearly expressed support for the long-term commitment we have at Barksdale Air Force Base and for the majority of the nuclear triad. The decision to elevate Global Strike Command to a four-star command has already started to yield important rewards, but there is still work to be done and budgets should fully address specific needs to achieve U.S. advancements to upgrade and maintain America's technological edge over our adversaries.

Critical areas of need include upgrading nuclear command and control facilities; addressing the challenges of the B-52 re-engine, which are facing catastrophic engine failures; the future of the B-21; and essential funding for what President Trump's own March budget deemed, quote, "critical infrastructure maintenance," unquote, and warhead life extension programs to sufficiently modernize the nuclear security enterprise. As Secretary of Defense Mattis recently stated, "We must ensure a war that can never be won will never be fought."

As members of this committee, you are well aware of the activity Global Strike Command oversees and its involvement in a wide array of strategic deterrence, global strike, and direct combat, including actions in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Nigeria. The Bomber Command, 8th Air Force, in charge of our aging fleet and Missile Command, and the 20th Air Force, in charge of the U.S.'s intercontinental ballistic missiles, are critical to deterrence and global strategy.

In our ground capabilities, in the event that maintaining a capable and robust nuclear option doesn't suffice as a deterrent from war, it is also imperative we have capable and ready ground forces. Unfortunately, previous budget plans forced the Army to shrink at an unrealistic pace to the lowest levels in 50 years, as you know, and seriously threatened our Nation's long-term ability to carry the fight forward. These changes not only impacted the top line end strength numbers, but also the Army's ability to accomplish their missions and achieve necessary military readiness.

My district is the proud home of the Fort Polk Army Base and it is important today to highlight how the Army has continued to solidify Fort Polk's footprint as a multipurpose military installation with state-of-the-art Joint Readiness Training Center. The base contains units that provide invaluable training for advise and assist roles and provide soldiers with the training and flexibility necessary to carry out the demands placed on them to secure victory.

The exercise scenarios learned there replicate many of the unique situations and challenges the unit may face while deployed, and because of this, Fort Polk is uniquely suited for a number of upcoming Army plans, including planned expansion of the Army advise and assist missions, as it is the only combat training center in the Nation that also trains and deploys combat units.

The Army recently completed its largest land purchase in an effort to provide even more robust training capabilities for brigade

combat team rotations, an action that was warmly embraced by the local community.

We have a number of issues that I can highlight, but I see that I am far out of time. Mr. Chairman, I will submit the written comments for the record. And I certainly appreciate the opportunity to show our support for our men and women in uniform. Thank you all for your critical work for the country. And I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson can be found in the Appendix on page 33.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate the gentleman highlighting three very important issues. This committee has certainly focused on the nuclear deterrent, and missile defense, as you mentioned, is critically important, and the Army needs I think you have highlighted are very well taken.

Any comments or questions?

The gentleman from Louisiana.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to say it is an honor for me to serve with the gentleman from Louisiana. Also his knowledge base, his passion, his tireless work effort, he is all over not only the district, but his State, highlighting the Armed Forces capabilities and certainly the deficiencies that he has mentioned with the B-52 engine.

And he is right, the JRTC at Fort Polk is not only prime, but it is ready to take on that AAA [Advise and Assist] battalion and brigade, so we would look forward to working with that. In Belle Chasse we have certainly some issues down there with some F-15 shortages that will occur shortly if we don't do something about it.

So again, just a heartfelt thank you to Mike for his unwavering support of the Armed Forces, not only in Louisiana, but of the Nation.

Thanks, Mike.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other questions or comments?

I appreciate the gentleman taking time to be with us, as well as your input. Obviously, the committee will take all the input we have received today in written and oral form into consideration and try to come up with the best defense authorization bill we possibly can.

At this point, the hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

APRIL 27, 2017

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 27, 2017

**Statement of Steve Chabot,
Chairman, Committee on Small Business
Before the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives
On the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act
April 27, 2017**

Good morning, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18 NDAA). Let me begin by thanking the Committee for its longstanding collaboration with the Small Business Committee. It has been my privilege to serve on the Small Business Committee (SBC) for over 20 years and during this time I've enjoyed seeing this relationship develop. The successful passage of previous NDAA's are victories for our national security, for our men and women in uniform and for our small business industrial base. My testimony today will address bipartisan legislation marked up by SBC last year and will describe how it continues to complement the work of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC).

I. Introduction

For the past several years, the SBC and its subcommittees have held dozens of hearings on issues affecting small contractors. These hearings have focused on the alarming fact that the number of small firms registered to do business with the federal government continues to decline. As Chairman Thornberry has said, "It's getting harder and harder especially for small businesses to do business with the Department of Defense." This is why the Committee has, on a bipartisan basis, been focused on improving the defense acquisitions process.¹ Reversing this decline in small businesses serving the Department of Defense is a necessary part of the solution.

Nine members of the Small Business Committee introduced contracting and entrepreneurial development bills this year. Working closely with our colleagues, Ranking Member Nydia Velázquez and I collected these solid, common sense reforms, plus many other bipartisan legislative provisions, and introduced H.R. 1773, the Clarity for America's Small Contractors Act of 2017, and H.R. 1774, Developing the Next Generation of Small Businesses Act. The SBC marked up these provisions that strengthen the industrial base in a bipartisan fashion last year. These bills not only reflect my priorities as Chairman, but those of my fellow Committee Members as well.

H.R. 1773 helps small contractors compete in three ways. First, it modernizes the Small Business Act to ensure that the language used is clear and consistent across federal procurement programs – DoD contracting officers shouldn't have to learn a dictionary's worth of new jargon just to work with a small business. Second, it strengthens the small business advocates within the Small Business Administration (SBA) who routinely work with DoD contracts by promoting competition and make sure the laws on the books, including the NDAA, are followed. Finally, the bill implements common sense reforms to ensure transparency and accountability by

¹ Scott Maucione, "Small business, hazing top NDAA wishlist for lawmakers" Federal News Radio (March 1, 2016) available at <https://federalnewsradio.com/defense/2016/03/small-business-hazing-top-ndaa-wishlist-lawmakers/>.

requiring that important information be provided that clearly shows where taxpayer dollars are being spent on which small business programs. These provisions will help enable greater small business participation. I'll now discuss each of these themes in greater detail.

II. Modernizing the Small Business Act

Title I of H.R. 1773 focuses on improving transparency and clarity for small businesses and also benefits DoD contracting officers, policymakers, and program managers.

a. Sec. 101. Improving reporting on small business goals

This first section is based on H.R. 1693, the Improving Contract Procurement for Small Businesses through More Accurate Reporting Act of 2017, introduced by Rep. Yvette Clarke and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick. Section 101 amends section 15(h) of the Act to increase transparency in goaling.² The Small Business Act requires SBA to assist agencies in setting goals for the award of prime contracts and subcontracts to small businesses and various subcategories of small businesses, and report on the success of meeting those goals. This section requires that the SBA begin reporting two new pieces of information for each goal: (1) the value of contracts credited to each goal if the contract is being performed by a company that is no longer small or no longer qualifies for that procurement program; and (2) the value of contracts credited to each small business goal if a set aside or sole source program for a different goal was used for the award. These two pieces of information should prove invaluable. The first will allow the SBC and DoD's Office of Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy (MIBP) to track small business success stories. This will give us a better picture of how these programs promote growth and sustainability, and will have the added benefit of making it easier to catch fraud and abuse of the procurement program. The second change will give Congress better insight into which programs are most successful and which are failing to achieve their objectives. Currently, the SBA gives credit to contracts awarded to participants pursuant to one certification, such as the 8(a) certification, and double counts credit towards any other certifications that the participant holds, such as a HUBZone certification and a women-owned small business certification. As each program has different objectives and different requirements, it is unclear as to which objectives are being realized. Section 101 will address this confusion.

b. Sec. 102. Uniformity in procurement terminology

This second section is based on H.R. 1640, the Unifying Small Business Terminology Act of 2017, introduced by Ranking Member Nydia Velázquez. This provision amends portions of the Small Business Act so that the same terms are given the same meaning in the Small Business Act as they are given in Titles 10 and 41 of the United States Code. SBA has already begun using the updated terminology in its own regulations when referring to procurement rules, so this

² For more information on the SBC's work on the goaling program and the basis for this legislative provision, please see the SBC Memorandum *Continuing Challenges for Small Contractors* (2015); available at http://smbiz.house.gov/uploadedfiles/11-18-2015_hearing_memo.pdf.

harmonization will not change the implementation of any programs. It will, however, greatly reduce confusion and provide much-needed clarity.

