LEGISLATIVE REPORT

United States Senate Fiscal Year 2018
National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2810, as amended)

As of 4 October 2017
OVERVIEW

On September 18, 2017, the U.S. Senate approved its version of H.R. 2810, the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The Senate authorized approximately $700 billion in total defense spending. The bill provides $640 billion in base and discretionary funding, which is an increase of $18.4 billion above the President’s budget request. The bill also includes $60 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

To view the full text of the legislation, please visit: https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr2810/BILLS-115hr2810pap.pdf

BILL HIGHLIGHTS

General Provisions

- Funds a 2.1 percent pay raise for military personnel. (SEC. 601)

Joint Provisions

- Authorizes reserve-component members activated under 12304(b) to receive pre-mobilization and transitional TRICARE health care. (SEC. 10702)

- Amends conversion requirement of dual-status technicians to Title 5 civilians from 20 percent to 12.6 percent. (SEC. 1045)

- Expands TRICARE eligibility to all federal employees. (SEC. 703)

- Expands VA counseling and treatment for sexual trauma for members of the Reserve Component. (SEC. 11001)

- Authorizes a feasibility study on conduct of a pilot program on mental health readiness of Reserve Component service members. (SEC. 737)

Army National Guard

- Requires a strategic report on upgrades to Army M113 vehicles. (SEC. 5102)

Air National Guard

- Directs development of a plan to modernize National Guard F–16 radar. (SEC. 5101)

- Allows for civilian training for National Guard pilots and sensor operator aircrews of MQ–9 unmanned aerial vehicles. (SEC. 5506)

- Authorizes an increase in PAA for Air National Guard A–10 units. (SEC. 133)
## FY18 NATIONAL GUARD ACCOUNTS OVERVIEW

### ARMY NATIONAL GUARD*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACCOUNT</th>
<th>FY17 LEVELS</th>
<th>FY18 POTUS REQUEST</th>
<th>FY18 HASC NDAA</th>
<th>FY18 HOUSE NDAA</th>
<th>FY18 HAC MARK</th>
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### AIR NATIONAL GUARD*

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*All Dollars in Thousands*
LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SEC. 131. Inventory requirement for Air Force fighter aircraft.
Effective October 1, 2017, the Secretary of the Air Force shall maintain a total aircraft inventory of fighter aircraft of not less than 1,970 aircraft, and a total primary mission aircraft inventory (combat-coded) of not less than 1,145 fighter aircraft.

Not later than June 30, 2018, the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the Air Force fielding plan for the HH-60 replacement programs and submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the plan.

SEC. 133. Authority to increase primary aircraft of Air Force and Air National Guard A-10 aircraft units for purposes of facilitating A-10 conversion.
In the event that conversion of an A-10 aircraft unit is in the best interest of a long-term Air Force mission, the Secretary of the Air Force may increase the Primary Aircraft Authorization of Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard A-10 units to 24 aircraft to facilitate such conversion.

SEC. 134. Requirement for continuation of E-8 JSTARS recapitalization program.
If the Secretary of the Air Force proposes in a budget request to cancel or modify the current E-8C JSTARS recapitalization program as presented to Congress in May 10, 2017, the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report at the same time as the Secretary of the Air Force makes such a request budget request.

SEC. 135. Prohibition on availability of funds for retirement of E-8 JSTARS aircraft.
Except as provided by subsection (b), none of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2018 for the Air Force may be obligated or expended to retire, or prepare to retire, any E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft.

The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to individual Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft that the Secretary of the Air Force determines, on a case-by-case basis, to be non-operational because of mishaps, other damage, or being uneconomical to repair.

SEC. 141. F-35 economic order quantity contracting authority.
The Secretary of Defense may enter into one or more contracts during fiscal year 2018 for the procurement of economic order quantities of material and equipment that has completed formal hardware qualification testing for the F-35 aircraft for use in procurement contracts to be awarded during fiscal years 2019 and 2020. The total amount obligated under all contracts entered into under this section shall not exceed $661,000,000.

SEC. 335. Authority for agreements to reimburse states for costs of suppressing wildfires on state lands cause by Department of Defense activities under leases and other grants of access to state lands.
The Secretary of Defense may, in any lease, permit, license, or other grant of access for use of lands owned by a State, agree to reimburse the State for the reasonable costs of the State in suppressing wildland fires caused by the activities of the Department of Defense under such lease, permit, license, or other grant of access.
SEC. 341. Authority to carry out environmental restoration activities at National Guard and Reserve locations.
The Secretary of Defense may carry out activities under this section at National Guard and Reserve locations.

SEC. 416. Number of members of the National Guard on full-time duty in support of the Reserves within the National Guard Bureau.
Within the personnel authorized by paragraphs (1) and (5) of section 412, the number of personnel under each such paragraph who may serve with the National Guard Bureau may not exceed the number equal to six percent of the number authorized by such paragraph.

SEC. 502. Authority of promotion boards to recommend officers of particular merit be placed at the top of the promotion list.
In selecting the officers to be recommended for promotion, a selection board may, when authorized by the Secretary of the military department concerned, recommend officers of particular merit, from among those officers selected for promotion, to be placed at the top of the promotion list promulgated by the Secretary under section 624(a)(1) of this title.

