

OPENING STATEMENT
The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
Hearing on NNSA FY 2013 Budget Requests for
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation and Naval Reactors
March 6, 2012

I'd like to call this hearing to order. Good morning, everyone.

Administrator D'Agostino, last week we heard from you and your nuclear weapons representatives. Today we will receive testimony on the NNSA's naval reactors and nonproliferation programs. I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome back all three of you to the subcommittee. The programs and professionals you each represent are critically important to the national security of this country, and I thank you all for your work. I'd also like to take a moment to recognize Admiral Donald for his extraordinary service to this country. The post of Naval Reactors is an eight-year assignment, unique in the Navy for its length and a truly formidable responsibility. This is the final year of your eight-year tour and therefore the final time you will testify before this subcommittee as the head of Naval Reactors. I would like to personally thank you for your 37 years of active duty service to this nation and for these past eight years working tirelessly to ensure the vitality of the Naval Reactors program.

Mr. Administrator, the breadth of programs that NNSA oversees is truly impressive. You maintain the nuclear weapons that provide a strategic umbrella for us and our allies. You run programs around the world to keep fissile material out of the hands of those who would do us harm. You work with the Navy to ensure our submarines excel at their role as the silent leg of our triad. And you provide the science and analysis to protect us against strategic surprises.

Last year, this Committee showed that our country's strategic security could be maintained and even strengthened within constrained resources. And as I said last week, the task before you is to demonstrate, to us and to the American people, that these funding levels, while constrained, will ensure our country's strategic security.

It's obvious to me as I look through the budget request that many hard decisions had to be made this year to work within constrained resources. The Naval Reactors request is only \$8.6 million above fiscal year 2012, a significant change from the steep escalation we were facing last year. Because of that escalation, Admiral Donald, this subcommittee asked you to take a hard look at your requirements and it's clear that you have done so, bringing back a very reasonable request for funding this year. I do thank you for your diligence, but understand there are still some difficulties in developing a path forward that will meet all the Navy's requirements in the outyears. I am interested to hear how the budget constraints may be affecting the needs of the operating fleet.

For instance, the Administration has announced that it would push back the Ohio Class Submarine replacement program by two years. This subcommittee has worked hard over the

years to ensure adequate funding to support the development of the new reactor for this program. Submarines are an indispensable part of our strategic triad, and I'm looking forward to hearing more on the changes to the Ohio-Replacement program and what other decisions could be around the corner that might impact our strategic posture.

With respect to the NNSA's nonproliferation activities, the funding requested for core nonproliferation activities is actually decreasing, after taking into account the request to start a uranium enrichment development program and the cost growth in operations associated with the MOX program. For instance, the budget request would cut funding for Megaports, part of the Second Line of Defense program, by 65 percent. That's an incredible cut to a program which just last year the Administration was defending as a critical part of our nation's efforts to fight the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials across international borders. I expect you'll be able to offer a good explanation of why you're taking a different approach this year.

Given the budgetary challenges facing this nation, we must at times look at our programs in whole new ways, seeking new efficiencies, innovation and inspiration. Mr. Administrator, I think the labs under your jurisdiction can be an important source of new ideas, but tapping into that resource will require real improvements in the effectiveness of NNSA's federal oversight activities. Please keep this subcommittee informed as you decide on what, if any, changes are needed to improve this situation.

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