

Durbin: Defense appropriations bill invests in groundbreaking research, protects Illinois priorities

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– U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chairman of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, announced today that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Defense Appropriations Bill – which provides \$574.6 billion in funding for the military and intelligence community, our national security requirements and the daily needs of over two million active duty and reserve servicemembers – funds Illinois defense installations and protects important Illinois priorities. The legislation was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee and must now be considered by the full Senate.

“Illinois has long taken a leadership role in our nation’s defense. Not only does our state claim three of our country’s most important and dynamic defense installations – Rock Island Arsenal, Scott Air Force Base, and Naval Station Great Lakes – we are also home to 13,000 National Guardsmen who serve throughout Illinois,” Durbin said.

“As Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, I have worked with my colleagues to maintain our state’s leadership and to ensure that Illinois servicemembers, their families, and our military and civilian workforce have the support they need and deserve.”

Ammunition Production in East Alton and Marion, Illinois

The bill maintains funding for numerous ammunition lines – including lines produced at Olin Brass in East Alton, Illinois and General Dynamics in Marion, Illinois – which are critical to the safety of our troops overseas.

Stronger Investments in Groundbreaking Research

Continuing to invest in basic and advanced research and development is essential to maintaining our technological edge on the battlefield and enhancing our national security. The bill supports these efforts by increasing funding for basic research by \$163 million over the President’s budget request to \$2.26 billion.

Just as investing in basic and advanced science has paid great dividends, similar investments in medical research and battlefield medicine are saving more lives while improving care options and quality of life after injuries. This knowledge helps better inform treatment for everyone. Today’s legislation supports these efforts by increasing funding for medical research at the Department of Defense by 5% over last year’s Senate bill to \$1.376 billion.

Federal funding for research and development has been on a downward trend for the past several decades leading to a \$1.5 trillion investment deficit that has forced a growing number of America’s best young researchers to take their talents to other industries – and other countries. For several years, Senator Durbin has championed increased investment to reverse this trend. Durbin authored [*The American Innovation Act*](#) and [*The American Cures Act*](#) to set steady growth rates in federal appropriations for biomedical and scientific research conducted at the nation’s premier federal research agencies.

Durbin has served on the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for 27 years. He assumed Chairmanship of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in 2013, taking over from his close friend and former Appropriations Committee Chairman, Daniel Inouye. In 2015, he became the Vice Chairman of the subcommittee after Republicans assumed leadership of the Senate.

The FY17 Department of Defense Appropriations Act including funding for the following Illinois defense installations and priorities.

Rock Island Arsenal

The legislation provides \$110 million for Humvee Ambulances some of which are produced at Rock Island Arsenal.

It also includes \$140 million in funding for Industrial Mobilization Capacity (IMC) to help arsenals keep their work rates competitive. This funding helps Rock Island Arsenal and other arsenals compete more effectively for public-private partnerships and other business to help sustain capacity, cost efficiency and technical competence in peacetime, while preserving the ability to provide an effective and timely response to mobilizations, national defense contingency situations and other emergent requirements. Durbin included a similar provision in the FY14, FY15 & FY16 Department of Defense Appropriations Bills, which were both funded in the final legislation.

The FY17 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill requires the Secretary of the Army to maintain a minimum workload at Rock Island Arsenal (and the arsenals in New York and Arkansas). The legislation also directs the Secretary of Defense to review opportunities within other services and the Defense Logistics Agency to maximize workloads at arsenals.

Chicago Manufacturing Institute

The legislation provides funding for each of the Defense Department's advanced manufacturing laboratories, including UI Lab's Digital Manufacturing & Design Innovation Institute (DMDII) in Chicago.

St. Louis Region

The Navy has identified a need for additional F/A-18s as part of its FY17 unfunded requests list, as well as an ongoing need for electronic attack capability.

To meet that need, the FY17 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill includes \$979 million in funding for 12 F/A-18s. Production of F/A-18s is based at Boeing's St. Louis plant, which employs thousands of workers, including 2,000 from Illinois.

Lovell Federal Health Care Center

The legislation approved by the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee today also fully funds President Obama's budget request – \$122.4 million through the Department of Defense – to extend the DOD-VA pilot program at Lovell Federal Health Care Center for a fifth year.

Since 1999, Durbin has played a major role in the development and implementation of the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, which serves as an integrated healthcare facility for both servicemembers and veterans in the North Chicago region.

Illinois National Guard

The National Guard is in the process of standing up ten new Army Guard Cyber Protection Teams (CPTs) across the country, including an innovative Illinois-Wisconsin CPT. The legislation added \$9.9 million to fully-fund these teams, which were not provided for in the FY2017 budget request.

The FY17 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill provides \$25 million for C-130H modernization, a portion of which may help accelerate nationwide engine upgrades and enhancements to C-130H aircraft. The 182nd Air National Guard wing based in Peoria, Illinois flies eight C-130H aircraft. These upgrades will reduce the need for repairs to the C-130H aircraft, and will also make them more powerful and energy efficient.

The bill also provides an additional \$4 million in funding for the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program. ChalleNGe academics – including Lincoln's ChalleNGe Academy in Rantoul, Illinois – give at-risk youths who have dropped out of high school a second chance at completing their education using a military model. Since its founding in 1993, 35 ChalleNGe academies across the country have graduated more than 120,000 participants.

Army Corps of Engineers, Champaign

The bill supports President Obama's budget request for the Army Corps of Engineers Research Center in Champaign, Illinois. The Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL) concentrates on improving the design and effectiveness of Army installations and ranges, making them more resilient, efficient and affordable. CERL

research and products also improve environmental sustainability while contributing to other Army Corps Research Center priorities.