

**Statement by Chairman Richard J. Durbin**  
**Subcommittee Markup of the**  
**Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015**  
*Tuesday, July 15, 2014*

The Subcommittee meets this morning to mark up the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015. This bill provides \$489.6 billion for the base budget for DoD -- equal to the Subcommittee's allocation -- and an additional \$58.3 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations.

The bill also includes \$1.4 billion in OCO for the State and Foreign Operations and the Military Construction Subcommittees. Although those bills have already been marked up, these funds were requested by the President to address urgent problems overseas, and we cannot wait to take action on these portions of the OCO request.

This bill makes investments that are critical to the members of our Armed Forces, our allies, and our high-tech industrial base. Just as importantly, these investments are made within the requested amounts of funding for the Defense Department without using budget gimmicks, like transferring base budget items to the OCO budget.

Instead, this bill sets priorities, removes unnecessary funding from 516 different programs, and reinvests those funds where they are needed the most.

The first priority in this bill is people. The bill fully funds the one percent pay raise for service members and civilian employees and addresses a \$507 million shortfall in military retirement accounts. An additional \$25 million is provided to the Special Victims' Counsel Program to tackle the serious problem of sexual assault in the military. With this increase, sexual assault prevention funding will have nearly

tripled since 2012. The bill also adds \$200 million to ensure commissaries remain open for business.

We also provide significant increases to training accounts and other programs our troops use every day. In all, there is a \$5.9 billion increase over 2014 funding levels for programs that fund readiness, training, facility upkeep, and similar activities. This funding for the military services and the National Guard ensures our service men and women will be ready to respond to crises at home and abroad.

The bill also protects America's leadership at the cutting edge of innovation. For decades, Department of Defense technologies have revolutionized the world. Many of these breakthroughs began as a novel solution to a military problem. Our troops needed to know precisely where they were on a map, and the GPS system was built to provide that answer. Now those satellites are integral to our phones, cars, and even the banking networks that link automatic teller machines.

But we are at risk of losing our leadership role through neglect.

### **[Chart 1: Trends in Federal R&D as Percentage GDP]**

This is the trend in U.S. research and development spending. It is a trend in the wrong direction. Under Secretary of Defense Frank Kendall has warned the nation about its eroding military edge. He has warned that the U.S. is becoming, quote, "complacent."

Other nations realize that investments in R&D are critical to national security and to their domestic economies.

### **[Chart 2: Selected annual growth in R&D expenditures.]**

South Korea, Germany, and the European Union are all growing their research and development budgets by at least 5 percent; China by 20 percent.

We have led the world for decades, and this bill ensures we will stay in the lead. It adds \$257 million to basic research accounts in the military services and DARPA. These increases constitute a 5 percent increase to 2014 funding levels and an even larger increase to the budget request. Basic research funding allows universities to understand the nature of the world around us, which leads to breakthroughs in every scientific field imaginable.

We also maintain America's edge in medical research.

### **[Chart 3: Melissa Stockwell at Paralympics.]**

Thanks to advances in military medicine, our men and women in uniform are not only surviving battlefield injuries at a much higher rate, but they are recovering and contributing to their nation in a host of other ways.

This is Melissa Stockwell, from Chicago. Ten years ago in Baghdad, her Humvee convoy hit an improvised explosive device (IED). She lost her left leg above the knee – the first female American soldier in history to lose a limb in active combat.

That IED may have taken her leg, but it didn't take her fighting spirit. Melissa spent a year at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where she was fitted with a titanium prosthetic leg. She took her first step on her new leg 52 days after losing her old leg.

In 2008, Melissa was the first Iraq war veteran chosen for the U.S. Paralympic Team in Beijing. She is also a three-time para-triathlon world champion. And she's gone back to school to become a prosthetist (*PROSS-te-tist*) – to help other amputees live the fullest lives possible. She is the embodiment of “Army Strong.”

These are the lives that are restored by this Subcommittee's commitment to medical research.

**[Chart 4: Defense Health Research, FY10-FY15.]**

The bill provides a \$789 million increase in medical research. The budget request contained significant reductions in this area. We have addressed those shortfalls and gone even further: the bill before the Subcommittee includes a 5 percent increase to defense medical research programs, compared to last year's bill. As this chart shows, our support for medical research has increased dramatically in the past three years, from a low of \$806 million in 2012 to this year's proposed level of \$1.18 billion.