SEC. 503. Clarification to exception for removal of officers from list of officers recommended for promotion after 18 months without appointment.
The committee recommends a provision that would amend section 629 of title 10, United States Code, to clarify that the requirement to remove officers from a list of officers recommended for promotion after 18 months without appointment does not apply when the military department concerned is not able to obtain and provide to the Senate the information the Senate requires to give its advice and consent to the appointment concerned because that information is under the control of a department or agency of the Federal Government other than the Department of Defense.

SEC. 510A. Authority for officers to opt-out of promotion board consideration
The committee recommends a provision that would authorize service secretaries to provide that an active and reserve component officer may, upon the officer’s request, be excluded from consideration by a promotion selection board. The committee intends this authority be used to enable an officer to complete a desirable career broadening assignment or to develop additional technical expertise without harming future promotion potential.

SEC. 511. Consolidation of authorities to order members of the Reserve Components of the Armed Forces to perform duty
The committee recommends a provision that would amend section 515 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114–92) to require the Secretary of Defense to submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives by April 30, 2019, legislative proposals designed to implement alternative approaches to reducing the number of statutory authorities by which members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces may be ordered to perform duty to not more than eight statutory authorities grouped into four duty categories to which specific pay and benefits may be aligned.

SEC. 513. Review of effects of personnel requirements and limitations on the availability of members of the National Guard for the performance of funeral honor duty for veterans.
The Secretary of Defense shall undertake a review of the effects of the personnel requirements and limitations described in subsection (b) with respect to the members of the National Guard in order to determine whether or not such requirements unduly limit the ability of the Armed Forces to meet the demand for personnel to perform funeral honors in connection with funerals of veterans.
Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the review undertaken pursuant to subsection (a).

SEC. 547. Two-year extension of Suicide Prevention and Resilience Program for the National Guard and Reserves.
Section 10219(g) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking “October 1, 2018” and inserting “October 1, 2020.”

SEC. 583. Authorization of support for Beyond Yellow Ribbon programs.
The Secretary of Defense may award grants to States to carry out programs that provide deployment cycle information, services, and referrals to members of reserve components of the Armed Forces, members of active components of the Armed Forces, and the families of such members throughout the deployment cycle. Such programs may include the provision of access to outreach services.

SEC. 601. Fiscal Year 2018 increase in basic military pay.
Effective on January 1, 2018, the rates of monthly basic pay for members of the uniformed services are increased by 2.1 percent.

SEC. 611. One-year extension of certain bonus and special pay authorities for reserve forces.
The committee recommends a provision that would extend for 1 year the authority to pay the Selected Reserve reenlistment bonus, the Selected Reserve affiliation or enlistment bonus, special pay for enlisted members assigned to certain high-priority units, the Ready Reserve enlistment bonus for persons without prior service, the Ready Reserve enlistment and reenlistment bonus for persons with prior service, the Selected Reserve enlistment and reenlistment bonus for persons with prior service, travel expenses for certain inactive-duty training, and income replacement for reserve component members experiencing extended and frequent mobilization for Active-Duty service.

SEC. 616. Aviation bonus matters.
The amount of the aviation bonus payable under paragraph (1)(B) under agreements entered into under subsection (d) during a fiscal year shall be determined solely through a business case analysis of the amount required to be paid under such agreements in order to address anticipated manning shortfalls for such fiscal year by aircraft type category.

SEC. 617. Special aviation incentive pay and bonus authorities for enlisted members who pilot Remotely Piloted Aircraft.
The Secretary concerned may pay aviation incentive pay under this section to an enlisted member in a regular or reserve component of a uniformed service.

SEC. 633. Promotion of financial literacy concerning retirement among members of the Armed Forces.
Programs for promotion required. The Secretary of Defense shall develop programs of financial literacy for members of the Armed Forces to assist members in better understanding retirement options and planning for retirement.
Information on comparative value of lump sum and monthly payments of retired pay with conventional retired pay. The Secretary of Defense shall develop information to be provided to members of the Armed Forces who are eligible to make the election provided for in subsection (b)(1) of section 1415 of title 10, United States Code, to assist such members in making an informed comparison for purposes of the election between (1) the value of the lump sum payment of retired pay and monthly payments provided for in such subsection (b)(1) by reason of the election, including the manner in which the lump sum and such monthly payments are determined for any particular member; and the value of retired pay payable under subsection (d) of such section in the absence of the election, including the manner in which such retired pay is determined for any particular member.

SEC. 703. Modification of eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select and TRICARE Retired Reserve of certain members of the Reserve Component.
Section 1076d(a) and Section 1076e(a) of title 10, United States Code, are amended.

SEC. 737. Feasibility study on conduct of pilot program on mental health readiness of part-time members of the Reserve Component of the Armed Forces.
Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall conduct a feasibility study and cost estimate for a pilot program that uses predictive analytics and screening to identify mental health risk and provide early, targeted intervention for part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces to improve readiness and mission success.

SEC. 1045. Technical amendment relating to management of military technicians.
Section 1053(a)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (10 U.S.C. 10216 note) is amended by striking “20 percent” and inserting “12.6 percent.”

