

# PRESS RELEASE

## House Armed Services Committee Bob Stump, Chairman

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### OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BOB STUMP POSTURE HEARING ON FY 2003 ARMY BUDGET

Today, the committee will consider the fiscal year 2003 budget request of the Department of the Army.

I am pleased to welcome back Secretary Tom White and General Eric Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff, to assist the committee in understanding the details and implications of the Army's budget request.

In considering the overall defense budget request, the committee continues to hear that the significant increase in defense spending for fiscal year 2003 will at best fund current programs and operations rather than provide for significant additional equipment or people. Contrary to press accounts of a Defense Department awash in new spending, the military services budgets are replete with hard choices and trade-offs. A careful review of the proposed budget reveals that the military services are still struggling to meet their modernization needs, keep their best and brightest people in uniform, and properly support a crumbling infrastructure.

Thus, the budget increase should be viewed as a down payment, and a good one at that. However, the military services will require sustained budget increases and sound management if they are to truly recover from a decade's worth of underfunding.

The Army budget request for fiscal year 2003 is \$91 billion - almost \$10 billion more than the fiscal year 2002 appropriated amount. However, even with the increase, this budget request contains major cuts in military construction and Research and Development accounts.

The committee is very interested to hear how the Army plans to manage the continuing mismatch between operations and force structure within the proposed level of resources.

In sum, in spite of a \$10 billion increase, it is clear that the Army has made and will continue to make difficult choices to keep it firmly on the path toward the future. I look forward to today's testimony to better help us better understand how the Army leadership plans to navigate this difficult path.

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