III. Clarifying the Roles of Small Business Advocates

Small business advocates play a critical role in the development of a robust community of small business contractors. Small business advocates within the SBA include the Commercial Market Representatives (CMRs) and the Business Opportunity Specialists (BOSs). Unfortunately, the statutory roles and responsibilities of these long standing programs have not always been adequately addressed or modernized to keep pace with procurement reform. Title II of H.R. 1773 addresses these issues.

a. Sec. 201. Responsibilities of Commercial Market Representatives

This section is based on H.R. 1597, the Commercial Market Representatives Clarification Act of 2017, introduced by Rep. David Brat, Rep. Steve Knight, and Rep. Stephanie Murphy.³ It amends section 4(h) of the Small Business Act to provide a clear definition of the CMR program and enumerate the CMR's principle duties. Currently, the Act references the CMR and provides educational requirements, but does not explain the actual role of the CMR. SBA's Standard Operating Procedures have not kept pace with statutory changes, so they also fail to explain how the CMR should help small businesses compete for subcontracts. These changes will prioritize the key functions already performed by the CMR to promote a healthy industrial supplier base.

b. Sec. 202. Responsibilities of the Business Opportunity Specialists

This section is based on H.R. 1641, the Improving Small Business Advocacy Act of 2017, introduced by Rep. Maxine Waters and Ranking Member Nydia Velázquez.⁴ BOS's are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the 8(a) contracting program. BOS's are the government's defense against waste, fraud, and abuse in these programs, and SBA's unwillingness to properly staff and train the BOS has led to millions of dollars in 8(a) contracts being awarded to companies that are not qualified 8(a) firms.⁵ Section 205 will put the proper controls and oversight on this program to ensure that program participants are given the assistance they are promised while meeting the needs of taxpayers, contracting officers, and the warfighter.

IV. Other Issues

³ For more information on the issue of the CMR job description, please see SBC Memorandum *Supporting Success: Empowering Small Business Advocates* 3 (2015) available at http://smbiz.house.gov/uploadedfiles/11-18-2015_hearing_memo.pdf.

⁴ For more information on the issue of the BOS job description, please see SBC Memorandum *Supporting Success: Empowering Small Business Advocates* 3-4 (2015), available at http://smbiz.house.gov/uploadedfiles/11-18-2015_hearing_memo.pdf.

⁵ *Id.*

In addition to the provisions included in H.R. 1773, the SBC is working to reauthorize the entrepreneurial development programs within the SBA through H.R. 1774, which I introduced and Ranking Member Nydia Velázquez cosponsored. The entrepreneurial development programs further the important work being done by the House Armed Services Committee on procurement reform by ensuring that SBA is effectively introducing the next generation of entrepreneurs to the opportunities afforded by federal procurement contracts. Contained within H.R. 1774, which strengthens and modernizes SBA's entrepreneurial resources, are three Titles. Title I strengthens the data collection efforts of Small Business Development Centers. Title II reauthorizes the Women's Business Centers program for four years at \$21.75 million per year and contains accreditation process language to ensure uniformity among the Centers across the country. Title III reauthorizes the SCORE program for two years at \$10.5 million per year and also requires an enhanced online utilization effort by the program and a requirement for a strategic plan before future funding increases are considered. These provisions which strengthen the industrial base were marked up by the SBC in a bipartisan fashion last year.

V. Conclusion

I know we agree that our nation needs a strong industrial base which includes small businesses; it is fundamental to the health and defense of our nation as a whole. I look forward to working with this Committee to ensure that small businesses continue to provide the Department of Defense and the federal government with innovative and competitive solutions to support critical programs. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

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AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

24 April, 2017

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
Committee on the Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on the Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Statement for the Record Regarding the National Defense Authorization Act of 2018

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, esteemed Members of the House Armed Services Committee:

I submit this testimony to express my strong support for the inclusion of several efforts within the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). These efforts will serve to better the lives of our constituents serving in the Armed Forces of this great nation, and strengthen our national security as a whole.

During the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf War, nearly 700,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines deployed to Iraq and the surrounding areas, answering our nation's call to arms. Following the war, many veterans began to experience multiple, complex and persistent symptoms that have not to-date been explained by traditional medical diagnoses. Gulf War Illness has become that generation's Agent Orange. This illness could possibly affect as many as 250,000 veterans.

It is imperative that DoD coordinate with the Veterans Affairs Administration and the Gulf War Illness Research Program Consortium, part of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program, to declassify specific information necessary to enable the diagnosis and treatment of Gulf War Illness. It has been over 26 years since the war ended, and the necessary classified records should reasonably be expected to be declassified in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Currently we find our military actively fighting two unconventional wars, and preparing for the possibility of a third and even fourth simultaneous, conventionally focused fight. The requirements we as a nation continue to place upon our military are ever increasing, which for the last almost two decades has necessitated continuous call-up of the reserve component. The contemporary National Guard and Reserve Components (RC) have increasingly become operationally vital to the conduct of ongoing operations and contingency plans. To this end, I must insist upon the fair treatment of our reserve components, and the proper attention and planning for their continued operationalization.

The Reserve Component Benefits Parity Act, introduced by Representatives Palazzo, Franks, Shea-Porter and myself, is an important step towards ensuring fairness for our reserve component troops who are involuntarily mobilized to serve their nation under Title 10 U.S.C., §12304b. Many Members of Congress have requested its inclusion as a legislative proposal within this NDAA, and the bill has garnered broad bipartisan support, with over 50 members committing to cosponsor the measure. This legislation supports previous Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to provide parity in benefits under §12304b via amendment to titles 5, 10, 37, and 38 U.S.C. The Army Transition Plan, dated November, 2016, also identifies that rectification of this issue is vitally important to the reserve components and military as a whole. Inclusion of this legislation will correct the health care, education, leave, pay, and retirement benefits applicable to RC service members who mobilize under §12304b.

Increases in readiness must also accompany the increased operationalization of the reserve components. To do so requires more training days annually than have been required in the past, for which this committee has thoughtfully provided authorization and appropriate increases to funding. This fundamental shift towards an operational reserve, though resulting in enhanced readiness, comes at a cost to employers. Employers are decreasingly likely to hire traditional National Guard and Reserve Component members given their increased utilization over the last several years, and which is projected to continue indefinitely. I encourage that the strategic implications of this shift be comprehensively researched by DoD and communicated to employers across our nation's communities.

RC full-time manning authorizations have been steadily declining over several years, despite the aforementioned increased operational use of RC forces and overall end strength additions. Active Guard and Reserve service members are vital to the readiness of RC units, performing all of the administrative and day to day tasks that enable ready units and effective training. In order to ensure that DoD's RC forces are ready and able to conduct their wartime missions when called upon, adequate full-time manning authorizations and appropriations are necessary. I request that the committee consider inclusion of report language to detail issues pertaining to full time manning authorizations and the appropriate levels for each service.

To better qualify for and obtain civilian employment, our reserve component members often rely upon the assistance of DoD educational assistance programs. Recently, interpretation of DoD Instruction 1322.5 prompted an advisory from the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) which stated that FTA could no longer be used concurrently with Chapters 1606/1607 of the GI Bill. This change seems on the surface discriminatory towards the reserve component, placing an unsustainable strain on individual State tuition reimbursement programs, forcing them to absorb

added expenses which were typically covered by federal funds. I request that the committee include report language to encourage DoD to address this issue, identifying any differences between the active and reserve components utilization of Federal Tuition Assistance in conjunction with GI Bill benefits.

As DoD continues to include in its planning the RC forces necessary to ensure our national security, it has become apparent that more flexible authorities for their utilization have become necessary. A flexible RC involuntary mobilization period to achieve common a Boots on Ground time of 9 months for known requirements, supporting National Commission on the Future of the Army recommendation #31, and Holistic Army Aviation Task Force report recommendation #25, would allow this flexibility. I request that the committee include report language that would direct coordination for a joint report by DoD, National Guard Bureau, and the Army Reserve detailing proposals which would increase the flexibility of RC utilization

Thank you for allowing me to speak in front of this committee, and I look forward to the continuation of our work to provide for the security of America, and care for those who have and continue to serve this nation in uniform.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Walz
Member of Congress

Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee
FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act Member Day
Congressman John R. Carter

April 27, 2017

Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today on what I believe is a major problem facing the United States Army. I am the proud Representative of Fort Hood, Texas as well as the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Army Caucus. I work every day to ensure the soldiers I represent, and all of our men and women in uniform, have the resources they need to do their job as safely and effectively as possible. I believe the work of this Committee is critical to the well-being of our service members and their families, so I thank you both for all you do each and every day to serve those who serve us all.

