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INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET REQUEST FOR SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
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INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET REQUEST FOR SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, March 12, 2014.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:05 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. J. Randy Forbes (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. J. RANDY FORBES, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

Mr. FORBES. Well, I want to welcome all of our members and our distinguished panel of experts for today's hearing, focused on the fiscal year 2015 budget request. We have testifying before us retired Admiral Robert Natter, former commander of Fleet Forces Command; and Dr. Rebecca Grant, IRIS Independent Research.

Thank you both for appearing today to share your unique perspectives on this important topic.

Before I begin a specific discussion about the fiscal year 2015 budget request I want to express my continued concern about our overall defense budget request and proposed defense spending trends. To put it bluntly, the President's budget greatly diminishes our ability for responding to emerging threats and decreases our current readiness.

The harm in our budget deliberations will not be measured on the impact to our force structure today, but rather, the greatest impact will be the debilitating impact of the continued underfunding of the defense strategy and our hampered ability to respond to future global security requirements and challenges.

As for the budget request, there are multiple issues I find concerning. The most perplexing issue is the perceived indifference to the aircraft carrier force structure.

The budget request supports the defueling of the USS *George Washington* but has not included required funds for the refueling. This $450 million deficit in fiscal year 2015 may lead to a reduction in the overall aircraft carrier fleet from 11 to 10.

Equally problematic is the proposal to not support $300 million in advanced procurement for additional nuclear reactor cores in fiscal year 2015.

I refuse to accept the current trajectory that reduces our aircraft carrier fleet to 10. This runs in contravention to the entirety of the global requirement set forth by our combatant commanders. When

asked about the ability to support the global presence demand, Admiral Locklear indicated that even the current aircraft carrier fleet was insufficient to adequately support requirements.

I am also concerned about the national capabilities of the industrial base and the potential negative consequences that threaten to induce greater instability to what already exists. Considering the recent closure of Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana, I am concerned that a diminished workload will precipitate additional restructuring.

With the truncation of the DDG 1000 program, the procurement reduction associated with the Littoral Combat Ship [LCS], the potential elimination of an aircraft carrier refueling and complex overhaul, and the indecision associated with additional amphibious ships after delivery of LPD–27, all of these issues will negatively impact the ship construction industry. Unless we are able to turn the overall defense trend lines in a positive direction, including the shipbuilding budget, I am concerned that the Navy will be unable to sustain the entirety of the existing industrial base.

Regarding future Air Force capabilities, I am pleased that the Air Force was able to protect its new KC–46 tanker and the new long-range strike bomber. These two programs will be critical to our nation's ability to project power for decades to come. However, it wasn't without cost or consequence to other imperative Air Force programs and capability areas such as space, airlift, tactical fighters, and necessary modernization and upgrade programs that bridged the capability gap until the Air Force's top three acquisition priorities are fielded.

I look forward to discussing these important topics with our expert panel of witnesses.

And with that, I turn to my good friend and colleague, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mike McIntyre.

STATEMENT OF MIKE MCINTYRE, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this hearing.

Thank you to our guests for being here with us today.

As you may well know, our full committee has heard from the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations [CNO] about the Navy's budget request coming up, and with regard to the Air Force, we will look forward to hearing from the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff on Friday. And when we consider the proposals before us this afternoon, I know there are some questions that I, too, am concerned about, just as my good friend, Chairman Forbes, has indicated.

The Navy appears to have done better than other services in terms of protecting top budget priorities, but there are still, of course, many challenges over the horizon: the future of our aircraft carrier force, the size of the future amphibious assault ship force, and the *Ohio* submarine replacement program—something that I was discussing this morning in our other larger committee hearing. Given the Navy's budget projections, can all of these challenges be

met—the aircraft carrier force, the amphibious assault ship force, and the *Ohio* submarine replacement program?

For the Air Force, I am pleased it was able to protect the new bomber program and the KC–46 tanker. However, the Air Force is taking risk in other areas, including retiring more C–130s, especially those at Pope Army Airfield in North Carolina, which is located at Fort Bragg, and a large number of the older tactical fighter and reconnaissance aircraft.

With regard to the 440th, I want to particularly cite an article that appeared in the statewide newspaper, the Raleigh News & Observer, just yesterday with regard to the 440th Airlift Wing's medical training flight that they describe. And their reference is, of course, in this article, talking about the proposal with the Air Force being proposed before Congress to deactivate the 440th Airlift Wing at Pope Army Airfield, which would send 11 of the C–130s to other bases.

As this states, the 440th has provided airlift, airdrop, and medical support from Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, and all of the airmen training Monday of this week had been deployed overseas at least once. Last year the 440th moved more than 500,000 pounds of cargo, 3,400 passengers, and 13,000 paratroopers, working with a combination of both Active Duty and Reserve personnel.

We know that with the expansion at Fort Bragg under the last BRAC [Base Closure and Realignment] proceedings and the large investment that this Congress has made at Fort Bragg, it seems very, very unfortunate, and we feel like very unwise, to suddenly pull out the very support group with the Air Force that helps the mission at Fort Bragg be carried forward.

I would hope to hear the witnesses' thoughts on these types of topics.

Also, we know that the DOD [Department of Defense] has chosen to focus on potential conflicts where our Navy and Air Force will lead in terms of providing rapid response in combat power; yet, at the same time there is a proposal to reduce the size of the Army up to 150,000 troops by 2019. When we consider sequestration and all the concerns that go with it, the concern is, will the savings that are supposed to result from those reductions in the Army—would they be properly reinvested in Navy and Air Force capabilities, or would it just be money to help sustain what the Navy and Air Force need to continue?

The question is, are we going to be able to plan for the next-generation technologies, as well, and I would like to hear witnesses' thoughts with regard to what the Navy and Air Force are pursuing in this budget request. Are those the right technologies for us to continue to focus on?

In other words, are we correct in investing heavily in cyber, unmanned systems, directed energy, and electronic warfare programs? Are they going to be able to be sustained with the work that needs to be done for us to plan properly and adequately for the future for our national security and for helping our men and women in uniform do the work that they have committed to do?

With that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you and we look forward to today's testimony.

Mr. FORBES. Mike, thank you.

And I think all the members have the biographies for both of our distinguished witnesses today, and we appreciate both of you being here. We appreciate the written testimony that you have already given to us, which is going to be made a part of the record, without objection.

And now, Admiral, we look forward to any remarks that you might want to offer to the committee.

STATEMENT OF ADM ROBERT J. NATTER, USN (RET.), R.J. NATTER & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Admiral NATTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McIntyre.

It is my pleasure to appear before you all today. I am honored to be able to offer my independent assessment of the fiscal year 2015 budget, especially as it pertains to the Navy and naval forces.

First and foremost, I am very thankful for having had the opportunity to serve my country—36 years of commissioned service in the Navy and 1 year enlisted service. And my wife and I are very proud that our three daughters chose to serve this country as part of the Navy, two still serving. And I can assure you that they provide, as do their friends, a very blunt, straightforward assessment of their views and their generation's perspective on our military.

Today our country enjoys a superior military force. Thank you to our citizens, who have made the necessary sacrifices, and the succeeding generations to make that possible, especially on behalf of the representatives in succeeding administrations who have represented our people.

The leadership and national will to invest in ensuring that this country has the best military possible has resulted in unparalleled quality shipbuilding and aircraft manufacturing. Anyone has to just look around the world to see the competition and know that that is the case.

As a representative of dedicated and talented youth who man our ships and aircraft, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize the undersung heroes who work in our ship repair facilities, shipyards, and aircraft manufacturing facilities around this great country of ours.

We have been through a decade—more than a decade—of continuous war footing in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere overseas. With the anticipated withdrawal of our forces in Afghanistan, it is obvious that this country and our elected representatives have chosen to retrench as a military, but not, hopefully, as a nation.

And as this committee is well aware, the United States Navy is certainly not retrenching; we are continuing to operate and deploy around the world at the same levels as our forces had to do prior to OEF [Operation Enduring Freedom] and OIF [Operation Iraqi Freedom], and that is with a significant reduction in the numbers of ships, crews, and aircraft that we enjoyed during that period. The result is, of course, running ships, wearing our aircraft down, and extending deployments of our men and women on our ships at sea.

Needless to say, our nation and the Joint Forces commanders will continue to rely on the Navy and the Marine Corps and all our

services to be able to respond to a range of military operations worldwide.

Needless to say, we are an international trading community today—this country and a lot of other of our allies. They depend on freedom of the seas to move markets to and from this country and around the world, and without the confidence of our allies and trading partners in our ability to keep those sea routes open and free, our economy and our markets would be affected negatively.

