

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN RICHARD J. DURBIN
MDA BUDGET OVERVIEW HEARING
JUNE 11, 2014

The Subcommittee meets this morning to receive testimony on the fiscal year 2015 budget request for the Missile Defense Agency.

I am pleased to welcome the Director of the Missile Defense Agency, Vice Admiral Jim Syring. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today.

For fiscal year 2015, the President's budget requests \$7.5 billion for the Missile Defense Agency, and you are planning on receiving \$30.1 billion from fiscal year 2016 through 2019. As we all know, the Department's budget plan for fiscal years 2016 through 2019 exceeds the spending caps put in place by the Budget Control Act by over \$115 billion. I hope to hear more from you today on how you would meet sequestration levels in future years, and what this would mean for MDA's ability to perform its mission of keeping America safe.

We have discussed in the past the threats the United States faces around the world in the area of missile proliferation, and programs in Iran and North Korea, to name a few. As we attempt to address these problems with a prudent combination of political, economic and military tools, we rely heavily on MDA's capabilities for regional and homeland defense.

Given the threats we face, it is important that we get missile defense right. This budget request includes a number of proposals to mitigate problems with our fielded systems, most notably the Ground Based Interceptor. These are design, engineering and reliability problems that were largely caused by the rush to field this system without properly testing it first. We are now paying dearly for that decision.

As we move forward with new major acquisition programs, we need to ensure that we don't let arbitrary schedules trump sound and fiscally responsible acquisition practices. "Fly before you buy" makes a lot of sense to me. We simply cannot afford to divert resources from critical new investments in science and technology or proven, successful production programs to pay for things that should have been done right in the first place.

To give you one example, I am concerned by your proposal to reduce procurement quantities of the Standard Missile interceptor. This missile works, it is in high demand by our Combatant Commanders around the world, and it is a critical element of regional missile defense in Europe, which the Administration and this Committee are committed to. And yet your budget request reduces production by over 40 percent.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these issues. We want to ensure that our fiscal year 2015 appropriations bill enables the Missile Defense Agency to defend and support our nation and interests around the world in a successful and fiscally responsible manner.

Thank you for your testimony this morning. Your full statement will be included in the record.