Today, revisionist powers are annexing territory; challenging and probing the post-WWII political world order and using Anti-Access/Area Denial technologies to thwart our ability to project power. These nations have also modernized their ground forces and the tactical overmatch that US ground forces have enjoyed for decades is now gone. As US Army Vice-Chief of Staff General Allyn recently stated, we are “Out-ranged, outgunned and outdated.” On our present course, the US Army will not be sufficiently modern to deter and defeat potential enemies.

The Army’s current fleet of ground combat vehicles was conceived in the 70’s and built in the 80’s. While multiple upgrades to these vehicles have occurred, they were not designed for the requirements of today’s – and tomorrow’s – wars.

In eight years, the Army will make a decision whether or not to keep the current thirty-five year old Bradley Fighting Vehicle for the next fifty to seventy years. The scheduled upgrades for the Abrams tank will take twenty-six years to completely outfit the entire Army – while not solving many of the problems of being outgunned. And for many reasons like having to fund current readiness requirements at higher-than-expected levels, the Army has no program in place to procure next generation ground combat vehicles.

The risk an overmatched Army presents to the Joint force fight is untenable. It is also indefensible for us as Members of Congress to sit idly by and not give our Soldiers the capabilities they will need to dominate the battlefield in future wars.

I have introduced H. RES. 238 to support the US Army and encourage them to expedite their efforts to procure and field next generation ground combat vehicles, as well as their current modernization strategy. Our ground combat vehicles are overmatched today, and the longer we wait the longer our soldiers cannot provide adequate deterrence—or win if deterrence fails without high costs in blood and treasure—in one the of most threatening national security environments our nation has ever faced. As you begin your process of drafting the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, I respectfully request that the Committee include the report language contained within my resolution into the National Defense Authorization Act.

Again, thank you both for your staunch support of our military, service members and their families. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue.

**House Armed Services Committee
Thursday April 27, 2017
Congressman Dave Loebsack (IA-02)**

IAAAP: Line 3A Modernization

- I want to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for this opportunity to discuss a defense issue of importance not just to my district in Iowa, but to the warfighter, the US Army, and the taxpayer. The interests of all are well-served by this initiative.
- The Iowa Army Ammunition Plant (IAAAP) is one of the Army's six Government-Owned Contractor-Operated (GOCO) ammunition plants.
- Built in 1942, it's a vital part of our munitions industrial base with the production of High Velocity 40mm grenades, C4 blocks, tank and artillery rounds, and missile warheads.
- Today, IAAAP employs over 650 skilled professionals and is located in my district near the banks of the Mississippi River.
- Historically, however, IAAAP has not received sufficient modernization funding to upgrade critical manufacturing processes.
- An example of this is one of the production lines -- Line 3A -- which is the nation's primary large caliber ammunition melt pour facility.
- Line 3A is a large, spread out manufacturing line requiring manual touch labor and lacking the adaptability needed for implementing new manufacturing technologies. Its modernization is long overdue.
- Modernization of this Army-owned line would yield more precise process controls, automation, environmental controls and a greatly reduced footprint.
- My understanding is that the proposed plan to modernize this line would reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and pay for itself in less than 5 years.
- I hope the HASC will find merit in this initiative and will support the modernization of Line 3A at IAAAP that will provide so many benefits to so many stakeholders.
- I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for your time and consideration.

Congressman Rick Crawford

Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee:

EOD Priorities for the FY2018 NDAA

Good morning Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee. Once again, I am here to testify before the committee regarding Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) priorities for the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. I served in the Army as an EOD technician and I am proud to be a co-chair, along with Members Susan Davis, Brian Mast, and Tim Walz, of the House EOD Caucus.

EOD duties are a small, but critical capability within the Department of Defense. They provide support to the United States Secret Service for VIP Protection. They respond to unexploded ordnance on and off their installations. They assist public safety authorities with rendering safe improvised explosive devices as well as rendering safe chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons.

The first priority for the Caucus is to re-engage last year's EOD acquisition reform. Last year, Representative Davis submitted an amendment that would have established a permanent Joint EOD Research, Development, and Acquisition program, under the supervision of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (AT&L). During conference with the Senate, this reform measure was changed to enable DOD to examine the current program and provide recommendations. The Department's findings were to leave the current program as it is. This means DOD's oversight of the EOD technology and training program is performed by the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, not the Undersecretary of Defense for AT&L.

This is troublesome because the oversight officer's position is scheduled to be eliminated. Additionally, the current system of acquisition causes the Services to coordinate on their equipment needs, but then they each have to compete separately through the four Service requirements systems in order to field what is called "Joint common equipment." This duplication of effort results in inefficiency and increased costs to the taxpayer.

More importantly, the current system has completely failed to deliver critical equipment, such as x-ray's, robots, and electronic jammers, to the field. Instead, each Service is buying commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) items to meet its needs. The Radiographic Imaging System for EOD (RISEOD) program is fielding systems that are not compatible with Windows 10 software, are routinely delivered with 50% of the systems broken or unusable, and is so poorly thought out that the Joint EOD Technology Center issued a safety of use message saying that using the system could, under certain threats, cause injury to the user. The Army needs an additional \$37.5M to purchase these COTS systems. This failure to deliver essential equipment that meets requirements on schedule has created a reliance on various COTS solutions that are not joint and will create a logistics nightmare for the joint force commander when deployed.

We on the Caucus urge the Committee to work with your Senate colleagues to develop a real joint EOD RDA program under the appropriate supervision of the Undersecretary of Defense for AT&L, with a funding line managed by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, in order to ensure proper accounting and funding of a small, but critical capability and appropriate budget justification documentation to ensure proper oversight.

The Caucus also continues to be concerned with the capacity of the Army EOD program. Over the past fiscal year, roughly one third of the Army's EOD force has been cut. Current military deployments to the Middle East have decreased in the past years, but the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are not going away at home or abroad. IEDs remain a cheap, easy to assemble, and effective weapon that can have a strategic effect. Many briefings talk about the elimination of chemical or biological weapons, but virtually no mention is made of the EOD men and women who are qualified to disable, defuse, and dismantle these weapons. While working with HASC staff, we noticed very little EOD capacity identified in specific operational plans. We are concerned that the EOD capability is being overlooked in various plans, which will result in a lack of capacity when we need it. We recommend limiting the further reduction of the Army's EOD forces to match that of other sustainment capabilities.

The capacity cuts and lack of EOD planning is caused by a lack of appropriate EOD senior leaders within the Army. Many of the Army's higher headquarters, such as the Corps and Army level, have no EOD officer to conduct planning. Additionally, the lack of an EOD General Officer continues to hamstring the further development of this important capability within the Army. Therefore, the Caucus urges HASC to consider establishing an EOD Branch within the Army sustainment community, with a Brigadier General as the Chief of that Branch. We fully understand the difficulty of creating a new general officer position, and recommend, as Congress did with other newly created branches, giving the Army a limited exclusion to the general officer cap for the purpose of manning a new branch.

The National Guard's Civil Support Teams (CST) are the first line of defense for individual states in the instance of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear threat. However, EOD technicians are a missing and much-needed element. The Caucus recommends a National Guard EOD Program which will authorize full time National Guard EOD positions enabling the National Guard to provide 24/7 EOD support to protect our Nation. This will also allow EOD technicians transitioning out of the active component, who currently have limited options, to transition into the National Guard.

Finally, the Caucus is submitting an amendment to merge various USNORTHCOM elements into a US Northern Command Joint Task Force for EOD and Counter-IED. The purpose of the Task Force would be to provide appropriate oversight of EOD immediate and deliberate response to civil authorities in case of a national emergency, such as an IED campaign against the United States.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony today. I look forward to working with the Committee in the near future to craft legislation that supports EOD in their mission to defend the homeland and our interests abroad. I remain available to the Committee for further assistance on EOD matters, and I thank you for your consideration.

Congressman Neal Dunn (FL-2)
House Armed Services Committee Testimony

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee, it is an honor to testify today.

I am here to express support for incorporating H.R. 1968, the Military Assets Protection Act, into the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018. I recently introduced the legislation with Representative Hanabusa. Representative Rosen is also a cosponsor of the legislation.