We obviously have to prepare for the various contingency risks around the world. And in that regard, I agree wholeheartedly with the CNO's assessment that the Navy will be at high risk and not able to prevail in all warfare areas against a near peer force.

And let me be specific about that. He is talking about China and Russia. Make no mistake about that: They are a near peer force and we would be at risk with the funding and with the forces that we have available to us now and in the future.

The challenge facing the U.S. Navy is budgetary uncertainty in the near term and a threat of the return to the potentially disastrous sequestration funding levels after 2015. Essentially, if we go back to BCA [Budget Control Act] funding levels the Navy will not be able to provide the force levels, the readiness levels that have been projected and provided to you in this morning's hearing.

I think the CNO has made the case for that and I fully agree with that.

The big elephant at the door was mentioned by Congressman McIntyre. That is the *Ohio* replacement [SSBN–X].

That replacement is going to require such a huge chunk of our SCN [Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy] funding that our industrial base and the ships that we are able to deploy in the future is not going to be worth the paper it is written on. Unless there is external funding made available for the *Ohio*-class replacement, our SCN line and the ships that we are able to project out into the future are not going to be in accordance with the 30-year shipbuilding plan that you have seen.

Aircraft will also be affected if we return to the funding that we are talking about, with 111 fewer aircraft procured in the FYDP [Future Years Defense Program]. We obviously, I agree with the Secretary and the CNO that we are going to have to rein in the significant growth of medical expenses, housing stipends, and subsistence payments for our people. And retirement remuneration and copays ought to be part of that reassessment.

Having said that, the military makes up 1 percent of this nation's population today, and I believe that those kinds of adjustments need to be made across the board. There needs to be shared sacrifice in our society and not just sacrifice on the part of our men and women in uniform.

The people with whom I have spoken on active duty today are willing to step up. They understand the budget constraints of this nation and they are willing to sacrifice. They would like to be doing it with the rest of our nation and not all alone.

Lastly, let me just say that I have discussed not only with the junior people in the Navy but also our leadership, and I am quite frankly dismayed and disappointed by the repeated reports of untoward behavior, to include violent sexual assaults, and significant

shortcomings on the part of some of our military leaders. My discussion with the CNO and our other senior leaders is that they need to be held accountable, the letter of the law needs to be upheld, and the rest of our people need to know that that is not going to be allowed and permitted in this Navy today.

With that, sir, I would like to conclude my remarks.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Natter can be found in the Appendix on page 23.]

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, Admiral.

Dr. Grant.

STATEMENT OF DR. REBECCA GRANT, PRESIDENT, IRIS INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Dr. GRANT. Thank you, first of all, for the opportunity to testify.

I am glad that the committee today is looking for some independent assessments because I think the committee has a special responsibility to look at the fiscal year 2015 defense budget in light of the changes in the international security environment. As we see daily, we are not in the world of 5 years ago, where stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan were our top concerns. What we see today are signals of instability ranging from the East China Sea to the Crimea.

I will confine my remarks primarily to those Air Force systems that are key to projection of forces. And as we know, Americans have long counted on air superiority to make all other forms of military force most efficient and most effective.

And in looking across this budget, I see that we have an opportunity to consider whether we can really take some steps to diminish risk and produce a budget that better meets our national security needs.

Specifically for me, my number one concern is that we prepare and posture and equip for a strong deterrent stance in the Pacific. Specifically, this means being able to retain air superiority and sea superiority and that freedom of maneuver even if forces of China or another adversary—potential adversary—adopt a confrontational stance. China is not the only major power in the Pacific nor around the world, but if we prepare for a strong deterrent posture there then we get our capability right for most of our global needs.

Freedom of action in the Pacific demands some highly sophisticated air forces that can operate with impunity on an arch from Australia to the Aleutians, and so looking across this budget I have a few specific concerns.

I am glad to say, I think the Air Force has it largely right in its top three priorities with—of F–35, KC–46, and the long-range strike bomber. Although it is outside the scope of this committee, let me just say very briefly about F–35 that that, too, is part of power projection for our joint forces and is very important to continue to procure and to increase procurement rights to give us a solid capability with a fifth-gen system.

KC–46 I am glad to see is proceeding on course. Without tankers we do not have global air power; in fact, we really do not have global military power.

And of course, the new stealth bomber is rightly a top priority. Why? Because there is no other system in the inventory of our

partner services or of our allies that can provide that rapid, precise strike capability against some of potentially the most dangerous targets with the greatest possibility to threaten the international security system.

We are already short in our bomber force, and it is old, as the committee well knows. We need to go ahead and procure.

That said, there are three issues that I think the committee might want to think of going forward on the bomber.

The first of these is, in my personal opinion, overclassification. And this can be a risk not only to the proper public debate about such a major acquisition, but overclassification of a program can also restrict the technical work and crossflow that the prime contractors must go through to produce an adequate system.

We know that there will be systems on that bomber that should always remain highly classified, but I think the committee might want to reconsider the stance on whether this program should remain in the black. In my opinion, it should not.

Second, is the technology scope right for this bomber? We want to keep the costs controlled but we also want to have a bomber that is right for a 40-year service life, a period of time in which we may see the addition of new electronic countermeasures, directed-energy weapons, hypersonic missiles, many technologies that require the space, power, appropriate engines, and cooling to make this possible going forward.

Third is quantity. Even back in Desert Storm in 1991 we deployed 66 bombers, so 80 to 100 is on the short end of what we will need. We may want to consider going for more in the end.

Finally, I want to make some remarks about the industrial base. In the 1950s we had 54 major aircraft program starts across the fixed-wing inventory for the Air Force and the Navy; in the decade of the 2000s we had just nine. What that means most of all is that the key of our industrial base, which is people, are finding it more difficult to gain the experience across multiple programs.

Going forward, what we need in the industrial base really are four things: We need qualified tier-one suppliers; we need critical design skills preserved within the design teams—everything from pyrotechnics for the cockpit on to structures, et cetera; we need to have program managers who are experienced across a range of programs and able to execute from design right through the end of the lifecycle; and finally, we need to have that robust series of starts, and particularly, a focus on advanced engine technology, which in the end is what often separates our Air Force from its peer competitors.

With that, I would like to close my opening statement and I look forward to your questions. Thank you again for the opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Grant can be found in the Appendix on page 33.]

Mr. FORBES. Dr. Grant, thank you so much.

And to both of you, if we were talking about an athletic event and we were walking in here today and we were talking about athletic teams we would—and this were the gymnasium, we would look around and we would have all these wonderful banners about what our military has done; we would look at the team on the floor

and we would say, Admiral, kind of as you did, "They are the best in the world."

But for both of you, looking at the budgets that have been set forth here and projecting out 5 years or 10 years down the road, what is the part of it that gives you the greatest heartburn as to what you see?

Because, Admiral, you have had to meet those demands before. You know what it is like.

And, Doctor, you are looking at that industrial base every day and watching it wither away.

What concerns you most about what you are seeing?

Admiral NATTER. Well, I think it is blatantly obvious that our investment accounts in our military are on the downslope, and nations like China and Russia, their investment accounts are on the upslope. So there is going to be a meeting of those slopes.

In real terms, what that means to us is that we are deploying our ships more frequently than we did even before OIF and OEF, when the rule was essentially 6-month deployments. Today it is not uncommon to have 7- and 8-month deployments. And the new Fleet Response Plan that is presented, which I think is a good one, given the assets that we have, is going to result in 8- or 9-month deployments.

But the more those assets are used and flowed forward so that 8 and 9 months become the rule, then the exception is going to pretty quickly come to a year. And with that, people are not going to stay with us and our ships and aircraft are going to get worn out.

We saw that in an era between Vietnam and between 9/11, when we actually had to tie up ships alongside the pier. Many of you remember that. And investments and readiness eventually turned that around, but we don't want to go there again.

So to me it is blatantly obvious what is happening here, and the number of force levels are going down but the demands on those force levels are remaining constant, and in the case of the Pacific, probably going up.

Mr. FORBES. Dr. Grant.

Dr. GRANT. I agree. And I would say there are two things that concern me. The number one concern is we are, certainly within the Air Force, developing advanced aircraft but not procuring them in quantities sufficient to meet the threats that are on the very near-term horizon.

We are not procuring new fighters quickly enough, and although we have a bomber program now, you will recall this is a program that has started in embryonic ways, stopped, and restarted, and we are already late-to-need in the procurement for long-range strike. So I am concerned that we are not modernizing our combat air forces quickly enough and substantially enough.

A secondary and related concern goes to the readiness and training. The effects of sequestration have made a dent in the training of the long-term force and those younger aviators who have missed certain training evolutions that that force simply cannot get back. If we continue to oscillate in our funding of flying hours we may impose long-term quality shortfalls on the U.S. Air Force that really would be unacceptable.