SEC. 1062. Army modernization strategy.
The committee recommends a provision that would require the Secretary of the Army to develop a comprehensive modernization strategy for the total Army. This strategy should explicitly address the Army’s vision, end-state, key objectives, war fighting challenges, and risks. It should be sufficiently descriptive to drive requirements, set priorities, identify opportunity costs, and establish acquisition timelines. The committee assesses that a comprehensive strategy would give strategic purpose to existing acquisition programs. The strategy should provide the congressional defense committees an understanding of potential long-term costs beyond the future year defense program (FYDP) and aid in the decision-making process to terminate unneeded or underperforming programs. The committee directs the Secretary of the Army to submit its modernization strategy to the congressional defense committees within 90 days after the enactment of this Act.

The strategy shall describe how the Army intends on fighting and winning as part of a joint force engaged in combat across all operational domains. It should account for current trends and developments in weapons and equipment technologies. It should also account for the rapid pace potential peer adversaries are evolving new tactics and force design. Key is an understanding of what the Army will need to maintain command, control, communications, and sustainment of dispersed combat and combat support units in the face of electronic and cyber-attack.

The committee is concerned the Army is not modernized to fight and win high-intensity combined arms, maneuver battle against a peer adversary. The committee is aware of specific capability gaps that would significantly affect Army maneuver forces’ freedom of action, mobility, lethality, and sustainment.
The committee notes that the Army has published numerous strategies for specific programs such as small arms, tracked combat vehicles, wheeled vehicles, and aviation. Yet the Army does not possess an all-encompassing modernization strategy that provides purpose and priority to the above. Given the Army expends tens of billions of dollars each year on procurement, research, development, testing, and evaluation, the committee views a comprehensive Army modernization strategy as essential.

The committee acknowledges the Army remains engaged in active operations across the world and accordingly has made readiness its first priority. However, the committee assesses modernization as requirement for readiness in the very near future.

SEC. 1063. Report on Army plan to improve operational unit readiness by reducing number of non-deployable soldiers assigned to operational units.
Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the plans of the Army to improve operational unit readiness in the Army by reducing the number of non-deployable soldiers assigned to operational units of the Army and replacing such soldiers with soldiers capable of world-wide deployment.

SEC. 1065. Studies on aircraft inventories for the Air Force.
The Secretary of Defense shall provide for the performance of three independent studies of alternative aircraft inventories through 2030, and an associated force-sizing construct, for the Air Force.

Not later than April 1, 2018, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth the results of a review, under taken by the Secretary for purposes of the report, of the following (1) authority for the employment, use, and status of National Guard technicians under section 709 of title 32, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “National Guard Technicians Act of 1968”); (2) authorities for the employment, use, and status of National Guard and Reserve technicians under sections 10216 through 10218 of title 10, United States Code; and (3) any other authorities on the employment, use, and status of National Guard and Reserve technicians under law.

SEC. 1073. Business case analysis on establishment of active duty association and additional primary aircraft authorizations for the 168th Air Refueling Wing.
The Secretary of the Air Force shall conduct a business case analysis on the establishment of an active or classic association with the 168th Air Refueling Wing.

SEC. 1403. Drug interdiction and Counter-drug activities, Defense-wide.
Funds are hereby authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2018 for expenses, not otherwise provided for, for Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities, Defense-wide, as specified in the funding table in section 4501.

The Secretary of Defense shall establish and maintain a database of emergency response capabilities, including cyber capabilities units of the National Guard and Reserves.
SEC. 1662. Community college cyber pilot program and assessment.
Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, as part of the Federal Cyber Scholarship-for-Service program established under section 302 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (15 U.S.C. 7442), the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall develop and implement a pilot program at not more than 10, but at least 5, community colleges to provide scholarships to eligible students and assess the potential benefits and feasibility of providing scholarships through community colleges to eligible students who are pursuing associate degrees, but do not have bachelor’s degrees.

SEC. 2601. Authorized Army National Guard construction and land acquisition projects.
Using amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in section 2606 and available for the National Guard and Reserve as specified in the funding table in section 4601, the Secretary of the Army may acquire real property and carry out military construction projects for the Army National Guard locations inside the United States.

SEC. 2604. Authorized Air National Guard construction and land acquisition projects.
Using amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in section 2606 and available for the National Guard and Reserve as specified in the funding table in section 4601, the Secretary of the Air Force may acquire real property and carry out military construction projects for the Air National Guard locations inside the United States.

SEC. 2606. Authorization of appropriations, National Guard and Reserve.
The committee recommends a provision that would authorize appropriations for the reserve component military construction projects authorized for construction for fiscal year 2018 in this Act. This provision would also provide an overall limit on the amount authorized for military construction projects for each of the reserve components of the military departments. The state list contained in this report is the binding list of the specific projects authorized at each location.

SEC. 2702. Prohibition on conducting additional Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.
Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize an additional Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

SEC. 5101. Plan for modernization of the radar for F–16 fighter aircraft of the National Guard.
The Secretary of the Air Force shall develop a plan to modernize the radars of F–16 fighter aircraft of the National Guard by replacing legacy mechanically-scanned radars for such aircraft with AESA radars.