The emerging threat of Unmanned Aircraft Systems piloted by our enemies was brought to my attention by military leaders at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida's Second Congressional District, as well as General James Mike Holmes, the Commander of Air Combat Command, and Lieutenant General Scott Williams, the Commander of the First Air Force.

This Committee has also received testimony regarding the seriousness of the threat. On March 8th of this year, General John Hyten, the Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, stated his concern about "unauthorized flights of unmanned aerial systems over Navy and Air Force installations. These intrusions represent a growing threat to the safety and security of nuclear weapons and personnel."

This is not a theoretical threat. Terrorist groups like the Islamic State have increasingly used armed drones against our allies overseas. As the tactics and technology of weaponized drones are proven on battlefields abroad, they will be exported to our shores for attacks and espionage against U.S. military installations here at home. Our Armed Forces face a new threat from drones, and the law needs to catch up.

As you know, the Federal Aviation Administration also recently regulated drone flights at 133 military facilities in the form of air space restrictions. Although this is a good first step, we can't expect terrorists to follow FAA's "Notices to Airmen." And importantly, military personnel currently lack the authority and requisite shield against liability shield to interdict drones that compromise the security of assets, installations, classified information, and personnel.

For this reason, we drafted the Military Assets Protection Act in consultation with the Department of Defense and the Air Force Office of the Judge Advocate General.

In the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2017, this committee made critical progress on this issue. The Military Asset Protection Act will further clarify and strengthen the Defense Department's legal authority to interdict drones that threaten homeland assets and installations.

I respectfully request that the committee consider H.R. 1968 as it develops the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. Thank you all for your time and the opportunity to speak to you on this important issue.

Testimony of Congressman Mike Johnson (LA-04)
Submitted to the Armed Services Committee
April 27, 2017

Thank you, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith and members of the committee, I appreciate you giving me this opportunity today to provide input today during the Committee's "member day" for the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). I am excited to advocate today about the important need to maintaining a strategic edge and reinforcing our national defense needs within this year's bills.

I have the high honor of representing the 4th Congressional District of Louisiana, which is home to Fort Polk and Barksdale Air Force Base Command - two vital military installations for our nation and our national security interests around the world. As I'm sure you know, Fort Polk is home to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Barksdale is home to the Global Strike Command which oversees two-thirds of nations Nuclear Enterprise.

I am extremely pleased President Trump has promised to ensure our brave men and women in uniform have the resources they need to accomplish their mission. As we begin to rebuild our military strength, I hope you will allow me to work vigorously along with you to protect these missions and ensure our national security and readiness is fully maintained.

The role of nuclear weapons continues to play an integral role in the strategies of Russia, North Korea, Pakistan, India and China – in fact, according to many reports, and evident from recent aggressive actions, these countries are increasing their reliance on and modernizing their capabilities (land, air, and sea-based nuclear forces). At the same time, it is clear that Iran has not given up its nuclear ambitions.

Furthermore, there is open evidence that Russia doctrine contemplates the use of nuclear weapons to gain advantage in crisis. Consequently, the need for a strong, capable U.S. nuclear umbrella is growing. But over the course of only four years, from 2010 to 2014, the military budget was cut 21 percent. This happened despite the fact that the world was growing more dangerous and the stage was set for a number of Russian and Chinese aggressions against neighbors and the United States through cyber attacks, information warfare, and kinetic actions. Due to today's time constraints, I will focus primarily on two areas that I think are in desperate need of attention within the FY18 NDAA bill. Our United States Air Force and our Army components.

Nuclear Enterprise —

I would like to offer my support for the president's stated plan to prioritize our nuclear enterprise though modernizing our deterrent capabilities in the upcoming defense budget. Thankfully, despite ideological differences, Congress has taken a clear stand on expressing its support to the long-term commitment of Barksdale Air Force Base, home to the U.S. Global Strike Command and responsible for the majority of the Nuclear Triad and Enterprise.

First, I want to recognize the important and good work being carried out by the Air Force. This includes the decision to elevate Global Strike Command to a four-star Command, an effort that has already begun to demonstrate important rewards. Unfortunately, I was discouraged to see that some recent budgets fell short of fully addressing items for specific Air Force needs related to improvements at Global Strike Command. That is why I ask that in the budget before us today, the committee strongly considers working to fund advancements absolutely necessary to upgrade and maintain a technological edge over America's adversaries.

A few areas in critical need of funding are upgrading nuclear communications facilities, addressing the challenges of a B-52 Re-engine, and the future of the B-21, among others. Specifically, today I would like to highlight three important areas related to ensuring our nuclear enterprise receives the necessary attention in this upcoming Fiscal Year's budget. Moving forward I look forward to working with the committee and its members to address:

1. Ongoing challenges with our nations Aging Fleets including a B-52 Re-engine (Earlier this year, debate over whether to replace the TF33 engine reignited after a B-52 from Minot Air Force Base lost an engine during training. Former Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James characterized the mishap as a "catastrophic engine failure,"), challenges in maintaining aging weapons and a robust Nuclear Enterprise Infrastructure, and needs related to developing critical Weapons Storage and Maintenance Facility areas.
2. There are ongoing much needed upgrades to our Nuclear Command, Control & Communication's (NC3), something I am thankful the Air Force has begun working on and which I know this committee has engaged in as well.
3. Lastly, improving to fund a robust set of capabilities and options. As you know, the top requirement for nuclear forces is to maintain a survivable and ready nuclear force that is capable of deterring our enemy and if necessary, surviving a surprise attack. Given today's foreign climate, the need to keep a close watch on this is as important as ever in order to assure our allies and maintain our own defense against hostile nations.

As members of this committee you are well aware of the activity Global Strike Command oversees and its involvement in a wide array of strategic deterrence, global strike and direct combat support. The Bomber Command, 8th AF in charge of our aging fleet and Missile

Command, 20thAF in charge of the United States Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM's) are critical to our deterrence and global strategy. As Secretary of Defense James Mattis recently stated when speaking about maintaining a safe and secure nuclear deterrent, "we must ensure a war that can never be won will never be fought..." In the event that maintaining a capable and robust nuclear option would not suffice enough to justify attention, these assets also play a major role in our ongoing fight as terror states continue to grow and expand beyond threats to Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Nigeria. Global Strike Command has played an important role in our national security strategy to address new and emerging kinds of threats.

A few short examples of why these should be prioritized in the FY18 Defense Authorization bill rest in Global Strike Command's support of missions around the world using a robust number of assets both nuclear and non-nuclear assets. A very limited review of these international missions include:

1. Operation Inherent Resolve for U.S. Central Command, Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF South) (counter-trafficking) for U.S. Southern Command,
2. Operation Odyssey Lightning Exercises such as JUST HAMMER for U.S. Africa Command,
3. And Daily Bomber Assurance and Deterrence Missions in U.S. European Command and Continuous Bomber Presence Exercises in U.S. Pacific Command.

Given their importance of these ongoing missions, it is critical their needs are being addressed to the fullest extent so that they can adequately achieve mission requirements and ensure robust capabilities are maintained.

Army

Lastly I would also like to speak briefly about the needs of our U.S. Army. In the past two months, I have held a number of meetings with top Army officials.

Previous budget plans were forcing the Army to shrink at an unrealistic pace to the lowest levels in 50 years, and seriously threaten our nation's long term ability to carry the fight forward. These changes were not only impacting the top-line, end-strength numbers, but were also impacting the Army's ability to accomplish their missions and achieve necessary military readiness.

I am proud to represent Fort Polk Army Base which has continued to solidify its footprint as a multi-pronged home for military affairs with a vitally important, state of the art Joint Reserve Training Center (JRTC), and contains units that serve invaluable training for Advise and Assist roles as well. The JRTC provides soldiers the training and flexibility necessary to carry out the demands placed on them and win. The exercise scenarios learned here replicate many of the unique situations and challenges a unit may face while deployed. However, Fort Polk is the only Combat Training Center that also trains and deploys combat units, making it uniquely suited for a number of upcoming Army plans, including its planned expansion of the Army Advise and Assist missions.

Unfortunately, the demands on our Army soldiers and the communities that support them are always increasing. As you well know, sometimes moves that appear good on paper can have long lasting negative impacts on soldiers quality of life and impact overall moral and readiness.

