

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
Senate Committee on Appropriations**

**Conference Meeting on the Fiscal Year 2017 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs
and Zika Response Appropriations Act (HR.2577)**

June 15, 2016

(As prepared for delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

We are hopeful that we can resolve our differences and complete our work in a reasonable time.

We are determined to provide the resources necessary, in particular, to the public health threat of the Zika virus.

I think there is consensus on the importance of enacting a Zika supplemental as quickly as possible.

We are also making good progress on the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill. Senator Kirk has been diligent in ensuring that our veterans are being properly supported.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the good-faith efforts of all the conferees as we begin this conference. We have differences and they will be resolved. We are confident we can work through those challenges in a way that will reflect credit on the United States Senate and the House of Representatives.

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