It continues long-standing congressional investments in diseases such as breast cancer, prostate cancer, traumatic brain injury, and others. It also provides additional resources for the Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program so that the Armed Forces can apply funding to the most promising proposals, through collaboration with the National Institutes of Health and other agencies.

Another initiative of this bill is increasing United States engagement with our friends and allies to counter unpredictable and dangerous threats. Our Nation remains a superpower, but we cannot tackle all the world's threats alone.

The bill provides \$1.9 billion for the new Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund, plus an additional \$1 billion in another OCO appropriation account, which can be used to further engage friendly countries in countering the spread of terrorism. These proposals actually provide more funds over the next two years, with improved oversight, than the request submitted by the Department of Defense. The provision also ensures that these partnerships will be in line with American values, by requiring that recipients of this assistance be subject to human rights vetting.

The rise of ISIL and its incursion into Iraq means that more has to be done to promote the transition of Syria to a moderate and effective government. The bill provides a temporary authorization for the Department of Defense to train and equip vetted elements of the Syrian opposition, pending final authorization committee action on this issue.

For our longstanding friends and allies, \$1 billion is included for the European Reassurance Initiative, including Baltic Air Policing. The bill also adds \$348 million for Israeli missile defense programs, including doubling the funding for the Iron Dome system defending population centers all across Israel as we speak.

Finally, the bill makes substantially increased investments in successful programs that are needed by our Armed Forces, but simply could not fit into the Pentagon's budget proposal. Vice Chairman Cochran and I did not simply rubber stamp the budget submitted many months ago. The vast majority of these increases also address challenges in the U.S. industrial base, maintaining key engineering capabilities for the long term.

The bill provides \$1.3 billion for E/A-18G Growlers, \$800 million for the LPD-28 amphibious ship, and \$848 million to refuel the USS

George Washington. Possible breaks in production lines are eliminated with increased investments in a variety of Army vehicle programs, including \$61 million for Stryker engineering and production and \$120 million for Abrams tanks. The bill does not direct any changes to the Army's AMPV program, but sets the stage for later competition on follow-on programs.

In addition to the funding for these programs, the bill injects more competition into an important national security capability. The Defense Subcommittee held a hearing this year focused on how much we pay to launch satellites.

#### **[Chart 5: EELV Program Timeline.]**

As shown by this chart, the cost to launch Air Force and classified satellites has escalated dramatically over the past several years. Stronger oversight by Congress, GAO, and the Air Force has started to bend this cost curve, and the contractor has also taken important steps to control costs. But the long term answer is more competition in space launch missions. This bill includes an additional \$125 million to accelerate full and open competition among any certified rocket provider for an upcoming launch mission.

One of the revelations of the Subcommittee's space launch hearing was the U.S. dependence on a Russian-built engine, the RD-180. America's access to space should not depend on the cooperation of a state-owned foreign company, particularly in a country that is hell-bent on rebuilding an empire at the expense of its innocent neighbors. Therefore, the bill accelerates investment in a new, liquid-fueled engine. Both the development and the use of this engine are directed to be fully competitive, so United States rocket companies all have a fair shot at developing, and using, this new technology.

Finally, the bill contains several important good-government initiatives and reforms, but I would like to highlight just one example. Smoking is a serious problem in our military.

**[Chart 6: Smoking in the Military.]**

Servicemembers use tobacco at a higher rate than the general population, especially smokeless tobacco. It costs the military and estimated \$1.6 billion every year in health care and lost productivity.

Part of the reason? Tobacco sold at military exchanges is subject to a 5 percent discount. In practice, the discounts can be as high as 25 percent off or more. There's simply no reason why deadly tobacco products should be subsidized for members of our Armed Forces. The bill includes a provision that eliminates that discount, so there are no more subsidies for these deadly products.

I would like to thank Vice Chairman Cochran for all of his work on this important bill. We have had to address many difficult issues to better serve the men and women in the Armed Forces. Putting a bill of this size and importance means that not everyone will agree with all of the Subcommittee's recommendations, but this bill makes very important strides in promoting our national security and serving those in uniform, and I urge its approval.

I now turn to the Vice Chairman for his remarks.