Mr. FORBES. And, Doctor, when you talk about the risk of not modernizing, we hear that phrase a lot but what does that mean? What kind of risk are we assuming?

Dr. GRANT. We are not buying enough aircraft to face down and deter a potential peer adversary in the Pacific. Let me be specific: We are not buying enough aircraft to overmatch China in the Pacific.

Mr. FORBES. So we had testimony in this subcommittee by Admiral Lehman and Gary Roughead probably a year or so ago where they talked about a tipping point, where the United States, as we continue to drop our military spending, it would actually encourage peer competitors to start increasing theirs to catch us. They felt we were already there. What do you feel about that?

Dr. GRANT. If only we really knew. But I would have to agree, we are close to being—we are too close to feel comfortable with where we are.

I think our—we are just now beginning to focus on preparing for that theater. We need to focus on it very sharply because we want to deter, and to deter means we cannot allow a gap to open up in our capabilities.

I do not think that our competition with China is like our former competition with the former Soviet Union, where it was a case of matching forces one-for-one. China has natural advantages in geography. We need a force big enough and strong enough to make sure that China doesn't feel comfortable taking risks and pushing out in that theater. And in that case, I think we are far too close to the tipping point to be comfortable.

Mr. FORBES. Admiral, you have had to meet these needs of our combatant commanders before. We are hearing a lot today about perhaps reducing the number of carriers down from 11 to 10.

Could you just give us your thoughts on how crucial it is to have those 11 carriers, or if you think it is crucial? And secondly, in the area of munitions, how crucial is that and where do you see us with this budget?

Admiral NATTER. Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, as you know, the commander of Pacific Command has testified on the requirement for carriers in his theater. I can assure you that the commander of Central Command will also echo that requirement.

There are certainly not enough carriers to satisfy the demands of all our combatant commanders. They have all testified to that point.

The issue and the quandary is, how many are enough? And unfortunately, we really can't say the answer to that question until post-hostilities.

Having said that, every one of our combatant commanders have testified, and certainly the Chief of Naval Operations has testified that 11 is just barely sufficient to satisfy the need, and it doesn't fully satisfy the need of all the combatant commanders.

So going from 11 to 10 and eliminating a capital ship like this halfway through its life is irresponsible on the part of our citizens. And I think if our citizens had the vote on this and they knew what the tradeoffs were that they would ensure that this national asset was funded.

The aircraft that go with it, the ability to project power, and the ability to prevent the kinds of action that Dr. Grant was referring to out in the Pacific theater are important. And so the fact that we are talking about going to 10 carriers and the ability to flow far fewer assets than we have been able to in the past puts us at greater risk.

The CNO has testified that against a peer competitor, two mission areas are at high risk. I think the slope of that curve is obvious.

Mr. FORBES. And if both of you could just address your worry, if any, on munitions?

Admiral NATTER. On munitions, there is a requirement for more advanced munitions, and on the part of the Navy, a better surface-to-surface capability. I know the commander of Pacific Command is well aware of that. We have had discussions about that. The Navy is investing in that.

The depth of our munitions is an issue. We are okay in some areas. We need more in the way of more precision and more highly capable munitions. And of course, a lot of that is dependent upon the threat and the potential adversary, but I think against a high-end [threat] there is no doubt that we need greater investment in munitions.

Mr. FORBES. Dr. Grant, your thoughts?

Dr. GRANT. I agree. We probably have enough Mark 83 bomb bodies in the inventory, but I doubt we have enough of much of anything else across the spectrum.

We see in every conflict a shortage of some type of crucial munition. In the Kosovo conflict of 1999 it was a shortage of JDAMs [Joint Direct Attack Munition] and they had to be rushed through production. This happens to us every time.

The difference in a peer conflict will be that we won't have the luxury of time to spin up production lines, rush munitions, trade them between theaters, move them between ships, move them from ships to airbases and airbases to ships. We need to have in place in theater a wide range of munitions—the correct air-to-air munitions; we need to have, if we may count them as such, munitions such as THAAD [Terminal High Altitude Area Defense] and Patriot.

These need to be where they need to be before the crisis starts. That is crucial to giving our policymakers options as we face a potential peer competitor.

Almost part two of this is the imperative to invest in our more sophisticated range of munitions—JASSM [Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile]; LRASM [Long Range Anti-Ship Missile]; the more sophisticated air-to-air and dual-role air-to-air, air-to-ground munitions that we see coming. These are expensive options to start with. It is painful to put them into a budget at any time, particularly now. Yet it is that munition that in the end does the job.

It is like the tires on your car. That is the only thing that is in contact with the road. In the end, that munition is what is in contact with the adversary target. This is not an area that we can skimp.

Mr. FORBES. And do both of you agree that in the past we have been short munitions but we have had the luxury, as, I think, Dr.

Grant, you mentioned, to ramp those up because of the adversaries we were facing, but in a near competitor situation we would not have that luxury? And if that—you do agree with that, where do you see this budget taking us in terms of the munitions gap?

Admiral NATTER. Well, the focus and emphasis on the part of the Navy, of course, is replacing old ships and older aircraft. And with the BCA [Budget Control Act] and then the BBA [Bipartisan Budget Act], the funding to reach down and replace those munitions and restore the kinds of advanced munitions that Dr. Grant addressed is—the money is not there.

They are doing it with some development areas. I will tell you, I have had this discussion, I know the fleet commanders have been straightforward about wanting to get some decent surface-to-surface missile capability on the LCS. There are some obvious missiles that can be put on that ship in the near term, and the Navy needs to get off the dime and get on with it.

Hellfire is the perfect example of a missile that Navy has in its inventory. The Army literally has thousands of them. The Navy puts them on their seaborne helicopters today.

I think that some sort of missile system and an anti-air capability on the LCS would go a long way to having the fleet commanders better embrace that ship. That can be done quickly—certainly much more quickly than it is being done today.

Mr. FORBES. Good.

Dr. Grant.

Dr. GRANT. I agree. I think this budget may not have looked carefully enough at what we really need to prepare for a peer threat. It is something we are all hoping won't happen, but we—this is the defense planning cycle. We must look for capacity. And this is true, again, with munitions.

It is very tempting to cut or stretch or delay. A lot of early munitions work is done in basic research accounts or in classified programs, where it is hard to look at what is truly going on.

But I think we see this temptation to stretch and skimp. We are all hoping not to have to use these things, but you would—but unless you have that capacity then the purchase of the platforms is—you know, is—why would you do it anyway?

And this is something that is easy to get right. It is easy to get the munitions inventory correct.

We hear all the time, "You don't want to be Winchester," in this environment, and it is easy to prevent that. So I think we need to continue the investment both in getting the correct inventories, positioning them correctly, and in the advanced—the suite of advanced munitions for a range of platforms and services.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you.

And I would like to recognize Congressman McIntyre for any questions he might have.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you again to our witnesses.

Admiral Natter, on pages three and four of your testimony and then you also just orally referred to the concern about the Air Force—I mean, sorry, the aircraft carrier force structure being reduced in the Navy with the current proposal. If this happens—and I think we are in agreement with you, we do not want it to hap-

pen—but if it were to happen, how would we mitigate, would you recommend, the shortfall in our day-to-day presence overseas? I know it is all about force projection, and with the concern of losing one of our carriers such as the USS *George Washington,* what would you say we could do to mitigate that loss?

Admiral NATTER. Well, the loss of that carrier would result primarily in the ability to flow forces beyond the two-carrier presence that the CNO is providing the theater commanders.

In the case of Pacific Command, we have the forward-deployed carrier that is generally available on short notice. We also have one always deployed out in that theater or over in the Central Command theater that can flow quickly into the Pacific Command theater if required.

The challenge will be the flow of additional carriers into the theater should a contingency erupt in North Korea, with respect to the islands, or with respect to any incident in the South China Sea. Today the Navy is able to flow three carriers in addition to the two in theater.

That won't be an option should we go down to 10 carriers. So that is going to be the shortcoming.

The reality is in order to provide a carrier's worth of aircraft, strike capability 24 hours a day, you need two decks to do that for any extended period of time because flight deck crews, pilots, ships need to sleep occasionally. And so with a two-carrier capability providing one 24-hour cycle of assets, that is not sufficient firepower with the kinds of challenges that we are talking about in the Pacific theater.

So there is going to be an obvious and I think a negative impact on our ability to provide the forces necessary that this nation depends on.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Yes, sir. I agree with you.

Now, also on page 5 of your testimony you refer to the 52-ship smaller surface combatant requirements, and in looking at your comments there you talk about the unmatched capability that we need to have with the LCS program, but it does not mean, you say, that every ship needs to possess 360-degree defense and offense supremacy. So is your recommendation that if we are under—and I know the DOD has given some instructions about this with regard to Littoral Combat Ships—that modification or making sure that we keep the same number if at all possible but just making modifications on the ships themselves if we do not have the financial wherewithal to do what we would like to do ideally on all 52 of them?