I recently was made aware of one potential such move, where the Pentagon is reviewing a proposal to allow DOD civilians to shop at military exchanges, a move that while allowing of

millions of dollars in new sales to these DOD retail outlets – would have a severe and negative impact to the surrounding communities. Often times, these communities that have invested heavily to bring off-base services to improve the quality of life for soldiers and families, and rely on revenue to keep their doors open. I plan to engage with the Department of Defense in the hope that a common-sense solution will prevail.

I hope to work with members of this committee to ensure that the Army uses the right information and the proper methodology to maximize our existing resources and appropriate facilities, including existing training units and facilities related to Brigade Combat Team (BCT) activities, before any decisions on changes are made.

I hope the members here today will work alongside me in the future to address the challenges facing our nation. I look forward to doing everything I can to support the work your committee is doing to provide our military with the needs and force structure required within the FY18 bill.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate this opportunity to show my support for our men and women in uniform, and I yield back.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 27, 2017

**Testimony
Of
Congressman Jodey Arrington (TX-19)
Before
House Committee on Armed Services**

**Testimony from Members on their National Defense Priorities
for the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act**

April 27, 2017

Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on the national defense priorities of Texas' 19th Congressional District. We are the proud home of Dyess Air Force Base, located in the City of Abilene. The base has 5,100 dedicated military and civilian personnel and is under Global Strike Command. Dyess serves as the home for the Air Force's 7th Bomb Wing, which has 33 of our Nation's 62 B-1 bombers. Dyess is the B-1 Training Base and has a B-1 Operational Squadron, a B-1 Training Squadron, and a new B-1 Classic Associate Reserve Unit. Dyess' missions also include two Active Duty C-130J squadrons with a total of 27 of these new, highly-capable aircraft.

Since 2001, the B-1 has been playing a major role in Afghanistan and Iraq and, more recently, in the fight against ISIL. The B-1 has been able to do this because Congress provided funding in prior years that improved the aircraft's capabilities to drop a variety of weapons with increasing accuracy. The new Integrated Battle Station is the latest enhancement that will ensure that the B-1 will be even more effective in meeting its mission requirements. In recognition of the B-1's overall capabilities, the B-1 was selected, along with the F/A-18 E/F, to be the initial aircraft to carry the new Long Range Anti-Ship Missile, which is a joint Navy/DARPA project.

Although we do not have a detailed FY 2018 budget request from the Administration, the Air Force has an ongoing program that will continue to improve the B-1's capabilities.

Chairman and Ranking Member, I appreciate the Committee's longstanding support and funding for B-1 Research, Development, Test & Evaluation and B-1 Procurement and I request the Committee's continued support for these essential B-1 programs as it considers the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

I also understand that the Air Force's Unfunded Priorities List includes a service life extension program for the B-1 engines. Since the B-1 has a service life beyond 2040, this would seem to be a prudent investment to ensure the efficient operation of the aircraft in the years ahead. As the Committee considers the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, I request that this important B-1 engine program receive the necessary support.

In addition to improving the B-1's capabilities, the Air Force is proceeding with the development of a new long-range strike aircraft, the B-21 Raider. I appreciate that the Committee has been

supportive of this important program and request continued support to keep the B-21 program on track.

Given the Air Force's goal of having the B-21 become operational in the mid-2020s, I would expect that the Air Force will begin to consider basing opportunities in the next several years. I would like to note that Dyess has successfully operated as a long-range strike aircraft base since it opened in 1956, more than 60 years ago. The base has served as a home for B-47s and B-52s and has been the Air Force's main B-1 base for more than 30 years. Importantly, Dyess has been the Nation's B-1 training base, is close to training ranges and training routes, and has a new B-1 Classic Associate Reserve Unit. All of this adds up to Dyess being an exceptional base for the B-21 and an outstanding location for B-21 training activities. And in closing, I'd add that, in fact, Dyess is such an exceptional base and Abilene is such an exceptional community that the Air Mobility Command Community Support Award now even bears the community's name, as "The Abilene Trophy."

I would like to thank you again, Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith, for the opportunity to testify before you today.

Congressman Andy Barr's (KY-06) Written Testimony to the House Committee on Armed Services Regarding C-130J Recapitalization in the FY18 National Defense Authorization Act

April 27, 2017

Thank you Chairman Thornberry for providing me the opportunity to speak before the House Armed Services Committee today to advocate for the recapitalization of vital equipment necessary for our military to complete its missions, while strengthening our national security.

As you know, for more than forty years, the C-130H "Hercules" has remained the military's primary transport aircraft, providing humanitarian assistance, precision airdrop and tactical airlift across the globe. Furthermore, the dual-role mission of the Air National Guard (ANG) means this aircraft is just as critical in overseas missions as it is in the homeland.

While the Air Force has adopted the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force (NCSAF) recommendation on concurrent fielding of the F-35 and KC-46 aircraft, the Air Force and Air Mobility Command need to produce a similar roadmap for the C-130J "Super Hercules" aircraft. The Air Force and Air Mobility Command should work with the Air National Guard in funding a long-term C-130 recapitalization plan over a 10-year period utilizing the 21 C-130Js allocated for production by Lockheed-Martin Corporation but not yet designated for specific assignment to an Air Force flying unit.

Furthermore, recapitalization meets the Air National Guard Capstone Principle of to "Maximize concurrent and balanced recapitalization and modernization." In May 2015 the Air Force released its official *U.S. Air Force Strategic Master Plan*, which on page 26 states that, "the ANG requires interoperable, first-rate equipment that can seamlessly employ as operationally indistinguishable units with the active component."

Despite the approval of the Air Forces Strategic Master Plan, the Air Force and Air Mobility Command reneged on their pledge to the Air National Guard to field "concurrent and proportional" aircraft with the Air National Guard when it recently modernized its entire active duty C-130 fleet to the new C-130J model.

This leaves the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve components, including my state of Kentucky, as the only components flying the aging C-130H, with little-to-no active Air Force support.

Recapitalization is potentially an existential issue for National Guard Air-wings across the country like the Kentucky Air National Guard, which flies some of the oldest of the "legacy" C-130H fleet in Air Force, and is subject to inevitable downsizing over next 5-to-20 years.

I request that the House Armed Services Committee begin recapitalization for the Air National Guard's aging C-130 H fleet to newer J models through the FY18 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). While modernization efforts on H models are underway, it is

imperative for the Air National Guard to begin recapitulation in order to remain on equal footing with the Active Duty in fulfilling both foreign and domestic missions.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued support of the men and women of the Air National Guard.

CHERI BUSTOS
 17th District, Illinois
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1317

Testimony on National Defense Priorities

Thank you Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith for providing this opportunity to provide testimony essential to Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Since the Civil War, the Rock Island Arsenal has been one of our nation's vital military assets and an integral part of the Quad-City region's economy. I am eager to work with you to ensure that the Rock Island Arsenal maintains the workload it needs to keep its workers' skills sharp and maintain readiness so that it can continue supporting our warfighters for years to come.

In addition to several critical commands, Rock Island is home to the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center (JMTC). JMTC is the only remaining foundry within the Department of Army. In 2013, it was named a Center of Industrial and Technical Excellence for foundry operations. As such, it is unique within the Department of Defense, with the equipment and skilled workforce capable of taking raw material and transforming it into equipment that can help protect our soldiers across the world. In an unpredictable international environment, keeping this capability within the Department of Defense is critical. It allows our armed services to adapt to changing needs and emerging conflicts quickly.

In order to make that capability as strong as possible, we must ensure that Rock Island Arsenal and other industrial facilities within the Department of Defense have the necessary workload to maintain critical capabilities and hone new ones. In this year's National Defense Authorization Act, I ask you to include policies that will support that workload and give these facilities the flexibility they need to succeed.

First, I ask you to encourage the production of items that are currently purchased from foreign entities in military arsenals, depots and other organic facilities. In a time of increasing threats across the globe, making the equipment our warfighters need in America is a step to protect them from those who would wish to do them harm. Further, these federal funds are best used supporting American workers, including the skilled civilians who work in our arsenals and depots.

Second, I ask you to give the Secretary of Defense the authority to allow Army arsenals to adjust the labor rates charged to customers throughout the year. Private companies have the flexibility to adjust based on market conditions and workload. To help supplement their workload from the Department of Defense, arsenals would be better able to compete for contracts and form public-private partnerships if they had this flexibility as well.

Language to further both of these goals was included in H.R. 4909, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*, when it was approved by the Committee and passed on the House floor last year, and I respectfully request that you include it again.