SEC. 5102. Upgrade of M113 vehicles.
No amounts authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2018 may be obligated or expended to upgrade Army M113 vehicles until the Secretary of the Army submits to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the strategy of the Army for the upgrade of such vehicles.

SEC. 5503. Annual report on participation in the Transition Assistance Program for members of the Armed Forces.
Not later than February 28 each year, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on the participation of members of the armed forces in the program under this section during the preceding year.
SEC. 5506. Civilian training for National Guard pilots and sensor operator aircrews of MQ–9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.
Subject to subsection (c), the Chief of the National Guard Bureau may enter into one or more contracts with appropriate civilian entities in order to provide flying or operating training for National Guard pilots and sensor operator aircrew members in the MQ–9 unmanned aerial vehicle.

SEC. 5701. Regular update on prescription drug pricing standard under TRICARE Retail Pharmacy Pilot Program.
Section 1074g(d) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph, “(3) With respect to the TRICARE retail pharmacy program described in subsection (a)(2)(E)(ii), the Secretary shall ensure that a contract entered into with a TRICARE pharmacy program contractor includes requirements described in section 1860D–12(b)(6) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–112(b)(6)) to ensure the provision of information regarding the pricing standard for prescription drugs.”

SEC. 6001. Air Force pilot program on education and training and certification of secondary and post-secondary students as aircraft technicians.
The Secretary of the Air Force shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of (A) providing education and training to secondary and post-secondary students in the skills and qualifications required to lead to certification as an aircraft technician for the Air Force with skills levels 3–5; and (B) certifying individuals who successfully complete education and training under the pilot program as aircraft technicians for the Air Force at the applicable skill level.

SEC. 6002. Collaboration between Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Defense on unmanned aircraft systems.
The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense shall collaborate on developing standards, policies, and procedures for sense and avoid capabilities for unmanned aircraft systems.

SEC. 6601. Sense of Congress on use of Intergovernmental Personnel Mobility Act Program and Department of Defense Information Technology Exchange Program to obtain personnel with cyber skills and abilities for the Department of Defense.
It is the sense of Congress that (1) the Department of Defense should fully use the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program (IPAMP) and the Department of Defense Information Technology Exchange Program (ITEP) to obtain cyber personnel across the Government by leveraging cyber capabilities found at the State and local government level and in the private sector in order to meet the needs of the Department for cybersecurity professionals; and (2) the Department should implement at the earliest practicable date a strategy that includes policies and plans to fully use such programs to obtain such personnel for the Department.

SEC. 10702. Eligibility for certain health care benefits of members of the Selected Reserve ordered to active duty for pre-planned missions in support of the Combatant Commands.
Pre-mobilization Health Care. Section 1074(d)(2) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking “in support of a contingency operation under” and inserting “under section 12304b of this title or”

Transitional Health Care. Section 1145(a)(2)(B) of such title is amended by striking “in support of a contingency operation” and inserting “under section 12304b of this title or a provision of law referred to in section 101(a)(13)(B) of this title.”
SEC. 10902. Report on the need for a Joint Chemical-Biological Defense Logistics Center. Not later than March 1, 2018, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that includes (1) a description of the operational need and requirement for a consolidated Joint Chemical-Biological Defense Logistics Center; (2) identification of the specific operational requirements for rapid deployment of chemical and biological defense assets and the sustainment requirements for maintenance, storage, inspection, and distribution of specialized chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear equipment at the Joint Chemical-Biological Defense Logistics Center; (3) a definition of program objectives and milestones to achieve initial operating capability and full operating capability; and (4) estimated facility and personnel resource requirements for use in planning, programming, and budgeting.

SEC. 11001. Expansion of eligibility from the Department of Veterans Affairs of counseling and treatment for sexual trauma for members of the Armed Forces. Section 1720D(a)(2)(A) of title 38, United States Code is amended by (1) striking “on active duty” and (2) inserting “that was suffered by the member while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training” before the period at the end.

SEC. 11005. Report on cyber capability and readiness shortfalls of Army Combat Training Centers. Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to Congress a report on the Army Combat Training Centers and the current resident cyber capabilities and training at such centers to examine potential training readiness shortfalls and ensure that pre-rotational cyber training needs are met.

SEC. 11605. Report on progress made in implementing the Cyber Excepted Personnel System. Section 1599f(h)(2) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph, “(F) An assessment of the progress made in implementing the Cyber Excepted Personnel System.”

SEC. 11608. Report on training infrastructure for cyber forces. Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the Department of Defense training infrastructure for cyber forces. Such report shall include the following (1) identification of the shortcomings in such training infrastructure; (2) potential commercial applications to address such shortcomings; and (3) future projections of cyber force growth and urgent needs relating to such growth.

REPORT LANGUAGE

AH–64 Apache Block IIIA Remanufacture
The budget request included $935.9 million in line number 6 of Aircraft Procurement, Army (APA), for AH–64 Apache Block IIIA Remanufacture. The committee recommends an increase $39.0 million in AH–64 Apache Block IIIA Remanufacture. This is on the Army unfunded priority list.