Admiral NATTER. Yes, sir. As I testified just a few minutes ago, I think there needs to be some surface and surface-to-air capability on those ships yesterday. I think that can be done quickly and ought to be.

These ships are necessary for the Navy to fulfill its mission in things like antipiracy patrols. They are going to be a far superior ship for the mine warfare mission. I was on a minesweeper as an ensign and JG [junior grade] and I can tell you that the ability to sustain mine warfare operations for a long period of time is going to be much more capable on the LCS than it ever thought of being

on its predecessor mine warfare ships. It also will deliver some significant ASW [anti-submarine warfare] capability.

So for the level zero, level one contingency kinds of requirements of our combatant commanders today, these are good ships. And they are going to grow and they are going to be better as technology comes in.

The alternative, of course, is to have even fewer ships to be able to deploy to the combatant commanders for things like antipiracy, for things like mine warfare, and ASW, and working with our allies and friends in the Southeast Asia theater. These are perfect ships for that theater.

So I support the ship. I would like to see a little more kill power on them.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Right. Thank you, sir.

Dr. Grant, just quickly in the few moments I have left, the Air Force, of course, as you have well cited in your testimony orally and written, is cutting hundreds of aircraft in the 5-year budget plan. In terms of future technology, do you think the Air Force is investing in the right things and do you think that the claim of the Air Force to be cutting these aircraft because it wants to protect its top three programs—the new F–35, the new bomber, and the KC–46 tanker—are the proper priorities with the limited sources of funding available?

Dr. GRANT. Yes, Congressman, I think that is their intent. I think they are trying to cut in order to reach a force structure of the future.

The question, though, is the risk of executing that plan, and I will be more comfortable with taking the lump of the cuts when I see that the funding for those top priorities is really stable in there and that they are procuring them in the quantities required. So I share a little bit of a wait-and-see concern, but I think that at this point in time, while there are many cuts on this map of the U.S. that make me cringe and where I think, "Oh, I would cut, but maybe I wouldn't have cut that particular unit—"

Mr. MCINTYRE. Right. Right.

Dr. GRANT. I think overall this could be the right step as long as it is done carefully.

You asked about future technology investment and mentioned earlier directed energy and some other things. I think these are absolutely vital.

We have, in the past few years, have seen advances in hypersonics and directed energy in particular, and some other aspects of electronic warfare, that have really made breakthroughs that we have looked for for a long time, and I would like to see these continued. I applaud the Air Force's investment in adaptive engine technology, which is long and complicated but absolutely essential to next-generation combat aircraft and to more rapid response through that advanced engine technology.

I cannot stress enough, too, that it is those advanced engines that our U.S. companies make that truly separate us from our competitors.

So I hope this committee will look carefully and make sure that we are continuing the investments. Something like directed energy, which, in fact, the Navy is deploying this summer on a ship, this

sort of thing has the potential to be quite revolutionary, both in defensive—as a defensive and as an offensive weapon system, and I would like to see the Air Force encouraged to continue its thoughts and experiments as to how directed energy and other advanced technologies go on both its current and its future platforms.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Courtney is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses for their very powerful testimony.

You know, I think it is important sometimes to remember the Budget Control Act is not like we are helpless in front of it, and sequestration to boot. The historical precedent of sequestration in the 1990s and early 2000s, when Congress came together on a bipartisan basis with a balanced package of deficit reduction, turned off those chainsaws that were put into place with Gramm-Rudman.

And if you, you know, look at Gramm-Rudman's own words at the time, I mean, that was exactly the intended purpose; it was not to actually have those mechanisms actually go into effect. But, you know, sometimes I think we need to be reminded of what the damage will be, and that is what certainly your very outstanding testimony today is going to hopefully point this Congress in that direction.

Admiral, I want to first of all thank you for your comments on page five about the Navy's investment in modernization of the cruisers and three amphibious ships. I think the chairman deserves some credit for sort of resisting the push to totally retire those cruisers in past years, and I think we have actually found a better, smarter way to sort of deal with this issue. And your input, I think, is very constructive in that score.

Earlier in your testimony you talk, again, about the 600-pound gorilla that is sitting out there with SSBN–X, and again, this came up with Secretary Hagel last week, and this morning with the Secretary of Navy and Admiral Greenert.

You know, it is not that far off that we are looking at the bulge that production is going to cause to the budget, and, I mean, you mentioned sort of external assistance to the Navy's budget as a solution to it. Maybe you want to talk about that a little bit more in terms of whether it is a separate account or whether we just enlarge the Navy's piece of the pie?

Admiral NATTER. Well, I would take either option, sir, but the reality is this is a strategic national asset that is absolutely essential to the survival of this country. It needs to be put on a side. I know the Navy has said it is absolutely essential. It is the baseline of their sand chart that says, "You cut other things before you cut the *Ohio* replacement."

I agree with that. We can't afford not to fund *Ohio* replacement.

The reality, though, is it is about $6 billion a year for about 13 years in the SCN budget, which today is only between $11 billion and $14 billion. So if the administration and the Congress insist on funding it out of the SCN account then you start picking shipyards to close down that are currently engaged in building amphibious ships, destroyers, cruisers, the submarine, the SSNs will go down in numbers.

Something has got to give here. My take on it is this is a national requirement and it ought to be funded in some way other than through the Navy's SCN line. That is up to Congress. You are a lot smarter than I am on that, but that is my going in proposition, sir.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, thank you for the compliment. I am not sure all of us would regard—your testimony is very helpful and, you know, I think that is really, you know, an important mission for the Seapower Subcommittee to really start addressing now. So thank you for being here today.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, Joe.

And as I indicated to both witnesses beforehand, this is the time we would like to see if there is anything we have left out. Anything you need to clarify, we want to give you an opportunity to do that for the record.

And, Admiral, as you begin that statement, if you could follow up on what Joe just mentioned about the cruisers. Tell us why the cruisers are important—what do they do and why it is important that we have those cruisers.

Admiral NATTER. Yes, sir. I am glad you asked the question. I was commanding officer of one of those cruisers. Not the 11, but a cruiser.

The reality is that the DDGs [guided missile destroyers] and the cruisers have comparable surface-to-air and anti-air capability—different capabilities, but the cruisers are older. The value of the cruisers, of course, is that if you update them, upgrade them, and ensure the HM&E [hull, mechanical, and electrical] is longlasting, it will go with the carrier.

It has a much larger combat space where you can put what we refer to as the air defense commander, or alpha whiskey, to coordinate the air defense around the carrier and around the battle group. That is essential. You have got to have someone looking out for the entire problem rather than just the ship's own self-defense and missile defense. So that is a great value of these assets.

The challenge on the part of the Navy is the top line. They didn't want to put these ships away. They need the force levels to satisfy the combatant commanders, and so this is not their idea. They have to satisfy that top line and stay within the budget constraints, and this is an innovative way, I think, to do that and still have these assets available if there is a national emergency. You can certainly bring those back into the force much faster than you can build a new ship.

I would like to see something a little more gradual so that you are not putting them all at the end of the train, but I can understand the Navy's rationale for doing that. This is strictly a matter of tradeoffs: What do you roll out in order to satisfy the top line?

I can tell you that the cruisers may not be the last ships that have to go through this kind of an approach, primarily, again, because if we stay at the BCA levels all bets are off on all this—the cruisers, the carrier, you name it. And then you fold on top of that the *Ohio*-class replacement and the Navy as we know it today isn't going to exist any longer.

Mr. FORBES. Admiral, could you tell us for the record exactly what cruisers do in terms of their muscle, and what would be the impact to the Navy of losing 11 cruisers?

Admiral NATTER. Well, 11 cruisers, in addition to the significant air defense capability—being able to fire a good number of missiles out to protect not only themselves but also the amphibious ready group, the carrier battle group—also has the ability to launch some significant numbers of Tomahawk missiles. They have been used in prior engagements. They have been very valuable in that regard.

If you don't have those 11 cruisers then you are going to have to cycle DDGs more frequently on deployment in order to satisfy the requirements of those Tomahawks, of those air defense missile assets.

The presence. I think we have all seen the movie, or many of us have seen the movie, about the SS *Alabama* and Captain Phillips. None of that is even remotely possible without ships on station—conventional U.S. Navy ships that the SEALs went aboard and operated from. Without some capable asset out there, none of that is possible.

So we as a nation can forget about it. We can forget about putting off these pirates, getting them under control. And that will affect the sea lines; that will affect the economy; that will affect the markets.

Mr. FORBES. Dr. Grant.

Dr. GRANT. Thank you.

