



United States House of Representatives

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE **DEMOCRATS**

Adam Smith, Ranking Member

Democrats Stand Up for American Values in the FY 18 NDAA

“An enormous amount of good bipartisan work has gone into the writing of this bill. Make no mistake about it: We face a complex threat environment. North Korea is testing intercontinental ballistic missiles, Russia continues to undermine not just our elections, but democracy itself across the globe, and we face a terrorist threat. These are dangers that we must be prepared to confront.

“On the broader budget issue, the main thing I am still concerned about in this bill is that it really doesn’t make choices. This defense bill is \$72 billion over the budget caps, so if we don’t eliminate or raise the budget caps, that additional money will go away, and leave us once again in the land of uncertainty.

“I also want to point out that the rest of the budget does matter. The President’s budget contains a \$54 billion plus-up for defense and a \$54 billion cut from nondefense discretionary spending. So don’t tell me one thing doesn’t have anything to do with the other. If we don’t make the choices on the budget that reflect the priorities of the entire country, that actually reflect the budget numbers, then we are doing a disservice to the men and women who serve our country. It’s a good bill. It is going to be better once we figure out the budget issues and actually start making the choices that are necessary to make us stronger in every aspect of society.”

--Ranking Member Adam Smith [statement](#) on the FY 18 NDAA

Prevailing on Important Measures

In markup, Democrats passed an amendment acknowledging that climate change is a direct threat to U.S. national security interests. It also required a report on vulnerabilities to military installations and combatant commands, as well as the mitigations that may be necessary to ensure installation and mission resiliency in the face of climate change, and required a briefing on recurrent flooding and sea level rise impacting military installations. On the House floor, Democrats defeated an amendment that would have eliminated the provision.

In votes on the House floor, Democrats fought and defeated amendments that would have restricted the use of biofuels and alternative energy. Biofuels and alternative energy programs are important to the U.S. military’s efforts to diversify energy supply options, increase operational flexibility, and enhance mission resiliency. These programs are being done in a cost-competitive manner.

In a floor vote, Democrats defeated an amendment that would have prevented funding of medical care for transgender members of the U.S. military.

In a floor vote, Democrats defeated an amendment that would have required the Defense Department to analyze the Islamic religion and attempt to assess its elements as a cause of violent extremism. This highly political amendment would violate the Constitution, and theological speculation is not a core competency of the Defense Department.

Democrats defeated in markup an amendment to reduce GAO's oversight of missile defense programs and would have reduced congressional access to the Missile Defense Agency accountability reports. Effective missile defense is essential for national security, and proper oversight of missile defense programs is crucial to ensure that it works properly and taxpayer money does not go to waste.

In a floor vote, Democrats defeated an amendment to drastically change the method by which prevailing wages on military construction contracts are computed under the Davis-Bacon Act. This change would have undermined labor protections and resulted in lower wages for blue-collar construction workers.

In a markup vote, Democrats passed an amendment requiring the Commandant of the Marine Corps to provide a report on the changes and costs that would be required in order to execute fully integrated basic recruit training for men and women, including renovations to barracks.

In a markup vote, Democrats passed an amendment directing the Secretary of Defense to ensure legal permanent residents who are serving in the military are informed of the availability of naturalization through military service.

In markup, Democrats passed a comprehensive package of measures strengthening deterrence and unity against Russian aggression, so that the United States is adequately prepared to respond to Russia's comprehensive campaign to undermine democratic principle worldwide.

Democrats also won a requirement to brief the Armed Services Committee on the Russian military's role in hacking the 2016 U.S. election.

In markup, Democrats passed an amendment to codify reporting on civilian casualties as a result of Title 10 operations overseas, based on an executive order created by President Obama.

In a markup vote, Democrats passed an amendment banning the use of DOD funds to construct President Trump's border wall, only to have it stripped out of the bill by the Rules Committee using an undemocratic "self-executing rule" that prevented a fair debate.

Democrats required the Secretary of Defense to address strategic stability risks that might stem from the mandated test of the SM3-IIA missile defense interceptor against an ICBM, and a report on how DOD would address those concerns. Strategic stability is crucial to national security, and should remain central in U.S. planning.

Fighting for Our Principles

Democrats fought to enhance gender equality in the military by including women in the Selective Service.

Democrats fought for equal access to contraception for women in the military.

Democrats fought to extend the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA), which would prevent the return of the “widow’s tax.”

