

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

**Hearing to review to Review the FY2017 Budget Request & Budget Justification
for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps**

March 2, 2016

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the subcommittee meets this morning to receive testimony on the budget request for the United States Navy and Marine Corps. We are pleased to welcome:

- The Honorable Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy;
- Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations; and
- General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

This is Admiral Richardson's and General Neller's first appearances before the Subcommittee since becoming Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps. We are pleased to welcome you both. We also welcome our fellow Mississippian, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, back to the Subcommittee. Thank you for joining us and providing your testimony.

For fiscal year 2017, the President's budget requests \$155 billion in base funding to support the Navy and Marine Corps. The request is \$5 billion less than the current funding level. The request also includes \$9.5 billion to support ongoing Overseas Contingency Operations. These funds will support the deployment of Sailors and Marines throughout the world and sustain ongoing operational commitments.

We appreciate your efforts to maintain a robust shipbuilding budget. Specifically, we welcome the inclusion of full funding for the Ohio class Replacement Program within the Navy's regular budget request from fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2021.

We appreciate your service to our nation. We look forward to working with each of you as we prepare and report the fiscal year 2017 appropriations bill that will enable the Navy and Marine Corps to defend our national security interests around the world.

Thank you for your testimony and your cooperation with our committee.

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