Just three points. First, help hold the Air Force to its air dominance mission so that it acquires the jets and the munitions and funds the correct training to keep up this vitally important mission.

Second, if I may jump into Admiral Natter's area, perhaps, and make a comment quickly about carriers: It was tempting to shave a carrier off when we looked at them primarily for—as extra bomb-droppers in permissive airspace. Carriers going forward will provide not just extra bombs on target, but air dominance, additional surveillance, tactical relay and communications—missions we have rarely tapped them for at the level we may have to in the Pacific.

Recall that in 2001, when Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan began, four carriers were sent. Three provided air superiority; the fourth was stripped of its air wings save for a few F–18s and stuffed with a lot of funny-looking black Army special ops helicopters.

So a carrier is an airfield of amazing flexibility. This is no time to be talking about getting rid of aircraft carriers.

Third and final point, if I may say, this is about our two strategic programs coming up. One, of course, is the *Ohio* class, and the other is the long-range strike bomber.

I think we ought to, as a nation, look at both of them as important strategic programs and consider whether they should not both be funded in a manner that is separate from the other ship-buying and aircraft-buying accounts of the day. This was, in fact, the case with both *Freedom* class when it was procured in the 1960s, and with *Ohio* class when it was procured in the 1980s.

So SSBN–X and LRS [long-range strike bomber] ought to both be looked at for what they truly are—that is, incomparable strategic systems which no other service nor ally can duplicate.

Thank you.

Mr. FORBES. We have been joined by Mr. Langevin.

And, Jim, do you have any questions?

If so, I would like to recognize Mr. Langevin for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will submit my questions for the record, but I thank the witnesses for their testimony today.

Thank you.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you.

And we want to thank you both for being here today. We certainly appreciate your expertise, but most importantly, your willingness to share it with this committee.

If we have no additional questions then we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:58 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

March 12, 2014

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 12, 2014

Re: Submitted Testimony for Admiral Robert J. Natter, USN(ret); 12 March 2014

Chairman Forbes, Ranking Member McIntyre, distinguished members of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, it is my pleasure to appear before you today to testify following the Navy's Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget submission. I am honored to offer my independent assessment of the status of America's Navy.

First and foremost, I am thankful to have been part of the World's preeminent maritime force—the United Sates Navy—for over 36 years of commissioned service. Also, my wife and I are proud to say that our three daughters have also chosen to serve our country in the United States Navy; two of my daughters are currently serving. Not only is this a source of great pride for me, but they, and their friends and professional associates, provide me a window into our current generation's thoughts and concerns regarding our Department of Defense's current direction and priorities.

Today, our Navy remains a superior force because our nation's citizens have made the necessary sacrifices to support it, as have their elected representatives in succeeding administrations and Congresses. Up to this point we have maintained the leadership and national will to invest in ensuring a technological and force advantage over other navies, to include unparalleled quality shipbuilding and aircraft manufacturing, combined with sufficient depot infrastructure, laboratories, R&D sites, testing programs, and a repair infrastructure that are, collectively, second-to-none. These platforms, when combined with the dedicated and talented youth of America, are the US Navy's qualitative edge; it is what makes this navy the best in history. In addition, I would be remiss if I did not also recognize the world's best ship construction and repair workers, both in the public and private sectors. Thank you again for permitting me to speak briefly, on what I think is needed to continue with this mandate.

After more than a decade of a continuous war footing in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere overseas, the Country is anticipating a substantial withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, bringing a much-anticipated period of relative peace, and an opportunity for some of our men and women in uniform to rebalance, reset, and return home. In essence, we are retrenching as a military, but hopefully not as a nation; *this is, as the committee knows, certainly not the case for our Navy.*

The global security environment has not lessened the demand for Navy and Marine Corps forces. Although our Navy is smaller than ever, the national and combatant commanders' demand for surface ships, submarines, maritime patrol and intelligence gathering assets, Seabees and Navy SEALS, remains as high as ever. Today, the Navy maintains nearly the same presence as it did at the height of OIF and OEF, albeit with thirty fewer ships and crews. This equates, quite simply, to fewer sailors fulfilling the same mission requirements as more sailors did only a few years ago. Recent events in Ukraine, Syria, South Sudan, Congo, Mali, C. African Republic, Iran, North Korea, the South China Sea, and Libya foretell a stressful environment that will continue to dictate the need for a state-of-the-art, ready Navy deployed around the globe. In every scenario, the elected leadership of our nation and the Joint Force Commanders will rely on the Navy and Marine Corps to engage a willing and increasingly capable adversary as our first line of defense, or as a hard-hitting offense, across the range of military operations.

Today's challenging environment remains maritime-focused. Markets across the globe depend on the sea, its ports, and freely moving shipping to transport cargo from, to, and across the sea; our financial markets depend on this merchandise flowing freely over the sea and the data running in the cables beneath it, as well. As such, maintaining unimpeded sea lines of communication and allowing commerce to move unabated is essential worldwide. Having the confidence of our allies and the respect of our adversaries in knowing that the U.S. Navy will take the lead to safeguard the maritime domain is a central premise to our wellbeing as a nation.

After a year of sequestration, the passage of the two-year Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 provided some temporary relief from chaotic short-term budget uncertainty. However, without further legislation, the Budget Control Act (BCA) spending caps will return in FY16, and with it, a military strategy based on an anemic funding level, traditionally apportioned amongst the services, and not reflective of today's international challenges. I am only one voice in a chorus of former military officers, diplomats, businesspersons, politicians, and private citizens who harbor deep reservations about our nation's ability to meet the threats and challenges of an increasingly complex security environment. The impact of this uncertainty precludes the detailed and deliberate investment planning required to shape the navy of the future, and no doubt adversely affects not just the health and vitality of our military and its vitally important industrial base, but the entire defense community. I fully concur with the CNO's assessment that

a return to sequestration funding for the Navy will result in a high risk that the Navy will not be able to prevail in all warfare areas against a near-peer force (China or a resurgent Russia) or be able to deal with more than one major contingency (N. Korea, Iran, etc.) at a time.

Against this backdrop, last Tuesday the President released his Fiscal Year 2015 budget request for the Department of Defense. On the same day, the Department of Defense released its updated defense strategy outlined in the recently completed 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The QDR identified three strategic pillars: defending the homeland against all threats; building security globally by projecting U.S. influence and deterring aggression; and remaining prepared to win decisively against any adversary should deterrence fail. The QDR also calls for Joint Force "rebalancing" in four key areas; (1) *rebalancing for a broad spectrum of conflict*, (2) *rebalancing and sustaining our presence and posture abroad,* (3) *rebalancing capability, capacity, and readiness within the Joint Force*, and (4) *rebalancing tooth and tail.* To satisfy all of these tasks will require tough choices on the part of our Navy. These choices will have impacts on force structure, acquisition, modernization, and manning.

The most acute challenge facing the US Navy is budgetary uncertainty in the near term and the threat of a return to the potentially disastrous sequestration funding levels after 2015. Out-year procurement of capital assets, principally ships and aircraft, needs a high level of certainty so our industrial base can invest efficiently and for the navy to plan effectively. Surely, major defense assets having strategic underpinnings, such as ballistic missile submarines and aircraft carriers, must be dialed into out-year budgets so that the nation can proceed without the confusion and high costs associated with indecision. As it now appears, building the replacement to the Ohio-class SSBN in the 2020s within the traditional $11-14billion allocated to Navy shipbuilding per year will stop the procurement of a host of other ship and aircraft programs. A resulting multi-year pause in procurement affecting an already fragile industrial base and shipbuilding plan (large and small surface combatants, aircraft carriers, amphibious and support ships, patrol and attack aircraft programs, and attack submarines) must be avoided. It is incumbent upon this and succeeding administrations and Congresses to plan for these large capital expenditures in a balanced way. Short of an external addition to the Navy's SCN account to pay for our nation's most survivable strategic assets (SSBN submarines), which will carry about 70% of our strategic deterrent missiles, the *Navy's 30 year shipbuilding plan and the force*

levels it provides will be far from achievable. The impact will be that our Navy will be unable to safeguard the United States' future economic and diplomatic leadership, and we will have squandered the inheritance obtained from the sacrifices of generations going back to World War II and beyond.