AH–64 Apache Block IIIB New Build
The budget request included $446.0 million in line number 8 of Aircraft Procurement, Army (APA), for AH–64 Apache Block IIIB New Build. The committee recommends an increase of $273.7 million in AH–64 Apache Block IIIB New Build. This is on the Army unfunded priority list.
High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV)
The budget request included $53.0 million in line number 3 of Other Procurement, Army (OPA), for High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). The committee recommends an increase of $15.0 million in OPA for HMMWV. This is on the Army unfunded priority list.

Warfighter Information Network-Tactical
The budget request included $420.5 million in line number 19 of Other Procurement, Army (OPA), for Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN–T). The committee notes an early to need requirement in the budget for fiscal year 2018. The committee is also aware that the WIN–T program is significantly challenged by dated requirements, vulnerabilities to electronic warfare, and cyber attacks and reliability issues. The committee recommends a decrease of $420.5 million in OPA for WIN–T.

C–130 propulsion upgrades
The budget request included $66.3 million in line number 47 of Aircraft Procurement, Air Force (APAF). The committee recommends an increase of $26.8 million in line number 47 of APAF.

C–130H modernization
The committee remains committed to the Air Force’s Avionics Modernization Program (AMP), and urges the Air Force to pursue the most rapid upgrade possible of the 176 C–130H aircraft. The committee continues to support the current two-increment AMP upgrade strategy, but is concerned that extensive development needlessly delays completion of both AMP increments despite availability of commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and non-developmental item (NDI) technologies, including glass cockpit and autopilot systems and components, that are available and in use on C–130 aircraft today.

Achieving the best possible value/capability for the taxpayer and the Air Force is the goal. Therefore, the committee expects the Secretary of the Air Force to maximize efforts to procure COTS and NDI solutions and that minimize use of unnecessary military standard (MIL–STD) systems. This approach must adhere to the intent of Section 2377 of Title 10, United States Code, and comprehensively apply the tenets of DoD’s Better Buying Power (BBP) 3.0 policy. COTS/NDI solutions are currently flying on both U.S. Government and civilian C–130 aircraft that are lighter, less expensive, and have proven reliability at or above that of the MIL–STD solutions. Such cost-effective solutions should be embraced to the maximum extent possible and practical.

Therefore, the Secretary of the Air Force is directed to provide a briefing to the congressional defense committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act that details (1) how the intent of Section 2377 of Title 10, United States Code, and the prescribed processes of DoD BBP 3.0 have been vigorously applied to defining both the technical requirements and acquisition strategy for AMP Increments 1 & 2, including the Air Force’s creation of incentives to offerors for accelerated and cost-capped implementation; (2) how the standards requirements applied to the C–130 cockpit modernization are not excessive given the operational mission profiles and considering other COTS technologies already operational these aircraft; and (3) how the proposed solution will reduce total ownership cost to the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units that must then operate and maintain the aircraft.
F-16 Block 40/50 Mission Training Centers
The Secretary of the Air Force has directed the Air Force to accelerate procurement of additional F-16 Mission Training Centers (MTC) suites for Air National Guard use in order to provide continuity of training between live and virtual scenarios, develop and maintain required combat readiness without dependence on the availability of off-station resources, reduce flight operations tempo and flying hour cost required to gain equal training readiness, reduce travel cost, reduce personnel tempo impacts for pilots, and increase dwell time for wings, allowing more deployment flexibility. Additional MTCs would save travel costs and make the F-16 block 40/50 MTC more available to Active Duty, Reserve, and Air National Guard F-16 block 40/50 pilots, resulting in enhanced readiness.

Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS)
The E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) aircraft has long provided significant joint air command and control in both land and maritime arenas. The committee is pleased that the budget request includes some funding to continue this program’s essential warfighting function until the JSTARS Recapitalization Program reaches Full Operational Capability (FOC) in 2028. The committee expects that the Department of the Air Force will take no action to prematurely retire E-8C aircraft before the JSTARS Recap program reaches this milestone. The committee is greatly concerned that a lengthy JSTARS Recap acquisition program could result in a capabilities gap which will leave the combatant commanders without an acceptable level of ground moving target indicator and battle management command and control capability for several years. Accordingly, the committee encourages the Secretary of the Air Force to fund all necessary modifications, including, but not limited to, Prime Mission Equipment-Diminishing Manufacturing Sources (PME-DMS) on all 16 E-8C aircraft and to maintain all E-8C aircraft in a singular configuration and deployable state to continue world-wide missions, avoid degradation of mission performance, and meet Combatant Commander requirements for operations during the period.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a briefing to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, not later than November 1, 2017, that describes, in detail, a strategy to sufficiently address manning, sustainment, modernization, and viability deficiencies that would resolve capability gaps, shortfalls, and deficiencies of the E-8C fleet of aircraft. The briefing should include a strategy that addresses right-sizing and balancing unit manning among the Total Force; maintaining proficient and current aircrews to meet operational requirements; resolving obsolescence and diminishing manufacturing sources of parts and supply; necessary mission system upgrades and operational enhancements across the E-8C fleet to keep the aircraft viable and relevant until the JSTARS Recapitalization aircraft is fielded; resolving maintenance deficiencies; standardizing existing aircraft capabilities in areas such as imagery servers and the Automated Information System; and the associated cost, budget, and timeline required to implement the strategy.

