

**Chairman Lamar Alexander Opening Statement  
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development**

**Hearing to Review the Budget Request  
and Funding Justification for the Nuclear Cruise Missile**

**July 13, 2016**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Today we are having an oversight hearing to discuss the development of the “long-range stand off” nuclear cruise missile, and the W80-4 warhead, which is funded in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill each year.

While Senator Feinstein and I don’t always agree on everything, we have been able to work together and have discussions that are based on the facts. One thing we have always agreed on is the importance of oversight.

This is the earliest the Senate Appropriations Committee has completed markups for the regular appropriations bills since 1988, and now it is time to convene our first oversight hearing this year. The Senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, which passed the Senate on May 12 by a vote of 90 to 8, includes \$220.3 million for the W80-4 warhead, which will be carried by the Long Range Standoff Weapon.

However when Senator Feinstein and I were drafting the bill this year she expressed concerns about this program and we agreed that an oversight hearing was needed. Today we hope to learn more about the nuclear cruise missile, why it is needed, and the critical role it plays in our national security. Later this afternoon, we will have a closed panel for government witnesses where we will hear the Administration’s position and about the military requirements for the nuclear cruise missile.

**A Safe, Reliable and Credible Deterrent is Vital to Our National Security**

Our national security requires a safe, reliable, and credible nuclear deterrent, which provides two things: It guarantees that we have the ability to retaliate if someone attacks the United States, which deters adversaries from attacking in the first place; and it supports nonproliferation by assuring our allies that they are protected under our nuclear umbrella, which makes them less likely to develop their own nuclear weapons.

Today, there are many more nuclear threats than there were during the Cold War, and because of that, deterrence is much more complicated than it was then. For example, both China and Russia are modernizing their nuclear weapons stockpile, and Vladimir Putin recently commented that the Russian rockets used in Syria could be equipped with “special nuclear warheads.” This is especially troubling because Putin has used nuclear weapons as a threat to warn against NATO’s presence in the Baltic States and Ukraine.

The president of the United States must have credible and equivalent nuclear response options to dissuade adversaries from even threatening to use nuclear weapons. That is precisely why we need nuclear weapons, including the nuclear cruise missile.

I hope the day never comes when we need to use a nuclear weapon again, but it is important to remember that the way we prevent that from happening is by making sure our adversaries know we can and will retaliate.

### **The New START Agreement**

When the Senate debated the ratification of the New Start Treaty in December 2010, the president made a number of commitments regarding his intent to modernize our nation's nuclear stockpile and supporting infrastructure, which had declined since the end of the Cold War.

I agreed to support the New Start Treaty because the president committed to an \$85 billion, 10-year plan to make sure that our nuclear weapons work. I sent a letter to the president, along with three other Senators, in December 2010, to inform him that we would support the New Start Treaty and full funding for the modernization of our nuclear weapons arsenal. I ask Unanimous Consent to enter a copy of the letter and the president's response into the record.

The president also specifically stated that he intended to modernize or replace the nuclear triad (Land-Sea-Air nuclear response capabilities), which includes the Air Launched Cruise Missile. The Administration has followed through on their commitment and requested funding each year to keep modernization of the Air Launched Cruise Missile on track and improve our nuclear infrastructure.

### **Effective Management to Keep Costs Under Control**

If we are going to be able to continue to afford the needed investments in our nuclear weapons stockpile and infrastructure, we have to spend taxpayer dollars wisely and keep big programs and projects on time and on budget.

The Uranium Processing Facility in Oak Ridge, the Plutonium Facility in New Mexico, and life extension programs for our aging warheads were all part of the president's commitment to modernize our outdated nuclear weapons and facilities. Each of these projects spans multiple years and costs several billion dollars to complete.

Senator Feinstein and I have focused much of our oversight on the Uranium Processing Facility in Tennessee over the past five years. We asked for a Red Team review of the project, which recommended ways to get it back on track.

We said the project had to be completed by 2025 with a cost no greater than \$6.5 billion, and the design had to be at least 90 percent completed before we began construction of the nuclear facilities. We urged the Department to take aggressive steps to get costs under control. The

Uranium Processing Facility is off to a good start, and serves as an example for how the Department needs to manage other large projects. We are working to ensure the Department incorporates lessons for the Uranium Processing Facility into the Plutonium Facility, and also incorporates best practices into the warhead life extension programs.

I look forward to the testimony this morning and having a classified discussion later this afternoon to discuss the threats we face, and the important role this weapon plays in maintaining our national security.

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