One of the most damaging things Congress can do to the Services' ability to remain balanced across all warfare areas is to expect the Services to maintain its present force level in the face of reduced money to pay for it. Navy's budget from FY10 to FY19 is en route a 21% reduction. The Budget Control Act mindlessly pushes that topline reduction downward to an ultimate 25% reduction from FY14 to FY23, to a topline lower in real dollars than in 2003. More immediately, Navy's PB15 budget is a $31B reduction from the PB14 FYDP. Reductions of that scale can be off-set only by large expenditures, such as in the shipbuilding, ship repair, and aircraft procurement accounts, or by wholesale personnel reductions. The overhaul of the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN-73) and preservation of its air wing, for instance, is approximately a $7B investment across the FYDP. The Navy has little choice other than to decommission that national asset half way through its productive and capable lifespan as part of a larger plan to cut force structure. That is incredibly troubling, and in my opinion, blatantly short-sighted; but unless this committee and this Congress value these national assets through a strategic lens and fully funds their operations for the design-life of the ship, I fear that today's budget challenges will "scratch one flattop," a feat no enemy has been able to do for over 70 years.

Stark realities of budget cuts are manifest in aircraft and air vehicle procurement, as well. The implications of the $31 billion reduction from PB14 to PB15 funding levels mean 111 fewer aircraft across the FYDP. Included in this list are 33 fewer F-35 Lightening II aircraft, 8 fewer P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, and a 30% reduction in the number of MQ-4C Triton air vehicles this nation relies upon for long-range surveillance. Some 3,500 fewer weapons will be procured in the FYDP because of the BCA, as well. The impact to shore support infrastructure, already underfunded in some accounts from previous years, sees a further reduction in sustainment, restoration, and modernization accounts. No program is immune from substantial cuts.

The post BCA environment will have other challenges. I believe the Navy's investment in phased modernization of some eleven cruisers and three amphibious ships is an innovative way to preserve force structure while preparing for an uncertain future. Given the tight funding provided in the Navy's budget allocation, I strongly endorse this approach. I encourage the committee to look past the near-term reductions in employable ships to the 2025 timeframe when these ships will regain their standing as top-flight command and control air defense ships. Additionally, should a national emergency require it and the funding were provided by Congress, these ships could be ready for deployment much faster than waiting for a new construction ship to enter the fleet.

Careful consideration must be given to ensure our ships maintain a high lethality in all domains. The committee ought to ensure that potent anti-surface, subsurface, and air defense systems are resident in all ships-of-the-line. This does not mean that every ship needs to possess 360-degree defense and offense supremacy. Ships like the two models of the LCS provide the combatant commander with a relatively low cost littoral-presence for the commanders' many phase zero and phase one missions and provide for a much-improved mine warfare platform. The LCS's modular anti-submarine warfare suite will give it an unmatched capability in the littoral. The ship also provides the joint force a phenomenal platform to support multifaceted special operations throughout the world's littorals. I urge, most ardently, that the committee work to continue funding a small surface combatant in the approximate timeframe to satisfy the 52-ship small surface combatant requirement. Moreover, I encourage the committee to realize the benefits in the Department of the Navy's use of non-traditional ship types for ship-to-shore connector missions, afloat staging bases, and other niche joint and coalition operations.

Another challenge is people. Yes, the rate of growth in the manpower accounts warrants a holistic look at the benefits package for service members. A boost to compensation in areas that promote mastering the most valued skills, undertaking the most difficult jobs, and volunteering for the most arduous deployments is warranted. Reining in the significant growth of medical expenses, housing stipends, and subsistence payments is also warranted. However, these efforts ought to be accomplished in stride with other discretionary and non-discretionary adjustments. Retiree remuneration and copays ought to be part of this reassessment. In addition to the 1% of our population that makes up our military, I believe that adjustments and shared

sacrifice should be expected of all citizens. The military people with whom I have discussed this issue understand the need for getting personnel costs and benefits under control. They also believe that they should not be alone in this effort.

Permit me to speak briefly about our Navy as an institution. As a father of female naval officers and a keen observer of the health of the force, I am dismayed and disappointed by repeated reports of untoward behavior, to include violent sexual assaults and significant shortcomings of military leaders. However, as more than just an interested observer, I am hugely appreciative of the Department's emphasis to inform, educate, reiterate, enforce, investigate, prosecute, and drive out all manner of assaults within the ranks. I look forward to the day when society will recognize that the military again leads the way in its progressive pursuit of zero tolerance of such behavior and acts on fellow sailors and civilians alike.

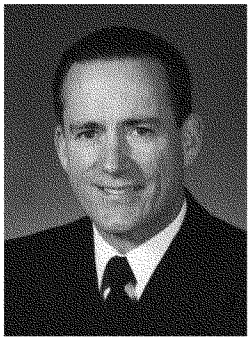
As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen stated that the national debt is America's biggest threat to national security. While that is as true today as it was then, returning to BCA-constrained spending levels in FY 2016 will dramatically increase the risk this administration and Congress take in executing our Defense Strategic Guidance.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and look forward to your questions.

Admiral Robert J. Natter, USN Retired

Biography

Admiral Natter is President of R.J. Natter & Associates, LLC, a consulting and advocacy firm specializing in corporate and defense strategy. Natter is also Chairman of the Board of G4S Government Solutions (GS), a premier U.S. provider of security and infrastructure support solutions for customers with complex requirements in highly regulated industries. G4S GS employs about 6,000 personnel at nearly 200 sites globally. He also serves on the Board of Directors of BAE Systems, Inc. a U.S. subsidiary of BAE Systems plc and on the Board of Corporate Travel Management (CTM), a publicly traded Australian (ASX) company specializing in Corporate Travel throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia, and the United States.



Natter enlisted as a Seaman Recruit in the Naval Reserve at age 17. Following one year enlisted service and graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy he eventually advanced to the rank of Admiral. In 20003, Admiral Natter completed his Navy career as Commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, the first Commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, and the Commander-in-Chief of the NATO Western Atlantic Command. At the time of his service the Atlantic Fleet consisted of over 160,000 Sailors and Marines, 162 ships and 1,200 aircraft, as well as 18 major shore stations.

Admiral Natter's commands at sea included Officer-in-Charge of a Naval Special Warfare detachment in Vietnam; Cruiser and Destroyer Commands; command of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Asia; and finally Commander of US Fleet Forces Command. His shore assignments included staff member for the House Armed Services Committee (100th Congress); Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff during Operation Desert Storm; Chief of Legislative Affairs for the Navy; Director for Space, Information Warfare, Command and Control; and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Plans, Policy, and Operations.

Admiral Natter's military decorations include the Silver Star Medal, four awards of the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, five awards of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with Combat V, two awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V, Navy Achievement Medal with Combat V, and the Purple Heart among others.

In 2012 Natter assumed Chairmanship of the US Naval Academy Alumni Association Board of Trustees, representing about 55,000 living graduates. He is also on the Board of the National Navy SEAL Museum.

DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 113th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Committee on Armed Services in complying with the House rule. Please note that a copy of these statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the witness's personal privacy (including home address and phone number) will be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness's appearance before the committee.

Witness name: **Admiral Robert J. Natter, US Navy Retired**

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

_X_Individual

___Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2014

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

FISCAL YEAR 2013

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

FISCAL YEAR 2012

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

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Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2014):__one_____;
Fiscal year 2013:___one_____ ;
Fiscal year 2012:__one_____ .

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2014):___Navy_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____Navy_____;
Fiscal year 2012:__Navy_____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2014):___Program Advisor_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____Program Advisor_____;
Fiscal year 2012:____Program Advisor_____ .

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2014):__$6,000.00_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____$9,000.00_____ ;
Fiscal year 2012:_____$15,000.00_____.

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government: None

Current fiscal year (2014):_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

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List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

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Fiscal year 2013:_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2014):_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____.

Dr. Rebecca Grant
Testimony to the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee
House Armed Services Committee
March 12, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request for Seapower and Projection Forces. My remarks will center on those U.S. Air Force systems at the heart of power projection and the role of the industrial base. This Congress has a special responsibility to consider the FY 2015 budget in light of accelerating changes in the international security environment. We are not in the world of five years ago, which was dominated by stabilization operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today there are visible threats and sources of instability from the East China Sea to the Crimea.

America's power projection forces must be ready to back up our diplomacy and lead our military operations whether in presence, deterrence, crisis response or conflict.

Americans have long counted on the air superiority that makes other forms of military operations efficient and effective. However, the USAF modernization path has been on rocky footing for some years. Members of this Committee have the chance now to take specific steps to ensure power projection forces are on a more stable path that will diminish risk and meet national security needs.

My principal concern is that the USAF be equipped and postured for a strong deterrent stance in the Pacific. Today this means preparing to retain air superiority, sea superiority and and freedom of maneuver even if forces of the People's Republic of China adopt a confrontational stance towards us or our allies, for example. China is not the only major power in the Pacific, but it is the one whose military is growing at the fastest rate – hence, it must take center stage when calculating long-term capacity and risk as we must do within defense planning.

Freedom of action in the Pacific demands highly sophisticated air forces, procured in sufficient numbers to act simultaneously, if required, on an arc from Australia through the Aleutians. Fortunately, the Air Force has the right priorities at the top of its list: F-35, KC-46 Pegasus and the new long-range bomber.