As a nation, we cannot afford to let this workforce's critical manufacturing skills decline or disappear. The Rock Island Arsenal has been there for our fighting men and women in uniform and I am committed to making sure this always remains the case.

Thank you again for this opportunity and for your consideration. I look forward to working with you to keep the Rock Island Arsenal strong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheri Bustos". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

Prepared Statement of Rep. Suzan K. DelBene

Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before the House Armed Services Committee on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. Crafting policies and solutions that keep our nation safe is no easy task, and I appreciate your willingness to consider our thoughts and concerns.

I know that in the coming months, the Committee will be carefully weighing a broad array of issues that are vital to our national security, our brave men and women in uniform, military families living across the globe, and thousands of American businesses and workers that support our nation's industrial base. As you begin to move through this important process, I urge you to include my bipartisan legislation — the Child Abuse Accountability Enhancement Act (H.R. 1103), which I introduced alongside Congresswoman Herrera Beutler — closing an appalling loophole in military law that currently denies justice for survivors of child abuse.

More than 58,000 children in the United States are sexually abused each year, while nearly 120,000 children become victims of physical abuse. For decades, members of Congress from both sides of the aisle have agreed that all survivors of child abuse deserve the opportunity to seek justice, regardless of who abused them.

Unfortunately, there is an appalling loophole in federal law that shields convicted child abusers from paying the restitution they owe, if their income is disbursed by the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) — the agency responsible for military retirement pay. While Congress unanimously approved a law in 1994 allowing child abuse survivors to receive garnishment from most federal retirees' pay, it inadvertently excluded military retirees, whose pay is not disbursed by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). A statutory change is needed to apply the same standard to all perpetrators of child abuse.

I learned of this loophole from two brave survivors in Washington state. As young children growing up in the 1980s, Pennie and Cory Delosh suffered vile and horrific abuses at the hands of their father, an Army veteran. When they sought justice, their father was convicted and sentenced to 17 years in prison, and Pennie and Cory were awarded a civil judgment for \$5 million in damages. But because Mr. Delosh's primary source of income is military retirement pay, existing law has shielded him from paying a cent of the restitution he owes his children. This is patently unacceptable.

Military retirement pay is disbursed each month by DFAS, and current law already requires that retirees' pay be garnished for court-ordered alimony, child support and commercial debt. This legislation simply extends the agency's existing garnishment authority to include judgments for the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of a child — the exact same standard that currently applies to federal retirees convicted of child abuse.

Chairman and Ranking Member, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify before the Committee. As you begin to craft the National Defense Authorization Act for 2018, I urge you to support this narrowly-tailored, commonsense fix. We have an obligation to address this federal loophole without delay to ensure justice for Penny, Cory and all children who are abused. I look forward to working with you on this critical issue in the weeks and months to come.

**Testimony of The Honorable Josh Gottheimer (NJ-05) Before the House Armed Services
Committee Hearing: FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act Member Day
2118 Rayburn House Office Building
April 27, 2017**

Dear Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate this opportunity to testify before you on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018.

I want to begin by thanking you for the work you do on this committee to keep our nation safe and to protect Americans in the face of growing threats, including the Islamic State (ISIS). As you know, each member of Congress takes the same oath to protect and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That is why I appreciate this opportunity to be able to address you today and provide input on our national defense priorities as you craft the Fiscal Year 2018 NDAA.

As you know, U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation is critical to our own defense, as well as the safety and security of our ally Israel, the only true democracy in the Middle East and a key strategic partner. I urge you to continue to support these programs and reaffirm our commitment to keeping support for Israel bipartisan.

Today, Israel faces grave threats and growing numbers of rockets and missiles in the arsenals of terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, and state-sponsors of terrorism like Iran.

In March of last year, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps launched two ballistic missiles inscribed with the slogan "Israel should be wiped off the earth." And Tehran has continued to test the fortitude of the international community by conducting another test in January of this year. Meanwhile, Hezbollah, which the Department of State designates as a terrorist organization, currently has an arsenal of approximately 120,000 to 150,000 rockets aimed at Israel.

To protect from these threats, the Islamic State, and other adversaries, Israel and the U.S. rely on full funding for defense programs like Iron Dome, David's Sling and Arrow 3, to intercept short-range rockets, medium-range rockets and cruise missiles, and to intercept long-range exo-atmospheric, intercontinental ballistic missiles, respectively.

Fortunately, these missile defense programs are proven to work. Just last month, Israel's Arrow system successfully downed a surface-to-air missile fired from Syria, and the Iron Dome system intercepted incoming ISIS rockets from Sinai.

The United States has made significant investments in missile defense cooperation with Israel. Not only do these investments defend our vital ally and reinforce its Qualitative Military Edge in the region, but they also enhance America's own systems and strengthen our U.S. defense industry.

That is why I strongly urge you to support \$705.8 million in Fiscal Year 2018 for these critical U.S.-Israel missile defense programs. That includes a much-needed test of the Arrow 3 long range missile defense program next year. In fact, I am introducing the U.S.-Israel Joint Missile Defense Act to authorize \$105 million for this test to validate Arrow 3's capabilities and assess its interoperability with our own systems.

Full funding for U.S.-Israel missile defense programs will enable Israel to procure more Iron Dome interceptors and launchers. It will make sure our ally can begin full-scale production of the David's Sling Weapon System, improve the Arrow 2 missile interceptor, begin full-scale production of Arrow 3, and conduct a much-needed flight test of the system here in the United States.

Congress and the House Armed Services Committee have an excellent track record of working together in a bipartisan manner to support these missile defense programs. I ask that in Fiscal Year 2018, you continue to support full funding for these programs that are necessary to protect our ally Israel, stabilize the Middle East, and improve our national security.

Thank you for your consideration.

TED W. LIEU
33RD DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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April 26, 2017

The Honorable James Mattis
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building

Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith:

I want to thank you for holding the Member's Day forum and providing me with an opportunity to offer testimony about an issue that is important to our national security: U.S. strategy in Yemen.

As you know, Yemen has been engulfed in conflict since early 2015, pitting the Saudi Arabia-led coalition ("coalition") and the government of President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi against the Houthi rebel movement. The war—which has left over 10,000 civilians dead and 70 percent of the population in need of aid—has had a significant impact on the people of Yemen, regional stability, and U.S. national security. As the fighting has dragged on, we have seen Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula exploit the chaos to grow its organization, a proxy battle develop as Iran has offered support to the Houthis, and the coalition repeatedly fail to avoid civilian casualties in what United Nations officials have deemed possible war crimes.

The U.S. has had direct involvement in this war by offering limited support to the coalition, including aircraft refueling, intelligence sharing, and arms sales. According to public reports and first-hand accounts from non-governmental organizations, Yemenis consequently hold the U.S. responsible for the widespread civilian casualties and dire humanitarian situation.

In December 2016, the Obama Administration made the decision to halt a planned sale of precision-guided munitions (PGM) to Saudi Arabia due to concerns over widespread civilian casualties and significant deficiencies in the Royal Saudi Air Force's (RSAF) targeting capabilities. This decision was the result of an internal review launched after the United Nations and a number of human rights organizations documented a series of RSAF airstrikes on civilian targets, including hospitals, markets, schools, a wedding and a large funeral.

According to reports in March 2017, the Trump Administration has decided to reverse course by lifting the suspension on PGM sales and indicating a desire to increase U.S. support for the coalition. While Defense Secretary James Mattis has publicly indicated that the conflict in Yemen can only be resolved by a political solution, he also reportedly sent a memo to National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster recommending U.S. support for a planned Emirati offensive against the Red Sea port of Hodeidah. Humanitarian groups have warned that this offensive would be “catastrophic” to the civilian population and plunge the country into famine.

Congress has repeatedly indicated substantial opposition to U.S. support for the Saudi-led bombings. In June 2016, 204 Members of the House on a bipartisan basis voted to block the transfer of cluster bombs to Saudi Arabia after reports of their use in Yemen. In September, 64 Members of Congress wrote to Secretary of State John Kerry, urging a delay in weapons sale to Saudi Arabia over concerns about civilian casualties and 27 Senators voted to halt a \$1.15 billion weapons sale to Saudi Arabia. These Congressional votes to block foreign weapons sales were the first in decades, demonstrating that the level of opposition to U.S. participation has risen to extraordinary levels. Furthermore, a recent letter from 55 Members of Congress to the President noted that the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force does not provide legal authority for the U.S. to battle the Houthis, a Shia group with no ties to Al Qaeda.