Primary aircraft assigned to Air National Guard rescue squadrons
The committee finds that National Guard rescue squadrons in Alaska, California, and New York play a critical role in rescue response throughout the United States during times of disaster or crisis, a mission that prepares these units remarkably well for success in combat. The committee notes that certain rescue squadrons, in addition to civilian and deployment requirements conducted by all National Guard rescue squadrons, are tasked with alert requirements in support of active duty missions. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to report to the congressional defense committees no later than 180 days after the passage of this Act on the readiness of Air National Guard units to meet active duty alert mission requirements and whether such units have the appropriate number of primary aircraft assigned to fully execute all assigned missions.
Warfighter Information Network-Tactical Increment 2-Initial Networking (WIN-T Inc. 2)
The budget request included $4.7 million in PE 0310349A of Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) Army, for Warfighter Information Network-Tactical Increment 2-Initial Networking. The committee notes changing tactical requirements. The committee recommends a decrease of $4.0 million in PE 0310349A.

C-130J
The budget request included $26.8 million in PE 41132F, Research, Development, Test & Evaluation, Air Force (RDTEAF) for the C-130J program. The committee recommends a decrease of $6.4 million in PE 41132F for RDTEAF, for a total of $20.4 million, for the C-130J program due to the availability of prior year funds that are excess to program needs.

MQ-9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
The budget request included $37.9 million in Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Defense-wide (RDTEDW), PE 1105219BB, for the development, integration, and testing of special operations-unique mission kits for the Medium Altitude Long Endurance Tactical (MALET) MQ-9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) is responsible for the rapid development and acquisition of special operations capabilities to, among other things, effectively carry out operations against terrorist networks while avoiding collateral damage.

The committee understands that the budget request only partially addresses technology gaps identified by SOCOM on its fleet of MQ-9 UAVs. Therefore, the committee recommends an additional $13.0 million in RDTEDW for the MQ-9 UAV for a total of $50.9 million.

The committee strongly supports SOCOM's efforts to accelerate fielding of advanced weapons, sensors, and emerging technologies on its fleet of MQ-9 UAVs. The committee has authorized additional funds above the budget request in each of the last 5 years to enhance these efforts and understands that SOCOM has successfully developed and acquired a number of new capabilities, including improved weapon effectiveness, target location and tracking, image resolution, and video transmission during that time. The committee expects SOCOM to update the committee periodically on its development efforts under the MALET MQ-9 UAV program.

Active electronically scanned array radar improvements
The committee notes that Air Force and Navy fighter aircraft are equipped with active electronically scanned array (AESA) types of radars, and all services are actively pursuing retrofit of these types of radars on legacy aircraft. The Air Force has identified threats from adversaries operating at frequencies where AESA radar's capability can be further improved, and has tasked the Air Force Research Laboratory to lead the development of technologies that address these capability gaps, in order to develop hardware that can be used across the services to address spectrum threats to radars, weapons, missile seekers, and other airborne platforms. The Committee encourages the Air Force to continue these efforts and provide resources as needed to develop newer, more capable arrays which will provide significant performance advantages.

STARBASE increase
The budget request included $34.7 billion for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide (OMDW), of which $183.0 million was for SAG 4GT3 Civil Military Programs.

The committee notes the STARBASE Program is a highly effective program that improves the knowledge and skills of students in kindergarten through 12th grades in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The committee recommends an increase of $25.0 million for SAG 4GT3 Civil Military Programs for the STARBASE program.
**Studies on aircraft inventories for the Air Force**
The budget request included $1.6 billion for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide (OMDW) for SAG 4GTN Administration and Service-wide Activities.

Elsewhere in this Act, the committee recommends a provision that would direct the Secretary of Defense to commission three studies to be submitted to the congressional defense committees on potential future aircraft inventories and capability mixtures no later than March 1, 2019. These studies would provide competing visions and alternatives for a future set of choices regarding Air Force aircraft capabilities and capacities. One study would be performed by the Department of the Air Force, with the participation of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Net Assessment. The second study would be performed by a federally funded research and development center. The third study would be conducted by a qualified independent, non-governmental institute selected by the Secretary of Defense.

Accordingly, the committee recommends an increase of $1.0 million in OMDW for SAG 4GTN Administration and Service-wide Activities for the performance of these studies, for a total of $1.6 billion.

**KC–46A aerial refueling tanker emergent requirements**
The KC–46A will serve as the backbone of the Air Force’s critical aerial refueling mission for the next several decades, replacing the aging 1950s-era KC–135 Stratotanker fleet. The committee is aware that the Air Force has provided funding for numerous military construction projects at installations across the country to prepare for the delivery and bed down of the aircraft.

However, the committee is concerned that as the KC–46A program matures and requirements become better defined, additional military construction and facilities, sustainment, restoration and modernization (FSRM) funding is necessary to properly support the fielding of the aircraft, house additional personnel, and meet unforeseen requirements of the tanker mission. The committee strongly encourages the Air Force to review and validate new and emergent requirements and prepare to provide additional military construction and FSRM funding in its budget request for fiscal year 2019.