On F-35, it is in fact crucial to all power projection. This week the USAF announced fighter force reductions. Risk in the fighter force is already inherent due to aging and tactical obsolescence, the failure to acquire more F-22s, and the rise of anti-access air defenses consisting of advanced surface-to-air missiles and advanced fighters with high-performance air-to-air missiles. The primary risk ahead is not from reducing older forces, but from the slow F-35 acquisition. If our goal is to keep a lid on confrontations in the Pacific, this will demand the ability to deploy 24/7 fighter combat air patrols at multiple locations. The interim goal should be to

reach acceptance of the first 1,000 F-35s across the USAF, USMC and USN fleets as rapidly as possible. Originally, this goal was to have been reached around 2015. It will now not be reached until after 2022, assuming the USAF makes its ramp to 80 and the Department of the Navy buys at a combined rate of 48 for several years. Projection of force won't be successful without F-35 in high-end scenarios in years ahead.

The KC-46 Pegasus is an essential; without tankers, there is no global airpower for the USAF, USN, or USMC or most allies.

The new stealth bomber is rightly a top priority, for no other system offers the range of response options. Secretary of the Air Force Deborah James has indicated that the Request for Proposals may occur later in 2014. Historically, this means the program may be within 2 or 3 years of down-select. I see three risks with the bomber, which the Committee may want to consider now.

First is over-classification. In my opinion, the long-range bomber should not remain a black program now that it is nearing formal request for proposals. Of course, aspects of its technology will always be highly classified and they should be. But would we try to buy CVN-79 as a "black" program? Over-classification interferes with sound public consideration of the program.

Over-classification can also interfere with the cross-flow of technical expertise as the program begins. Right now, the top engineers and production specialists in industry are working on other programs, like F-35, F/A-18, etc. Restricting discussion of the bomber chokes off opportunities for wider problem solving within the cloister of the prime contractor teams. For example, the bomber design leads cannot call in the structures or cockpit pyrotechnics or stealth materials expert from the fighter line for a problem-solving session if he or she is not cleared into the "black" bomber program. This problem can impose unnecessary risks, such as leaving issues unsolved prior to preliminary design review and causing schedule delays as contractors go through the slow process of clearing engineers and production workforce for limited special access billets.

Second, is the technology scope right? The new stealth bomber must be built for a 40-year service life. Over time, it should be given the most advanced engine technology, prepared for directed energy weapons as defensive and offensive systems, and armed with hypersonic missiles among other weapons. This means planning now for an airframe with space, power, suitable engines, and cooling to allow adaptation. While controlling cost is key, there is no point in cutting corners to buy a bomber that is technology-limited within a decade. Fear of technical risk can't be solved by adhering to cost targets alone. It takes sound evaluation of risk levels at preliminary and critical design review.

Third is quantity. This bomber must replace the B-1, B-52 and B-2 totaling 162 aircraft. The problem with a quantity of 80 to 100 is that we want this bomber force

to be able to generate 30 or more sorties per day at maximum capacity. This is to cover multiple target areas, in two widely separated theaters. Precision weapons are a given but bombers cannot be in two places at once. A sizeable force is necessary to hold at risk mobile targets because they are hard to locate. The force must also be sized for persistence: in this case, that means the ability to strike repeatedly, day and night. For reference, the USAF deployed 66 B-52Gs in 1991 for Operation Desert Storm and flew an average of 40 sorties per day (ranging from 27 on 20 Jan 91 to a high of 51 on 11 Feb 91. Data is from the Gulf War Air Power Survey, Volume 5, pages 22 and 246.) Hence, 100 aircraft should probably be the minimum number, and up to 200 would not be unreasonable.

Although this is outside the scope of this subcommittee, I applaud the USAF's decision to protect its Red Flag exercise. Power projection is also about preparation for the US and the chance to work with allies which Red Flags provide.

The Industrial Base

The broad commercial aerospace industrial base is healthy and globalized. However, military capability rests on a surprisingly narrow base of primes and suppliers who develop and build our nation's most advanced capabilities. From the 1950s to the 1990s the industrial base stayed healthy with multiple new program starts, competitions and fly-offs. In the 1950s, 54 new fixed-wing combat aircraft programs were started by the departments of the Air Force and Navy. People – who are the real industrial base – worked on a variety of programs, gaining skills from each.

In the 2000s, the number of new combat aircraft starts fell to 9. Managing technological evolution by volume alone is no longer working.

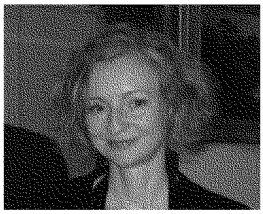
The industrial base for combat aircraft demands four very specific strengths. The first three are critical skills in aircraft design; qualified Tier 1 suppliers; and sustaining engineering across the life cycle of a weapons system. I am concerned by a trend towards moving sustainment work from original manufacturers to government depots for fear it will cut out the essential sustaining engineering work which has up to now resided mainly with the original manufacturers.

The fourth requirement in the industrial base is for competitive primes with managers who have gained experience across multiple programs. The drop in aircraft program new starts has diminished opportunities to grow production and management workforces. The dearth of space programs has taken away another source of industry experience. The industrial base still needs managers skilled in the work of system development across the lifecycle, from cultivating new technologies to shaping customer requirements to realistic critical design review to execution of operational test and evaluation and logistics concepts.

In addition, combat aircraft engines are a highly specialized segment of the industrial base. While this work is well-protected by current law that restricts most

work to US suppliers, the real obstacle is getting new high-performance military engines a "ride" in the form of new aircraft. The military combat engine business is a government-dominated market and it is up to the government to continue investment in this critical technology edge. One could hardly spend too much money on basic and applied engine research if we intend to remain a power projection nation.

The new stealth bomber is extremely important to the industrial base. However, that program will soon be wrapping up its design phase. The most important steps this nation can take will be to carry on significant investment in adaptive engine technology and to begin concept definition work for the so-called 6th generation fighter.



IRIS INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Dr. Rebecca Grant

Rebecca Grant is president of IRIS Independent Research, a qualified small woman-owned business specializing in defense and aerospace research and consulting.

Recent projects include analysis of Tier 1 suppliers in the defense industrial base for the US Air Force (Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition), assessment of long-range strike, and evaluation of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) recapitalization for industry clients. Clients have included Alion, BAE, Boeing, Booz Allen Hamilton, CSC, EADS, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and SAIC.

Dr. Grant received her BA from Wellesley College and a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics, University of London. Her first job was with RAND in Santa Monica, California. She spent three years on the Air Staff at the Pentagon working directly for Secretary of the Air Force Donald B. Rice and then for Air Force Chief of Staff General Tony McPeak in his operations group. Her portfolio included strategic nuclear force reductions, the B-2 program, logistics and depot maintenance cost restructuring, and roles and missions. Her professional experience also includes serving as Vice President, Defense Programs for DFI Government Services and a year as Senior Fellow of the Lexington Institute.

She has lectured at the USAF's Air University and for the air forces of the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands and Australia. She is a frequent guest speaker on airpower, technology and cyberspace at venues ranging from Wall Street investors, to business groups to active-duty Air Force units. Dr. Grant is also the author of major classified reports for the USAF on the Operation Noble Eagle response to September 11, Operation Enduing Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In the press, Dr. Grant is a Contributing Editor for *Air Force Magazine*. She has written numerous articles on air operations, technology trends, airpower history and great airmen. She served a three-year term as the founding director of the Mitchell Institute from 2008 to 2011. She has appeared on TV as an expert on airpower for the History Channel the Military Channel, and the Smithsonian (2005, 2006, 2012, 2013), and *This Week in Defense News with Vago Muradian*. She is also a regular guest speaker on airpower and current events for the syndicated *Veterans Radio Network*, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Grant also serves as a Director of the Washington Security Forum.

DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 113th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Committee on Armed Services in complying with the House rule. Please note that a copy of these statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the witness's personal privacy (including home address and phone number) will be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness's appearance before the committee.

Witness name: **Dr. Rebecca Grant**

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

__X_Individual

___Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2014

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
n/a			

FISCAL YEAR 2013

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
n/a			

FISCAL YEAR 2012

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
	USAF SAF/AQR via Alion	$189,000.00	Industrial Base

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2014):_____0_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____0_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____1_____.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2014):_____n/a_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____n/a_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____USA SAF/AQR via Alion
_____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2014):_____n/a_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____na/_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____Military aircraft industrial
base_____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2014):_____0_____;
Fiscal year 2013:_____0_____;
Fiscal year 2012:_____$189,000.00_____.

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

MARCH 12, 2014

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. FORBES

Mr. FORBES. Could you briefly describe what you believe the Navy's role to be in the coming years and whether you believe it is being properly resourced to meet the expected challenges?

