



## U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

Thad Cochran of Mississippi, Chairman

**NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FY2016 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL CLEARED FOR SENATE CONSIDERATION**

#### *Senate Appropriations Committee Okays Bipartisan Defense Funding Measure*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Vital bipartisan legislation written to ensure the continued strength of the U.S. military today received approval from the Senate Committee on Appropriations, making the \$575.9 billion measure available for consideration by the full Senate.

The committee today approved the FY2016 Defense Appropriations Bill with funding to ensure that American men and women in uniform remain the best equipped and trained in the world. The measure, approved on a bipartisan 27-3 vote, provides the Department of Defense (DoD) with funding increases to improve readiness and makes significant investments to sustain U.S. force structure. Important resources are dedicated to research and development in an effort to ensure the United States maintains a technological edge on its adversaries. The bill also maintains a strong commitment to taking care of the troops, their long-term health, and their families.

“We have worked together, as Republicans and Democrats, to write a responsible bill that provides the resources that the President and our military leaders say they need to defend our country and its national security interests,” said U.S. Senator Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and the Senate Appropriations Committee.

“Those who volunteer to defend this nation rely on us to meet our responsibility by ensuring that they have the tools to do their jobs. I hope that the bipartisan spirit with which this national defense bill was written will endure and propel the bill to the Senate floor for all Senators to review, debate and pass,” he said. “We need to make these funds available to our Armed Forces without delay.”

The committee-passed measure recommends \$489.1 billion in base funding and \$86.8 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations funding, consistent with the FY2016 budget resolution and the 302(b) allocation for the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

The bill provides \$213.9 billion for operation and maintenance accounts, which will enable the services to continue addressing their most urgent training and maintenance deficiencies. The measure funds an active duty end strength of 1,305,200 and reserve component end strength of 811,000, as requested by the President and incorporated in the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act. It also strengthens the National Guard and Reserve equipment account.

## Highlights of the Senate FY2016 Defense Appropriations Bill:

**Readiness** – \$213.9 billion for operation and maintenance accounts, which would enable the services to continue addressing their most urgent training and maintenance deficiencies while reconstituting the force to become smaller and more capable over the next several years. The bill also recommends an additional \$182 million to reduce readiness shortfalls.

**Aircraft Procurement** – The bill addresses several unfunded requirements and boosts Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities through the procurement of multiple air frames such as 12 additional F/A-18E/F Super Hornet fighter aircraft, six additional F-35 Joint Strike Fighters for the U.S. Marine Corps, four additional F-35s for the Air Force and eight additional MQ-9 UAV Reaper aircraft for the Air Force. In all, the bill recommends \$1.23 billion over the President’s budget for F-35 procurement, an additional \$979 million for the F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and \$160 million for the MQ-9 UAV Reapers.

**Army Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI)** – The bill contains a provision limiting the number of National Guard Apaches that can be transferred in FY2016 to 36 until 60 days after the Commission on the Future of the Army submits its recommendations to Congress. The provision would remain in effect until the date of enactment of the FY2016 National Defense Authorization Act.

**Shipbuilding** – The bill provides \$18.2 billion for Navy shipbuilding programs, an increase of \$1.6 billion and one ship from the request. In total, the bill funds the construction of 10 new warships: two Virginia class submarines, two DDG-51 destroyers, three Littoral Combat Ships (LCS), the LPD 28 amphibious transport dock, one Joint High Speed Vessel and one T-AO Fleet Replenishment Oiler. The bill also provides incremental funding, as authorized in the Senate reported National Defense Authorization Act, for one Arleigh Burke-class destroyer in addition to the 10 DDG-51s in the fiscal year 2013-2017 multiyear procurement contract.

**Missile Defense** – The bill provides \$8.2 billion for the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), an increase of \$262 million above the President’s request. This would fully fund MDA’s top priorities to modernize the Ground Based Interceptor, develop a Long Range Discrimination Radar that will be fielded in Alaska and field the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) Phase III, which includes fielding of Aegis Ashore sites in Romania and Poland. The bill recommends an additional \$329.8 million for Israeli missile defense programs, including \$150 million to begin production of the David’s Sling Weapon System, in support of the government of Israel.

**Missiles** – The bill reflects investments in critical missile procurement programs underfunded by the Services, including recommending an additional \$200 million in procurement funds for Patriot Missile Segment Enhancement (PAC-3 MSE) missiles for the Army and \$140 million to support Tube-Launched, Optically Tracked, Wire-Guided (TOW) missiles for the Marine Corps. The bill also adds \$30 million for Tomahawk missiles, an investment that supports a high-demand Navy program.

**National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account** – The bill provides \$1 billion for National Guard and Reserve equipment to modernize our reserve forces and ensure full interoperability with the active duty force.

**Basic Research Investments** – The bill adds \$228.5 million to basic (non-medical) research for the Army, Navy, Air Force and DoD, a 1.7 percent increase over FY2015 levels.

**Next Generation Rocket Engine** – The bill includes an additional \$143.6 million for the Air Force to continue development of a new U.S.-made engine as an alternative to the Russian-made RD-180 engine used in the Atlas V launch vehicle. This would enable the Air Force to move expeditiously to a new, domestically-produced engine that would end the nation's reliance on the Russians for access to space.

**Unmanned Carrier Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike (UCLASS) System** – The bill adds \$350 million for UCLASS air vehicle development and supports continued development of these technologies on a competitive basis. Senior Navy intelligence leaders have expressed concerns that a delay to the program would risk the United States falling behind in the development of an unmanned aerial vehicle from an aircraft carrier.

**Cyber Vulnerability Assessments** – The bill recommends an increase of \$200 million for the Department of Defense to complete cyber vulnerability assessments of all major weapon systems.

**Military Personnel and Pay** – The bill would fund an active duty end strength of 1,305,200 and reserve component end strength of 811,000, as requested and authorized. It recommends a 1.3 percent pay raise for military personnel, as requested by DoD and authorized by the Senate Armed Services Committee. The bill also supports the President's request to slow growth of the basic allowance for housing (BAH) for servicemembers, which would save \$3.9 billion in personnel costs over the next five years.

**Troops and Families** – The bill maintains a strong commitment to taking care of the troops and their families and recommends an additional \$14 million for behavioral health counseling, an additional \$25 million for the continued implementation of the Sexual Assault Special Victims' Counsel program across the services, and an increase of \$37 million to develop a financial education program to educate servicemembers on best practices with regard to career transition, health benefits, retirement planning and savings, and overall financial readiness.

**Defense Health** – \$32.5 billion for the Defense Health Program, which provides medical services for our military personnel and their families, continues advancements in medical research, modernizes and maintains medical infrastructure and develops the next generation of electronic health records. The bill also increases DoD core medical research budget as well as congressionally-directed medical research funding by \$835.5 million, including \$278.7 million for the competitively awarded peer-reviewed medical research program and \$177.3 million for the Department to advance its own medical research priorities.

**Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO)** – The bill transfers \$36.5 billion from base operation and maintenance accounts to OCO in order to meet the overall defense funding levels requested by the President while avoiding sequestration by breaching the Budget Control Act caps. This transfer moves funding for operation and maintenance budget lines that have executed both base and OCO funding in the past. The amounts provided would also enable the DoD to meet emerging threats and support ongoing military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

**Program Reductions** – The Senate bill proposes reductions to 486 programs based on schedule slips, cost growth and poor budget justification. It reinvests those funds to support unfunded requirements identified by the Services, increases authorized by the Senate Armed Services Committee, and readiness and military modernization priorities.

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