**Report on F–35 Joint Strike Fighter sustainment affordability and transparency**
The committee is concerned that the Department of Defense’s (DoD) sustainment strategy for the Joint Strike Fighter is not linked closely to the military services’ budgets that provide the necessary funding for the projected $1.0 trillion in operating and support costs of the program, thus contributing to the lack of transparency and misalignment of responsibility and accountability that has plagued the program from its inception. In 2014, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that while DOD has begun some cost-savings efforts and established sustainment affordability targets for the F–35 program, DOD did not use the military services’ budgets to set these targets. Therefore, these targets may not be representative of what the services can realistically afford and do not provide a clear benchmark for DOD’s cost-savings efforts. While the committee is encouraged by the Department’s attention on cost reduction efforts, until the budgets of the services actually inform the affordability targets the Department is trying to achieve, there is no way to ensure that any cost savings will actually result in a sustainment strategy that will be affordable. The current strategy lacks the transparency necessary for an efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars by the services that are actually operating and funding sustainment. Continuing the current practice of having the F–35 Joint Program Office handing a bill to the services during execution fails to incorporate the services’ budgetary input to guide sustainment decisions, prioritize requirements, and identify potential areas for savings.
Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives, not later than March 1, 2018, a report on the Department’s plan for improving the transparency and affordability of the sustainment strategy for the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter. The required report shall include the following elements: (1) a description of affordability constraints linked to, and informed by, military service budgets to help guide sustainment decisions, prioritize requirements, and identify additional areas of savings; (2) an explanation of the processes in place and steps taken to ensure that the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Air Force have full transparency of the F–35 sustainment costs that they are funding, and the corresponding capabilities provided, in order to support their own affordability initiatives; and (3) any other matter deemed relevant by the Secretary of Defense.

**Addressing challenges in remotely piloted aircraft community**

The committee has repeatedly expressed concern in the past regarding the projected shortfalls of pilots and sensor operators for remotely piloted aircraft (RPA). The committee notes that the Air Force provides the majority of RPA pilots and commends the Air Force for working aggressively to address this need.

Department of Defense policy states personnel cannot be deployed at a ratio of more than one to one, deploy-to-dwell, without explicit approval by the Secretary of Defense. The policy also establishes a goal of a one-to-two deploy-to-dwell ratio when possible. Most RPA crew personnel are not considered “deployed” under the current definition, yet they effectively fight in combat every day. Establishing a “combat-to-dwell” ratio for the RPA community has consistently been cited as a key means to reduce stress and create career opportunities for RPA personnel.

Similarly, the committee is concerned about the promotion rates of RPA officers. The Government Accountability Office’s 2014 report, Actions Needed to Strengthen Management of Unmanned Aerial System Pilots, showed that RPA pilots were promoted at below average rates from 2006–2013 on most boards and on only 3 of the 24 boards were RPA pilots “promoted in the top 50 percent of the career fields that competed.”

The committee reiterates its commitment to ensuring the Air Force continues implementing initiatives identified by the RPA Culture and Process Improvement Program (CPIP). Therefore, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a briefing to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the implementation of CPIP initiatives, progress toward meeting the 10:1 crew-to-combat line ratio and the 1:0.5 combat-to-dwell ratio, as well as future plans to ensure access to mental health professionals, childcare, housing, and other services at RPA bases meets the needs of the airmen stationed there.

The committee also directs the Comptroller General of the United States to provide an update, with a report to follow, to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the promotion rates of RPA pilots and sensor operators since its 2014 study. The update should determine if promotion rates have improved, factors leading to any current disparities in promotion rates of RPA officers, and recommendations to alleviate any disparity. Specifically, the update should include recommendations for how to increase (a) the selection of RPA officers for intermediate developmental education programs, and (b) the number of billets assigned to RPA pilots and sensor operators in the Rated Staff Allocation Plan (RSAP) to proportions comparable to that of fighter pilots and other fields.
Report on joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs suicide prevention

Suicide continues to plague the military Services, and the problem is exacerbated as servicemembers separate from the Department of Defense and enter a new system of care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The committee encourages the Secretary of Defense to work with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to assess the feasibility of establishing a joint office to house an interagency task force on suicide prevention. This office would facilitate the sharing of best practices between the agencies’ respective suicide prevention offices and collaborate and share resources where appropriate, such as with the joint use of the Suicide Crisis Hotline. The Secretary of Defense shall report the results of its assessment to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives within 180 days of this report.

Shortfall of United States Air Force aircraft maintenance personnel

The committee remains concerned with the current aircraft maintenance personnel shortfall in the United States Air Force. The Air Force has indicated as many as 4,000 additional aircraft maintenance personnel are required to achieve the necessary manning level and that rebuilding this critical workforce is a long-term project due to the extensive training required. The committee notes the significant value that the Department of Defense achieves through the use of Air Force Community Partnerships and recommends the Air Force examine additional public-private options to help alleviate this critical shortfall. The committee encourages the Air Force to pursue partnerships with local and regional educational institutions utilizing existing authorities contained in title 10, United States Code. The Air Force should explore creative options, such as creating an aircraft maintainer training program pipeline, to help achieve the required level of aircraft maintenance personnel at United States Air Force installations.

