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Chairman CW Bill Young – Opening Statement

Subcommittee on Defense

Fiscal Year 2012 Navy and Marine Corps Budget Hearing

Witnesses: The Honorable Raymond Mabus, Secretary of the Navy; Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations; General James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps

March 9, 2011

The subcommittee will come to order.

This morning the subcommittee will hold an open hearing on the posture and budget request of the Department of the Navy. We will focus on Navy and Marine Corps personnel, training, and equipment readiness and will also touch on acquisition issues to gain insights into the Department's priorities and decision making.

I would like to welcome Secretary of the Navy Raymond Mabus, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Gary Roughead, and Commandant of the Marine Corps General James Amos to the subcommittee. The subcommittee could not ask for a better team to speak for the Department of the Navy on the state of the Navy and Marine Corps team and their fiscal year 2012 budget request.

Thank you all for being here this morning and I appreciate your flexibility in getting started a few minutes earlier than normal to accommodate our Joint Session with the Senate later this morning. I'm sure I can safely speak for every Member of this subcommittee in thanking you for your service to our great nation.

Gentlemen, we are encouraged by several things we see happening in the Navy and Marine Corps. For the first time since 1992, you have requested funding for at least ten ships to be constructed in fiscal year 2012. That's a big first step in reaching a fleet size of 313 ships which we all acknowledge is the minimum fleet size necessary to satisfy our Nation's requirements. Additionally, you have finally acknowledged the shortfall in your tactical aircraft inventory and have taken a number of steps to reduce or mitigate the effects of the shortfall.

The subcommittee is anxious to hear about your Department's contribution to Secretary Gate's collection of efficiency savings. While we applaud this effort, we understand that the Navy and Marine Corps team was the largest contributor to the total savings found. While that may speak to the quality of the financial and budget professionals in the Navy and Marine Corps, we are a bit skeptical about some of the savings. The majority of the savings within your Department are in the broad areas of "buying smarter" and "streamlining organizations". Savings in these types of areas often times never materialize so we are anxious to hear about these in more detail. We shudder at the thought of your Department having to shift large amounts of funding during the fiscal year to cover shortfalls in the event these savings are not realized.

Rest assured that this subcommittee will continue to work with you to ensure you have the required resources and authorities to conduct your mission and take care of your sailors and Marines in the process. We understand as well as anybody that the number one resources of your team are the great men and women who sacrifice so much in defending our freedoms.

So welcome – I look forward to your comments and pledge to continue to work with you as we try to wrap up fiscal year 2011 and work through your fiscal year 2012 budget.

Now let me turn to my good friend and partner, Ranking Member Norm Dicks for any comments he may want to make.