INNOVATION

The FY25 NDAA is focused on rapidly deploying innovative and new technologies that our warfighters need to prevail on future battlefields.

Expediting Innovation to the Warfighter
- Permanently authorizes and expands the DoD's APFIT program which targets procurement funding to innovative solutions that can be rapidly delivered.
- Requires DoD to improve and streamline the "Authority to Operate" requirements for software and information technology, a key enabler of more rapid and iterative development practices.
- Establishes a forum of investors, entrepreneurs, financiers, private equity providers, and DoD officials to share information and find ways to expedite the fielding of emerging technologies.
- Establishes a Hackathon Program for the combatant commands and military services to address critical cyber challenges.
- Authorizes the Office of Strategic Capital to detail employees to innovative private sector companies.

Commercial Technology Capabilities
- Provides incentives for contracting managers to look for commercial-off-the-shelf solutions before entering into costly new contracts.
- Establishes a pilot program to demonstrate the ability to connect commercial and government systems in a hybrid space architecture.
- Establishes the Commercial Augmentation Space Reserve (CASR) to allow the Space Force to contract with the private sector to rapidly acquire space capabilities on an as-needed basis.

Emerging Technologies
- Requires the Department to create long-term investment strategies for key technologies in the fields of biotechnology and quantum information science.
- Requires DoD to stand up a Quantum Benchmarking Initiative to rapidly expand the development of quantum computing capability.
- Designates an official specifically responsible for autonomous vehicles in the Navy.

Research Security
- Protects DoD research by prohibiting universities and researchers from receiving funds if they work with entities in China, Russia, Iran, or other countries of concern.
- Prohibits funds for EcoHealth Alliance programs and the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Strengthening the Innovation Workforce and Research Partnerships
- Improves the ability of the Defense Innovation Unit, Strategic Capabilities Office, Space Development Agency, and Office of Strategic Capital to attract and hire highly qualified staff.
- Makes it easier for colleges and universities to work with DoD by clarifying guidance for educational partnership agreements and requiring revised grant expenditure guidelines.

Cybersecurity
- Restructures command of DoD's Information Network to improve cybersecurity.
- Requires DoD to improve the cybersecurity of the Defense Industrial Base.
- Mandates improvements to the security of DoD's multi-cloud environments.
- Requires an independent assessment of DoD's cyber organizational models.