Admiral NATTER. The Navy's role for the future will continue to be what it has done in the past since World War II. Simply put, its role will be to ensure the security of U.S. interests in an ever-expanding global economy and world in general. What has changed and evolved over the years is the increase in relative economic and military power, technological capabilities, and influence of other world powers. And therefore the challenge for our Navy will be to invest in the right technologies and the right ships and weapon systems while keeping the costs of those investments under control. As our nation has appropriately addressed the shift of its focus to Asia and the rising power and influence of China, our Navy's overall power has reduced in real and relative terms. We are shifting Navy forces to Asia primarily because of our real reduction in Navy forces overall and the knowledge that the Pacific Fleet's historic half of the Navy is now inadequate to meet the influence and power of a rising China's influence and power.

In summary, the Navy is not being adequately resourced to meet our nation's potential challenges around the globe.

Mr. FORBES. What is your sense as to the adequacy of the size of the current Navy fleet. Do you think the current "mix" of ships is correct?

Admiral NATTER. I do not think the current and projected size of the Navy fleet is adequate to meet the challenges of our potential adversaries without increased risk at prevailing in sustained high end combat operations. In reality, the number of counter-ship weapons and the technological capabilities of our potential adversaries have increased in real and relative terms over the past 20 years. Therefore, our Navy's ability to prevail must be assessed as at a higher risk than in the past. Given the recent reductions in SCN and APN funding for the Navy and the potential for a devastating reduction in those accounts if the *Ohio* replacement ship class is not funded with additional Congressionally directed appropriations, the Navy's ship and aircraft numbers will reduce to a potentially national military strategy altering level. If that is the case, the United States will be unable to ensure its treaty and alliance commitments internationally and especially in Asia. The current mix of Navy ships is about right given the potential for the various force employments against possible adversaries. Having said that, the total number of ships is marginally adequate while future numbers, given sequestration funding, is alarming.

Mr. FORBES. Admiral Locklear provided testimony last week to the House Armed Services Committee and provided the following information with regards to the potential reduction of an aircraft carrier, "You have about 10 [aircraft carriers] now. We can't support the global demand." He went on and said "One thing for sure, in my experience is that—that part of the U.S. global leadership is maritime dominance, where we choose to have it. And at the front of that maritime dominance, which starts to become very important, particularly in the world we're in today, are the capabilities that aircraft carriers bring." What is your assessment about a potential reduction in aircraft carrier force structure and the impact to the supporting combatant commander requirements?

Admiral NATTER. I agree with Admiral Locklear's testimony that the demand for our nation's aircraft carriers continues to be high and sustained. The demand is not only in his Pacific theater of operations, but his Central Command counterpart has also been forceful in his requests for Carrier presence, especially in the northern Indian Ocean. The simple truth is that demand for aircraft carriers exceeds today's available resources. The idea of not refueling USS *George Washington* and eliminating that carrier and its air wing is not smart. Our nation's investment in this combat capability and the sustained demand for its presence in troubled parts of the world in support of our treaty and alliance partners necessitate refueling it. Not doing so will reduce the ability of our combatant commanders to fulfill their responsibilities.

Mr. FORBES. Admiral Locklear provided testimony last week to the House Armed Services Committee and provided the following information with regards to the po-

tential reduction of an aircraft carrier, "You have about 10 [aircraft carriers] now. We can't support the global demand." He went on and said "One thing for sure, in my experience is that—that part of the U.S. global leadership is maritime dominance, where we choose to have it. And at the front of that maritime dominance, which starts to become very important, particularly in the world we're in today, are the capabilities that aircraft carriers bring." What is your assessment about a potential reduction in aircraft carrier force structure and the impact to the supporting combatant commander requirements?

Dr. GRANT. My research indicates 11 carriers are the minimum needed. Carrier numbers used in major conflicts were 6 for Operation Desert Storm in 1991, 4 for the start of Operation Enduring Freedom over Afghanistan in 2001, and 5 for Operation Iraqi Freedom major combat operations in 2003. The Coalition Air Component Commander tasked carriers supporting the Army during Operation Iraqi Freedom to provide up to 100 strike sorties per day.

Pacific theater scenarios could require 9 or more carriers to provide fleet defense, 24-hour operations with carriers alternating day and night cycles, air superiority and strike missions against sea and land targets. It is conceivable that three task forces of three carriers each might have to operate in three different locations in a major crisis. Carriers must be prepared to participate far more actively in countering adversary air threats in future scenarios.

If up to nine carriers may be tasked for wartime operations, a fleet of 11 is the minimum to allow one or two carriers in overhaul and transit.

The carriers are only as good as the planes on their flight decks. Sufficient F–35Cs to support joint tasking for defense, communications, ISR and strike are essential to carrier effectiveness, as is the E–2D Advanced Hawkeye.

Mr. FORBES. If the Air Force is required to execute fiscal resources at Budget Control Act sequestration levels, what operational risk do you believe they will incur by having to divest the entire KC–10 tanker aircraft fleet? In your opinion, are there other force structure decisions that the Air Force could consider in lieu of divesting the KC–10 fleet prior to having sufficient tanker capacity with the addition of the new KC–46 tanker aircraft?

Dr. GRANT. Divestiture of the KC–10 fleet imperils global reach and power projection missions. The KC–10 is newer and carries more fuel and cargo than the KC–135. Also, recent operations have shown that the KC–10 is often the preferred tanker for global bomber missions, for example, where multiple refuelings are required. The Air Force should retire some KC–135s rather than divest the KC–10 fleet prior to purchase of KC–46.

Mr. FORBES. The Air Force has articulated that the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter, the new KC–46 tanker, and the new Long-Range Strike Bomber are its top three acquisition priorities and vital to emerging threats and capabilities. Do you agree with the Air Force's priorities and do you believe there are any other areas that are critical Air Force capabilities that should be considered high-priority?

Dr. GRANT. I agree with the Air Force's top three priorities. Development of advanced air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles should be regarded as of equal importance.

Mr. FORBES. In DOD's fiscal year 2015 budget, there are many difficult decisions that had to be made in regards to curtailment or discontinuation of active production lines such as F/A–18s, Tomahawk Block IV missiles, and the closure of the C–17 production line last year. As it relates to considerations for preserving U.S. national industrial base capabilities, what industrial base capabilities do you assess to be vital or extremely important to U.S. national security objectives and capabilities?

Dr. GRANT. Top priority should be given to work on new advanced military engines capable of variable cycle efficient supersonic thrust (supercruise) for fighter and bomber platforms. Progress in this area is essential to air dominance and is a unique, export-controlled area.

Other priorities should include adapting fiber-optic lasers for battlefield applications; design work on the next fighter aircraft; hypersonic propulsion and vehicle bodies; disruptive energy sources; batteries; and longer-range missiles.

Mr. FORBES. Do you believe the force structure for the Air Force and Department of the Navy, as laid out in the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, is sufficient to meet the goals and objectives of the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance?

Dr. GRANT. The force structure for the Air Force takes considerable risk because the 48 fighter squadrons contain many non-stealthy, legacy aircraft. Air Force fighter squadrons carry the weight of air superiority for joint forces whether in deterrence and shaping, crisis response, or major combat operations. Delayed and derailed modernization has hurt this force. At this time the force is not enough to ensure a comfortable margin of superiority in many Pacific theater scenarios. Purchase

of the F–35A at a rate of 80 per year is the only near-term way to decrease risk and correct the imbalance. Also, it is worth noting that the Active Component and Reserve Component Balance will place high demands on the Reserve Component fighter forces in the event of conflict.

Likewise, the current bomber force assumes risk because only the 16 combat-coded B–2s are survivable enough for persistent, penetrating operations. The next generation bomber is essential to restore America's global strike credibility and the steadying effect of deterrence which it brings.

The Air Force's force structure is also overbalanced with more MQ–9s than are needed going forward.

The Department of the Navy force structure as spelled out in QDR 2014 also assumes risk. The total number of ships is lower than the 316 in the inventory on September 11, 2001. The QDR force structure wisely retains 11 aircraft carriers and 92 large surface combatants. However, the total number of ships is reliant on 43 small surface combatants including the 25 of the Littoral combat Ship. LCS was conceived almost two decades ago at a time when tactical concepts for the coastal areas were different and before challenges from a rising China and resurgent Russia. LCS is unlikely to prove as versatile as DDGs, for example, in the many different operating conditions and missions encountered around the globe. In the Pacific, and other regions, the large surface combatants such as DDGs are consistently tasked with a range of missions and form the core of warfighting capability. The QDR 2014 force structure falls short in preparing U.S. Navy forces to meet challenges at sea over the next 30 years.

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