

24. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of the Philippines.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 21-23, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the Philippines for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$42.4 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

AARON HARDING,
(For HEIDI H. GRANT, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21-23

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of the Philippines.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$27.8 million.
Other \$14.6 million.

Total \$42.4 million
Funding Source: National Funds.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Twenty-four (24) AIM-9X Sidewinder Block II Tactical Missiles.

Twenty-four (24) AIM 9X Block II Captive Air Training Missiles (CATMs).

Six (6) Tactical Guidance Units.

Ten (10) Captive Air Training Missile (CATM) Guidance Units.

Non-MDE: Also included are containers, support and test equipment, spare and repair parts, personnel training and training equipment, publications and technical data, software delivery and support, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance and other related support; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (PI-P AAY).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: June 24, 2021.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Philippines—AIM-9X Sidewinder Block II Tactical Missiles

The Government of the Philippines has requested to buy twenty-four (24) AIM-9X Sidewinder Block II tactical missiles; twenty-four (24) AIM-9X Block II Captive Air Training Missiles (CATMs); six (6) Tactical Guidance Units; and ten (10) Captive Air Training Missile (CATM) Guidance Units. Also included are containers, support and test equipment, spare and repair parts, personnel training and training equipment, publications and technical data, software delivery and support, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance and other related support; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost is \$42.4 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner that continues to be an important force for political stability, peace, and economic progress in South East Asia.

The proposed sale will improve the Philippines' capability to meet current and future threats by enabling the Philippines to deploy fighter aircraft with a short range air-to-air missile defense capability. The Philippines Air Force is modernizing its fighter aircraft to better support its own air defense and maritime security needs. The Philippines will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Raytheon Missile Systems Company, Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require travel of U.S. Government or contractor representatives to the Philippines on a temporary basis for program technical support and management oversight.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21-23

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AIM-9X Block II Sidewinder Missile represents a substantial increase in missile acquisition and kinematics performance over the AIM-9M and replaces the AIM-9X Block I Missile configuration. The missile includes a high off-boresight seeker, enhanced countermeasure rejection capability, low drag/high angle of attack airframe and the ability to integrate the Helmet Mounted Cueing System. The software algorithms are the most sensitive portion of the AIM-9X missile. The software continues to be modified via a pre-planned product improvement (P3I) program in order to improve its countermeasure capabilities. No software source code or algorithms will be released.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services in-

cluded in this potential sale is CONFIDENTIAL.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Philippines can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of the Philippines.

CONFIRMATION OF DAWN O'CONNELL

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I would like to talk about the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response. The HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, or ASPR, is in charge during a public health emergency and serves as the principal adviser to the Secretary on these matters. This is not a political or a personal choice for any administration; it is the law. I know because I helped write it. It is a national security position, responsible for keeping Americans safe from public health threats, like COVID-19. It is a role that we envisioned with two types of responsibilities. The ASPR serves an operational role. During an emergency, the ASPR coordinates the public health and medical response—whether that threat is a hurricane, a novel virus, or a chemical attack. The ASPR has the responsibility of overseeing the development, purchase, and deployment of lifesaving countermeasures, like the COVID-19 vaccine. The ASPR is also a policy job, assessing the threat landscape and adjusting our strategies to best position the United States for the threats we face today and in the future.

I am glad that today the Senate was able to confirm, by unanimous consent, Dawn O'Connell to be the ASPR. During Ms. O'Connell's nomination process for the job, she repeatedly agreed that she is ready to serve both roles and that the ASPR is in charge during public health emergencies. I believe her current role as a Senior Counselor to the HHS Secretary for COVID Response and her previous roles at HHS and in Congress have provided her with the skills necessary to fulfill the role of the ASPR. I was disappointed that it took the administration so long to nominate someone for this critical role, but I am pleased that they picked someone of Ms. O'Connell's qualifications. The ASPR is critical to the Nation's response and recovery to the COVID pandemic and preparing us against whatever comes next.

I helped orchestrate Ms. O'Connell's confirmation today when I am also releasing a white paper from my role as lead Republican on the Senate HELP Committee about the role of the ASPR. We have learned from two responses under two different administrations—Ebola under Obama and COVID under Trump—that despite Congress's bipartisan intent that the ASPR be in charge in an emergency, that hasn't worked quite the way we envisioned. So I have a series of recommendations to bolster the role of the ASPR and bring greater clarity to our government's response for future emergencies. The ASPR needs to have strong, effective leadership and play a key role in coordinating the Federal Government response. The ASPR needs to have the authority and resources to strengthen public-private partnerships in our medical countermeasures, medical supply chain, and healthcare system. And the ASPR needs to leverage innovation to expand our preparedness infrastructure. Senator MURRAY, the chair of our HELP Committee, and I are working together on bipartisan legislation to address the response to the pandemic, and these recommendations will see their way into that legislation this fall.

