

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 24, 2021

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chair
House Armed Services Committee
2216 RHOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chair, Defense Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
2256 RHOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 RHOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member, Defense Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
2205 RHOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, Chairwoman McCollum, and Ranking Member Calvert:

As leadership of the Blue Dog Coalition, which is united around the principles of a strong national defense and fiscal responsibility, we write to you regarding our main priorities for the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the Fiscal Year 2022 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill.

Increase Defense Funding as Proposed by the Biden Administration

The Biden administration has requested \$753 billion for national defense programs. This is \$12.3 billion or 1.7 percent above the Fiscal Year 2021 enacted level of \$740.7 billion. The \$753 billion request includes \$715 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Defense, which is \$11.3 billion or 1.6 percent above the Fiscal Year 2021 enacted level of \$703.7 billion. We believe this is a strong and sensible funding request, and we oppose calls to authorize or appropriate funding below this level. The United States faces a formidable array of challenges from state and non-state actors, including from China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, the Islamic State, and al Qaeda. We strongly support the robust defense funding level included in the President's budget request.

Fund Measures to Counter China

We agree with Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin that "China is our pacing threat" and that "our goal is to make sure that we have the capabilities and the operational plans and concepts to be able to offer credible deterrence to China or anybody else who would want to take on the U.S." The Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA established the China-focused Pacific Deterrence Initiative, and authorized \$2.23 billion to fund its various components. We respectfully request that Congress provide no less than \$4.68 billion in Fiscal Year 2022 for the PDI, as outlined by Admiral Philip S. Davidson, the former commander of United States Indo-Pacific Command, in the report he provided to Congress pursuant to Section 1251 of the Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA.

Support Watchdogs to Prevent Waste, Fraud, and Abuse

While we support strong funding for the Department of Defense, we also believe every dollar provided to the Department should be used wisely. It is important that we resource the offices working toward the goal of a clean audit opinion. Accordingly, we request that Congress provide at least level funding for both the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General and internal Department of Defense auditors, namely the Naval Audit Service, the Air Force Audit Agency, and the Army Audit Agency. We oppose the proposed cut to the Naval Audit Service.

Boost Cyberspace-Related Capabilities

Section 1752 of the Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA established the Office of the National Cyber Director to advise the President on cybersecurity, coordinate cyber policy across agencies, and oversee the implementation of the National Cyber Strategy. Given the string of damaging cyberattacks on our public and private sectors, it is impossible to overstate the importance of this newly-created Office. Therefore, we request that Congress provide robust funding for the Office so that it can fulfill its assigned missions.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We look forward to working with you to craft a defense authorization bill and a defense appropriations bill that advance our nation's security interests.

Sincerely,



REP. MIKIE SHERRILL (NJ-11)
Chair, Task Force on National Security
Blue Dog Coalition



REP. TOM O'HALLERAN (AZ-01)
Co-Chair for Administration
Blue Dog Coalition



REP. STEPHANIE MURPHY (FL-07)
Co-Chair for Whip
Blue Dog Coalition



REP. ED CASE (HI-01)
Co-Chair for Policy
Blue Dog Coalition



REP. ABIGAIL SPANBERGER (VA-07)
Co-Chair for Communications
Blue Dog Coalition



REP. KURT SCHRADER (OR-05)
Co-Chair
Blue Dog Coalition