While the Administration’s strategy on Yemen remains unclear, it is evident that the lack of such a strategy sends dangerous mixed signals to our regional partners and enemies alike and undermines Congress’ ability to conduct necessary oversight. A decision on U.S. involvement in the conflict and support for the coalition simply must be tied to a clearly-articulated regional strategy and the necessary Congressional authority.

As you work on the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, I encourage you to identify a mechanism that would direct the Administration to articulate a strategy on Yemen and the underlying legal authority for Congress to evaluate. While some of the details on a strategy are likely to be sensitive, I am confident it could be communicated in both classified and unclassified methods.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and the committee’s tireless work to protect U.S. national security.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee
Honorable Jimmy Panetta CA-20
April 24, 2017

I proudly represent a region along the central coast of California that has a booming defense presence. Although for most of the 20th Century, the area was known for Fort Ord and its fighting 7th Infantry, now our training takes place at Fort Hunter Liggett and Camp Roberts where service members can learn how to drive a tank, fly a plane, and shoot a gun.

Monterey is home to world renown military institutions like the Naval Postgraduate School and the Defense Language Institute, and the military training is learning to speak a foreign language, understanding the tools of cyber warfare, flying a drone, and becoming leaders in the 21st Century of warfare. Additionally, there are 11 other defense equities located in Monterey that employ over 15,000 and generate more than \$1.3 billion for the local economy.

If the Committee approves new BRAC authority in the FY18 NDAA, I urge my colleagues to include report language, as they have in the past at the request of my predecessor, Rep. Sam Farr, to ensure that any new BRAC round captures intellectual capacity of installations like NPS and DLI. This request is consistent with Ranking Member Adam Smith's bill, HR753.

I would like to highlight Section 6 of the bill that defines military value criteria as:

- the ability to support educational requirements
- that enhance the success of members of the Armed Forces in their military career fields, and
- the impact on operational readiness of the total force of the Department, including the impact on joint warfighting, training and readiness.

As you know, the previous COBRA models give weight to bases that have traditional military assets like runways or hangars. But there has not been established criteria to quantify intellectual capacity, which is just as integral to our nation's security and readiness.

NPS is the prime example of that type of education to prepare our future leaders -- from providing advanced degrees in Security Studies to providing training in cyber warfare, drones and satellites. The Center for Civil Military Relations (CCMR), a school within a school at NPS, focuses on relationships with other nations, including enhancing democratic civil-military relations, supporting defense reform, teaching institution building, peacebuilding operations, and how to combat terrorism.

I have no doubt that an investment in NPS and similar types of institutions is a prime investment not only in our military but also in our civil-military relations around the world.

Having served with a Special Forces unit in Afghanistan as a Navy Intelligence Officer, I know how important advanced education and foreign language training is to doing your duties and carrying out your mission.

Students at DLI are not only taught to be proficient in 17 DoD designated foreign languages, but also they learn about the cultural and regional nuances of a duty assignment. I recently visited DLI and received a command briefing. The highlight was sitting in on a Farsi language class and seeing these six young students from across our nation -- NC, Ohio, CA -- not only speak Farsi, but speak it comfortably. To see what they have learned in such a short period of time gave me hope about the future of our military leaders and military mission.

Based on education and training that takes place at installations like NPS and DLI, I am confident -- and you should be confident -- that the investments in education that you approve for our military members enables them to effectively serve and deploy anywhere in the world, making us more prepared and, ultimately, more safe.

Thank you.

MIKE THOMPSON

5TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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April 24, 2017

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith,

Thank you, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

I first became involved with this issue in 1999 when a constituent of mine asked me to investigate something he called Project 112/ Shipboard Hazard and Defense Project (SHAD).

Project 112 was a chemical and biological weapons research, development, and testing project conducted by the Department of Defense (DoD) and Central Intelligence Agency handled by the Deseret Test Center and United States Army Chemical Materials Agency from 1962 to 1973. Project SHAD, a part of the larger Project 112, was a series of tests conducted by the DoD during the 1960s to determine how well service members aboard military ships could detect and respond to chemical and biological attacks.

My constituent was the Senior Navy Officer in charge of 5 different light tug operations from 1964 to 1967. However, in 1993 he started having health problems. Since then, he has been diagnosed with malignant Melanoma; several types of skin cancers, prostate cancer and doctors have found 4 pieces of Asbestos in his lungs. As a senior officer, he was notified of some military chemical tests performed on animals on his ship while he was in service. Once he started getting sick, he asked me to investigate whether or not there could be a link between his health problems and Project SHAD.

As you know, the DoD performed experimental tests by spraying live chemical and biological agents on ships and sailors to test the Navy's vulnerability to toxic warfare. My constituent commanded some of the ships used in these experiments. These tests – known as Project 112, which included Project SHAD, exposed at least 6,000 service members without their knowledge to extremely harmful chemical and biological weapons.

The path of this investigation has been long and challenging. At first, the DoD denied that there were any tests at all. Then in 2001, the DoD confirmed Project SHAD. It revealed that there may have been some tests but indicated that no one had been at risk because the tests used simulated agents and the sailors were adequately trained and protected. In late 2002, DoD verified for the

first time that between 1962 and 1974 it had sprayed harmful chemical and biological agents on their ships and sailors. These tests included some of the most deadly chemicals on Earth: Vx Nerve Gas, Sarin Nerve Gas and *E. coli*.

These tests were performed *without* notifying the ships' commanders and crew about the toxicity of the chemicals or the potential for significant negative health effects. Nor were they adequately trained and protected as reported earlier. Many of the veterans who were on these ships have experienced serious medical illnesses and cancers.

Even today, despite these shocking revelations, DoD has not publicly provided a complete accounting of these tests; to our knowledge, has stopped looking for records of Project 112 service personnel; and never notified the veterans subjected to these tests about their participation or the scope of the tests to which they were exposed.

For many years, I have been working with my colleagues in Congress to bring information to light regarding Project 112 and Project SHAD, including passing legislation that required DoD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to disclose records relevant to the provision of benefits to those involved in the tests, as well as mandating two studies by the National Academy of Medicine to examine the health outcomes of SHAD veterans. These efforts helped reveal information on the substances to which the 5,900 SHAD veterans were exposed, but large gaps remain in our understanding of the origin of Project 112, and Project SHAD because a concentration of critical information remains classified.

This barrier undoubtedly impacted the balance of past studies conducted on Project 112 and Project SHAD. That is why I respectfully request that when you draft the 2018 NDAA, you include language that would require that DoD to fully declassify all materials and information relating to Project 112 and Project SHAD.

It is incumbent upon our country to ensure that any service member who participated in these tests is provided with treatment and other benefits if they have health problems and have developed a disability because of these tests. We cannot wait any longer. Many of these brave men who served their country are now sick or have even passed away. Project 112 and similar cases of chemical and biological testing on service members is an issue of trust and integrity.

It is imperative for us to right our government's past wrongs and help these brave veterans who unknowingly participated in these tests. Congress agrees that we must use sound science to make these critical determinations, and that is why I have taken such a strong interest.

Thank you for considering language as you draft 2018 NDAA. For additional information, please contact me or Jen Almendarez (5-3311) in my office.

Sincerely,


MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

Opening Statement of the Hon. Nydia Velazquez
House Armed Services Committee
Member Day for National Defense Authorization Act for FY2018

Thank you, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of this Committee for allowing me to come before you today to testify on the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

The SBA administers a portfolio of Entrepreneurial Development programs, including Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives or SCORE. These initiatives provide aspiring entrepreneurs and existing businesses with counseling, training, technical assistance, and mentorship. This network helps companies at all stages of development overcome challenges.

The agency's network of Small Business Development Centers – or SBDCs – is one such program. SBDCs operate in nearly 1,000 locations across the country and harnesses local community resources. In a single year, this initiative has helped more than 13,000 entrepreneurs launch new businesses. They have also advised nearly 200,000 clients, provided training sessions for over 260,000 attendees, and helped clients obtain \$4.6 billion in financing. Clearly, SBDCs are a vital part of our nation's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The SBA has also undertaken efforts to connect younger entrepreneurs with more experienced businessmen and women through the SCORE program. SCORE has grown to become one of the federal government's largest volunteer business mentoring programs, with over 11,000 business professionals at over 320 chapters nationwide. By offering advice from real

world professionals, SCORE is helping many business owners within all categories of the entrepreneurial community.