On the floor and in markup, Democrats fought an amendment that would have eliminated the common-sense “fly-before-you-buy” testing requirement before deployment of missile defense systems. Effective and reliable missile defense is essential for national security, and oversight of missile defense programs is crucial to ensure that it works properly and taxpayer money does not go to waste.

Democrats fought against a provision prohibiting funding for the extension of the New START Treaty. The New START Treaty is essential to limit and verify Russian strategic offensive nuclear force levels, and we should not give up this useful national security tool.

Democrats fought against a provision mandating that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty is no longer binding on the United States if Russia continues to violate the treaty in 2019, and they proposed sanctions against Russia in connection with its violation of the INF Treaty instead. Sanctioning Russia is a smarter approach to pushing them back into compliance with the treaty, rather than pulling out of the treaty and moving toward an unnecessary, expensive nuclear arms race.

Democrats fought against a provision limiting required funding for nuclear weapons dismantlement. The United States already has more than enough stockpiled nuclear warheads, and there is no reason to prevent the elimination of old nuclear weapons that DOD has determined it should get rid of.

Democrats fought an amendment mandating development of space-based missile defense interceptors as part of an effort to create a space-based missile defense layer, estimated to cost between \$100 billion and \$300 billion. According to the Missile Defense Agency, such a system is neither practical nor affordable, and spending hundreds of billions of dollars on such a system would undermine our more important defense priorities.

Democrats fought for a detailed report from DOD on the 25-year cost of nuclear modernization (to complement a report that the Department of Energy already provides), and a yearly 30-year estimate from CBO on the cost of nuclear modernization. If nuclear modernization is a top defense priority, it is important to account and plan for the trillion-dollar price tag the Defense Department is putting down payments on.

Democrats fought to constrain the expenditure of 2/3 of the funds for a new nuclear cruise missile until the administration decides whether such a program is needed, as part of the ongoing

Nuclear Posture Review. It makes no sense to spend money on this expensive program before DOD determines whether it is necessary.

Democrats fought to bar funding for travel expenditures that would benefit President Trump or his family at their properties, and for a report on the direct and indirect costs to DOD for President Trump's travel.

Included in the NDAA

Directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a comprehensive regional strategy for Syria that explains long-term U.S. objectives in the wake of active combat against ISIS. President Trump has not clearly spelled out his plan to secure the peace, and he owes the American people and our men and women fighting ISIS a plan.

Directs the Secretary of Defense to provide an Afghanistan strategy that will look beyond the next five years and assess the trajectory and cost of U.S. efforts there. President Trump has continually promised a clear plan for Afghanistan, and he is sending more Americans there to fight without having provided one.

Requires the President to develop a security strategy for Yemen.

Requires the President to outline U.S. strategic objectives in Somalia.

Enhances the tools available to prosecute perpetrators of nonconsensual sharing of intimate images by adding a new provision to the Uniform Code of Military Justice specifically prohibiting these crimes.

Prioritizes the readiness of U.S. Cyber Command, cyber mission forces, and cyber warfare tools and capabilities, including initiatives to strengthen the cyber workforce.

Strengthens congressional oversight of sensitive cyber military operations and cyber warfare tools and capabilities.

Strengthens congressional oversight of ongoing counterterrorism and unconventional warfare operations and programs, including intelligence activities.

And More

Click here for Ranking Member Smith's statement on the passage of the NDAA in the House: <http://democrats-armedservices.house.gov/press-releases?ID=F601F6E5-6988-48C3-AF2B-975345519CAC>

Click here for a summary of the FY 18 NDAA as passed out of Committee: <http://democrats-armedservices.house.gov/cache/files/7/d/7db44df8-43f1-4f3d-8a9f-e998f83eabce/0DD16C5944BA274AD9A241F201F652CF.fy18-ndaa-bill-summary---democrats.pdf>

Click here for the Ranking Member's Additional Views on the FY 18 NDAA as passed out of Committee: <http://democrats-armedservices.house.gov/cache/files/e/1/e16bcfd1-0ad8-4e20-8fb7-5ec3b8e9459c/A7FE6D94597702C83614D614E165582A.smith-additional-views-fy-18-ndaa.pdf>

Click here for a summary of the Chairman's Mark: <http://democrats-armedservices.house.gov/cache/files/a/e/aecb04e3-aeec-4af0-b144-80dda5478516/F59B14350FA4592C87218587A7CAACB9.fy18ndaa-chairmans-mark-summary.pdf>

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