MASK MANDATE

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, if you have flown in the past year, you have heard the announcement at the beginning of every flight that says Federal law requires that passengers wear a mask. Well, the last I checked, we have a constitutional system, and Congress makes laws. Something is not required by Federal law unless Congress passes such a law and the President signs it. That is the only way something becomes a federal law in this country.

We are coming through a pandemic, and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Over 150 million people in the United States are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Any American adult who wants to be vaccinated against COVID-19 can get vaccinated at this point, and the science should drive our decisions on how to open up. That is why today I introduced a resolution to encourage the CDC to review and update its guidance on wearing masks in confined spaces to clarify that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 no longer need to wear a mask on public transportation in the United States, including at airports, on commercial flights, and on buses and rail systems, and for the Transportation Security Administration to update its travel guidance to track with the latest science. I was joined in this effort by Senators COLLINS, LUMMIS, WICKER, MORAN and BLACKBURN, and I appreciate their support.

The CDC has been quite clear that masks are not needed for people who are fully vaccinated. Science matters, and vaccines work. The mandate to wear masks on planes and on other

modes of transportation—when they are no longer required in many businesses and restaurants for vaccinated people—is hurting the aviation industry.

If the objective is to encourage people to be vaccinated, one way to do that is for there to be a real difference in what you can do after being vaccinated. Repealing this requirement to wear masks on airplanes, at airports, and on public transportation would increase demand, increase travel, and would tie the policy to science. It is a commonsense step to take, and I hope more of my Senate colleagues will join us in encouraging the CDC to follow the science.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAN HENDRIX

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Dan Hendrix, who is retiring as president and chief executive officer of the World Trade Center Arkansas and associate vice chancellor of the Division of Economic Development at the University of Arkansas after a remarkable career dedicated to economic growth in the Natural State.

Dan is a proud Arkansan who has spent his life demonstrating his commitment to the State and developing opportunities to help businesses grow and flourish. He learned the tools that helped him succeed at the University of Arkansas and Arkansas State University, where he earned a bachelor of science in business administration with minors in marketing and management.

He started his career at ABF Freight System, where he established the subsidiary Container Carrier Corporation to transport ocean containers to and from major ports in the United States and throughout the world. Under his guidance, the company expanded import and export operations to U.S. ports of entry, and he served in several leadership positions within the company. He brought his skills to an Oklahoma Transportation Company in 1998.

In 2001, Dan joined the University of Arkansas and established the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations, where, among other successes, he led efforts to raise more than \$1 billion for the university as part of the institution's Campaign for the Twenty-First Century.

As president and CEO of World Trade Center Arkansas, Dan has used his talent and experience to help connect businesses in the State with international partners since its creation in 2007. His efforts have resulted in significantly increased exports of Arkansas goods and job growth. Today, businesses from all over Arkansas export products to nearly 200 countries and support 350,000 jobs in the State.

During Dan's tenure as leader of the World Trade Center Arkansas, he has also educated university students in global commerce through the center's

student intern program. The center has hosted dignitaries from more than 50 countries and enhanced diplomatic relations between the State of Arkansas and the United States with a variety of nations and economic partners.

I applaud Dan for his outstanding leadership and accomplished career. He has led a life of service and deserves our thanks for his military service and vision for expanding Arkansas's footprint around the globe. Dan is leaving a lasting legacy that will benefit future generations of Arkansans. I have been honored to work with him, and I appreciate his friendship. I know his wife Marilyn, children and grandchildren, who are very proud of him, are looking forward to spending more time together. I wish him the best on his retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO DAN SEWELL

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the career and service of a proud Ohioan, Dan Sewell, who will retire at the end of June, bringing an end to his 44-year career in journalism.

Dan spent 39 of those years with the Associated Press, serving Americans, both by bringing them the news and by telling their stories—in Buffalo, Miami, San Juan, Atlanta, and Chicago, where he has worked as a writer, editor, assistant bureau chief, and most recently in our home State, in Cincinnati, OH.

A native of Middletown, OH, Dan graduated from Edgewood High School. He got his start in journalism as a student journalist at Ohio University's student newspaper, The Post. That is where Dan and I first met, when he interviewed me as the youngest member of the Ohio State Legislature.

Journalists like Dan play a vital role in our democracy—they ask tough questions, they challenge special interests and uncover corruption, and they connect Americans with their communities and with the world. Whether it was the Grenada Invasion in 1983, Hurricane Andrew in 1992, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, or the mass shooting in Dayton's Oregon District in 2019, Dan has done vital work on the frontlines, covering stories that matter to people.

Not only has he made a difference through his writing, Dan also teaches as a part-time instructor of journalism at Miami University in Oxford, OH, helping mentor the next generation of journalists.

Dan is a devoted husband to Vickii, father of five, and grandfather of nine, and plans to spend time with them during retirement. And he will have more time to partake in his favorite hobby—attending Cincinnati Reds' games.

On behalf of grateful readers in Ohio and around the country, I thank Dan Sewell for nearly four decades of service in journalism, doing work that is important to the fabric of our communities and our country.●