

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 12, 2016

The Honorable Tom Price
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Price:

We are writing to express our complete and unwavering support for a FY2017 House budget resolution that provides the full \$574 billion for national defense base requirements, as agreed to in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 114-74). Consistent with the Budget Control Act, the bipartisan budget agreement capped the defense base budget at \$551 billion and provided \$23 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds in FY2017 to be used for additional base budget requirements. Combined, those funds provide our military with the \$574 billion necessary to simply maintain the force.

In his most recent budget submission to Congress, President Obama has defied the terms of the agreement – of which he was a principal negotiator – by refusing to fully fund base requirements at the agreed upon \$574 billion level. Of the previously agreed to \$23 billion in OCO funding to be used for base budget requirements, the President has only allocated \$5 billion, resulting in a \$18 billion shortfall.

As you formulate your budget resolution, it is also imperative that overseas operational requirements in FY2017 are addressed. Issues that must be considered in determining correct funding levels for contingency operations include:

1. Ongoing operations in Afghanistan and the need to maintain current troop levels through FY2017;
2. The resources needed to defeat ISIS and eradicate the spread of global terrorism;
3. A resurging Russia and the renewed need for a credible U.S. deterrent in Europe through initiatives such as the European Reassurance Initiative;
4. The continued nuclear threat posed by countries such as North Korea and Iran; and
5. An increasingly capable Chinese military focused on disrupting the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region.

In light of these and other threats, it is critically important that we sustain our military and meet contingency operations requirements so that we can provide our next President with viable strategic options. If we fail in this endeavor, we will greatly diminish our capability and surrender our global positions.

Under President Obama, the Army has been forced to continue to reduce its overall size to unprecedented lows. If left unchecked, the Army would be forced to reduce its active component

down to 450K personnel from the current 480K level. As numerous Army leaders have pointed out, these lower levels are unacceptable and greatly jeopardize the safety of our country. We must reverse the Obama Administration's plan to reduce the aggregate number of Army personnel to dangerous levels, which would severely degrade the capability of the U.S. Army and restrict the ability of the next President to protect the U.S. and our allies.

As the House Budget Committee begins its consideration of a budget resolution for FY2017, we respectfully request that you enforce the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 by maintaining the agreed upon funding levels for base requirements and meet all operational needs.

We look forward to working with you on this critical matter and thank you for your continued support of our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

Mac Gubly

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