Because small business owners come from all walks of life, the SBA has initiatives targeted at specific demographic groups. One of those programs is the Women's Business Centers—or WBCs. They provide in-depth counseling, training, and mentoring to small firms. In FY 2015, over 100 WBCs reached 130,000 clients and helped 700 new businesses get started.

With respect to each of these programs, it is vital that taxpayer resources are being used wisely and to maximum effect. I think we can all agree that these programs offer our nation's job creators vital tools to help our economy grow.

That is why Chairman Chabot and I, along with the other Members of the Small Business Committee, came together to author H.R. 1774, the Developing the Next Generation of Small Businesses Act of 2017. This bipartisan bill streamlines these programs and makes them more effective.

This bill amends the Small Business Act by eliminating unproven pilot programs and requiring clearer metrics for data collection for SBDCs. It also clarifies rules allowing for fee collection, marketing, and privacy requirements for SBDCs.

H.R. 1774 also reauthorizes the SCORE program for FY2018-FY2019 and ensures that the SCORE program and each of its chapters operates more effectively in rural areas, economically disadvantaged and traditionally underserved communities. They will also be required to develop and implement plans to use

electronic and web-based initiatives and the development of new skills by participating volunteers.

Even though female entrepreneurship is on the rise, there remain significant challenges, making WBCs even more critical. That is why this bill revises the duties of the Office of Women's Business Ownership to assist women entrepreneurs to start, grow, and compete in global markets. It also directs the SBA to establish standards for a program to accredit eligible entities receiving a grant to operate one or more WBCs.

Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy and we should provide our entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed – and that is what H.R. 1774 does. Therefore, I strongly encourage the complete bill's inclusion, along with

H.R. 1773, the Clarity for America's Small Contractor's Act, in the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

I want to thank you again for allowing me to testify here today and I yield back.

The Honorable Don Young



Congressman for All Alaska

Testimony of
The Honorable Don Young
 Before the
House Armed Services Committee
 FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act Member Request Day

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee, thank you for holding this hearing, and for giving me the opportunity to testify as the lone Representative for the State of Alaska. Though I am not a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am proud to represent the most strategic state in our country, with the largest number of service members and veterans per capita in the nation. I appreciate your consideration of the following provisions for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. I will keep my remarks today brief, and my staff will be happy to follow up with you to provide additional information on all of these issues, if needed.

Inclusion of HR. 1816, the Icebreaker Act

First, I would like to request the inclusion of the language from H.R. 1816, the Icebreaker Act. This legislation, which I introduced with HASC members Duncan Hunter, John Garamendi, and Rick Larsen, and is endorsed by the Association of the U.S. Navy, would specifically authorize the U.S. Navy to partner with the U.S. Coast Guard to procure up to six new icebreakers – three medium-class and three heavy-class – which are desperately needed to ensure the nation's security and maritime interests are protected in the Arctic.

With Russia, China, and other nations seeking to increase their presence in the Arctic region, the United States must get serious about updating its limited and aging fleet of icebreakers. This language is very simple, in that it specifically authorizes the Navy, in consultation with the Coast Guard, to enter into a contract to build icebreakers. As development in the Arctic continues, including new resource development, potential shipping lanes, and other economic activities, we cannot afford to be left behind.

Report on Modernization of the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex

Alaska is home to the nation's largest air training range—the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC). This range complex is nine times larger than the Nevada Test and Training Range at Nellis Air Force Base, and more than

The Honorable Don Young



Congressman for All Alaska

twenty times larger than the Barry Goldwater Range near Luke AFB in Arizona. While this range complex provides unmatched training capacity for the Air Force, much of its infrastructure (including its threat emitters) was developed for 4th generation aircraft.

Given Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's two F-22 squadrons, the decision to base two F-35A squadrons at Eielson Air Force Base, as well as Eielson's annual Red Flag and biannual Operation Northern Edge exercises, the Air Force should examine how it will modernize the range complex to continue to provide our Joint Air Forces with the best training possible. This language would require the Air Force to produce a report on modifications to the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex necessary to provide a true, 21st century training environment.

Requirement for the Air Force to update its 168th Wing Business Case Analysis

Section 1054 of the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act required the Secretary of the Air Force to complete a business case analysis on the conversion of the Alaska National Guard's 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson Air Force Base to an Active-Associate Total Force Initiative unit. While this report was completed in the spring of 2016, it did not contain any reference to the Air Force's decision to base two squadrons of F-35A fighters at Eielson.

I believe that the findings from the Air Force's business case analysis would be dramatically different if they had considered this basing decision, as it will drastically change the conditions in which the 168th operates. Therefore, this language would require the Secretary of the Air Force to update its business case analysis to ensure that it takes into account the F-35s that are scheduled to be based at Eielson beginning in FY 2019/2020.

Report on Arctic Capability Gaps

Section 1068 of the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act required the Department of Defense to update its 2013 Arctic Strategy in light of significant changes in the international security environment. This document was completed in December of 2016, and is a great step forward in articulating the desired ends for the United States in the Arctic region.

As part of this report, the Department of Defense specifically detailed several capability gaps in the Arctic region, including a lack of necessary infrastructure, shortfalls in observation, remote sensing, and weather forecasting,

The Honorable Don Young



Congressman for All Alaska

lack of navigational aids, challenges in high-latitude communications infrastructure, and limited personnel recovery capabilities.

While it is valuable to understand that these capability gaps exist, it is critical that we in Congress ensure that the Department of Defense is working to address these capability gaps. Therefore, this provision would require the Department of Defense to submit a report to Congress on how it intends to fill these gaps.

Business Case Analysis for replacing the Army's Small Unit Support Vehicle

The House Armed Services Committee Report for the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act requested a briefing from the U.S. Army on potential options to replace the Army's current Small Unit Support Vehicle (SUS-V), a vehicle critical to U.S. Army Alaska's ability to operate in an arctic and extreme cold weather environment. This briefing identified two possible courses of action—refurbishing the current SUS-V fleet, or procuring a new vehicle (specifically the BAE BvS10 Beowulf).

As the logical next step in the process, I request language that would require the U.S. Army to conduct a business case analysis for replacing the Army's current fleet of Small Unit Sustainment Vehicles, a vehicle of great import to US Army Alaska and any unit operating in an arctic environment.

Direct Hire Authority for Reserve Dual-Status Technicians

I request the inclusion of language that is very similar to a provision included in the House-passed FY 2017 NDAA, which provides U.S. Army and Air Force reserve units with "direct hire authority" to fill dual-status technician vacancies. Dual Status Technicians provide the vast majority of the full-time manning for reserve component units, and are critical to ensuring that our reserve units are able to accomplish their missions.

However, due to the terrible and overly-bureaucratic civilian hiring process for Dual-Status Technicians, it can often take more than 120 days—more than four months—to fill a Dual-Status Technician position. This language would simply provide the Army and Air Force Reserves with the ability to use a direct hire authority to more quickly fill its critical Dual-Status Technician positions, reducing this process by 30-40 days (according to U.S. Army and Air Force Reserve estimates).

The Honorable Don Young



Congressman for All Alaska

Modification of the Justification and Approval Process for Native Sole-Source Contracts

Late in Conference for the FY 2010 National Defense Authorization Act, an original "good government" provision, Section 802 was modified to unfairly isolate native contractors for enhanced scrutiny. This new provision, Section 811, modified the justification and approval process for Sole-Source Contracts valued at more than \$20 million, and now required head of agency approval. For example, if a contracting officer in the U.S. Air Force intended to award a \$19.9 million dollar contract, they could go through a standard approval process. However, if a similar contract was valued at \$20.1 million, that contracting officer would be forced to receive approval from the Secretary of the Air Force. This is simply inefficient and unnecessary, and it has had large negative effects on Native American and Hawaiian community-based contracting organizations participating in the SBA's 8(a) Program.

Given Section 811's negative effect on Native 8(a)s in Alaska and around the country, I request that the House include language that would align the Section 811 justification and approval process more closely with Federal Acquisition Regulations, which provide increasingly senior approval authorities based on a contract's value. This would ensure that contracting officers are able to efficiently award contracts, and not burden heads of agencies with contract approvals for contracts that should be able to be approved by much lower-level officials.

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Armed Services Committee, I again thank you for giving me this opportunity. I encourage all of you, and your staff, to come to Alaska to see firsthand all that we offer the Department of Defense. A strong defense presence in Alaska is not only vital to Alaska, but also vital to the national security of the United States.

