

Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense
Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Hearing
Opening Statement
February 16, 2012

Thank you, Chairman Young, for yielding. Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey, your appearance today marks your first before this Subcommittee in your current positions. Welcome and I look forward to working with you.

This Subcommittee knows that you come representing thousands of our troops and their families. We must begin by acknowledging their fine service, dedication, and sacrifice. Since the creation of our great country, young men and women have answered the call to serve. Since September 11, 2001, they have taken necessary and impressive strides to protect our people from current global threats. Within the last year, our brave soldiers and those in the intelligence community have surgically rid this earth of two of our greatest threats - Osama bin Laden and Anwar al-Awlaki.

In recent years, we have also seen a different kind of threat to our sovereignty emerge in our escalating fiscal crisis. This Committee has been front and center in attempting to address the very real security threat posed by out-of-control Washington spending and trillion dollar deficits. Last year, this Committee worked to restore transparency, austerity and tough oversight to the Appropriations process – and we succeeded in reducing discretionary spending by some \$98 billion compared to FY10. That hasn't happened since World War II.

While the Department of Defense is not immune to the difficult budget challenges we face, national security and keeping our brave men and women serving in uniform safe and supplied with the equipment they need remains a top priority. We must take temperate and responsible steps to reduce spending without negatively impacting the warfighter or military readiness in the future. I hope that you can illuminate me on how a 100,000 troop reduction will ensure sufficient security to meet future threats, maintain conventional and nuclear warfare readiness, address the growing cyberwarfare challenges, and uphold our treaty obligations.

We have some tough choices ahead of us, and I look forward to hearing from you today about the Administration's new priorities.

Thank you.

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