

# **Durbin: Defense appropriations bill provides critical funding for Illinois installations and projects**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, today announced that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriations Bill – which provides \$577.9 billion in funding for the military and intelligence community – funds defense installations and projects across Illinois. The legislation will now be considered by the full House of Representatives and the full Senate.

“From Rock Island Arsenal to Scott Airforce Base and Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois plays a critical role in our nation’s defense. This bill safeguards that role – and the well-paying jobs it supports – by continuing investments in our state’s defense installations and initiatives,” Durbin said. “I am proud to have worked with my colleagues on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to do what’s best for our military and the state of Illinois.”

## **Stronger Investments in Groundbreaking Research**

Continued investment in 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 \$174.5 million over the requested level for 2017 to \$2.28 billion.

Just as investing in science has paid great dividends, similar investments in medical research and battlefield medicine are saving 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 Defense Appropriations bill to \$1.38 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 three decades. 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 includes 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.

## **St. Louis Region**

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 more than 1,800 from Illinois. An additional 500 employees across 23 companies provide supplies to the F/A-18 program across Illinois.

## **Lovell Federal Health Care Center**

The legislation approved by the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee today also fully funds the Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Chicago. Since 1999, Senator 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 activating ten new Army Guard Cyber Protection Teams (CPTs) across the country, including an innovative Illinois-Wisconsin CPT at Camp Lincoln. The legislation added \$9.9 million to fully-fund these teams, which were not provided for in the FY2017 budget request.

The bill also provides \$10.3 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 145,000 participants.

## **Ammunition Production in East Alton and Marion, Illinois**

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

## **Impact Aid**

Impact Aid provides educational resources to school districts that have lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal property including military bases. The Department of Defense FY17 Appropriations bill provides \$30 million in funding for Impact Aid to support the education of children of military families and an additional \$5 million for Impact Aid for students with disabilities.

## **Special Victim Counsel Program**

Senator Durbin has fought to include measures in the annual defense spending bill that increase sexual assault survivors' rights and protect servicemembers from retaliation when they report crime.

Special victim counsels provide legal representation to victims of sexual assault in our Armed Forces. The bill adds \$25 million for the expansion of victim advocacy as part of the broader commitment to protect our servicemen and women and eradicate sexual assault in the military.