Transition Assistance Program challenges for the National Guard and Reserves

The committee is concerned about uneven participation rates by eligible members of the National Guard and Reserves in the Department of Defense’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP). To help ensure greater participation of eligible servicemembers in TAP, the committee directs the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to collect information on any challenges facing demobilizing members of the National Guard and Reserves regarding the timing and location of TAP courses. Additionally, the Secretary should consider the addition of related questions to the TAP online assessment tool, which are specific to members of the National Guard and Reserves.

Transition Assistance Program information for unit commanders

The Department of Defense’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides information, tools, and training to ensure servicemembers and their spouses are well-prepared to transition into civilian life. To ensure servicemembers’ completion of TAP, the committee encourages the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to require that all Services provide military commanders information on the TAP participation levels of servicemembers under their commands. The Services may use such information to hold commanders accountable for ensuring that servicemembers complete TAP.

Use of Post-9/11 GI Bill for technical schools and institutes

The committee notes that many transitioning servicemembers desire a career in technical and mechanical fields to build upon the skills and knowledge attained during service rather than pursuing a traditional degree-granting academic program. The committee strongly encourages the Department of Defense to ensure that information on technical schools and institutes be offered to transitioning servicemembers during the transition counseling provided by the Department of Defense so that servicemembers are aware of all options for which they can apply their Post-9/11 GI bill.
Report on action to address mental health of remotely piloted aircraft community

The Air Force is pursuing efforts to improve the quality of life and quality of service of the remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) community. This plan seeks to address the burden on RPA crews due to significant demand for persistent intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and strike capabilities. The committee is concerned about the potentially unique impacts on RPA pilots and airmen who are stationed in the United States while operating aircraft engaged in combat abroad.

Section 1712A of title 38, United States Code, provides for counseling and mental health services for a veteran or member of the Armed Forces who engaged in combat by “remotely controlling an unmanned aerial vehicle, notwithstanding whether the physical location of such veteran or member during such combat was within such theatre of combat operations or area.” A 2011 School of Aerospace Medicine report titled “Psychological Health Screening of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Operators and Supporting Units,” found “there is a high incidence of emotional exhaustion/fatigue among RPA operators as a group in comparison to noncombatant airmen” and that “efforts to reduce occupational burnout should focus on operational stressors and be equally devoted to weapon- and nonweapon-deploying RPA operators.”

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on steps the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard are taking to address the mental health of RPA pilots and airmen supporting RPA operations, particularly those stationed in the United States flying missions with aircraft assigned operationally to Combatant Commands. This report should also include detailed efforts the Air Force is taking to retain these pilots, given the potential for exhaustion and occupational stress.

Encouraging Air Force Rescue Unit Associations

The committee notes that United States Air Force rescue squadrons, including those in the reserve component, deliver critical combat and emergency support to military and civilian personnel in harm’s way, both at home and abroad. Whether called upon to provide combat search and rescue or to respond to a natural disaster, Air Force rescue squadrons are an adaptable and invaluable capability for the nation.

The unique nature of the rescue mission lends itself well for a robust partnership between Active, Reserve, and National Guard rescue units. In particular, experience gained by National Guard units while performing their domestic duties, under title 32, United States Code, provides important opportunities to prepare units for success in combat environments. The committee believes that the significant experience residing in reserve component rescue squadrons should be better leveraged to benefit the Total Force.

Issued in 2014, the report of National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force—a report required by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (P.L. No. 112–239)—recommended forming additional associate units comprised of both active and reserve component personnel and equipment. As part of the House Report of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (H. Rept. 114–537), the House of Representatives further encouraged the Air Force to consider forming associate units with the three Air National Guard combat search and rescue units in Alaska, California, and New York.

The committee believes the Air Force should accelerate the creation of combat search and rescue associate units to promote efficiency, leverage Reserve Component expertise, improve readiness across the Total Force, and expand interoperability between Active and Reserve Components.
**National Guard Counterdrug Program**

The National Guard Counterdrug Program (NGCP) is a federally-funded program that provides military-specific skill-sets to law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations to address the supply and demand for illicit drugs. The timing and allocation of funding continues to be a limiting factor for the NGCP and impedes the effective sustainment of relationships with supported agencies and impacts the retention of highly-trained individuals.

With such challenges in mind, the committee is interested in the allocation of resources to best support the Department of Defense (DOD) counternarcotic efforts. In October 2015, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that the National Guard had developed performance measures to report on its counterdrug program, but the information collected was not being used to evaluate and inform funding for state-level programs or oversee the counterdrug schools training.

While the National Guard has developed its Threat Based Resource Model (TBRM) to determine the severity of the drug threat, and is using it to determine funding levels for each state within the counterdrug program, the committee is concerned that the states’ use of the funds has not produced results in line with each state’s counterdrug objectives. The committee would like to have a better understanding of how the NGCP allocates and expends resources in alignment with its stated objectives.

Accordingly, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to evaluate the NGCP’s approach to resource allocation, to include the following: (1) A description of how the NGCP aligns with the Department of Defense’s overarching counter-narcotics objectives; (2) A description of how the National Guard determines funding and distribution percentages for each state in the TBRM; (3) An assessment of the extent to which funding for the National Guard counterdrug program is expended in accordance with approved state plans; and (4) An assessment of the extent to which the National Guard Counterdrug Program is achieving its stated objectives.

The committee directs the Comptroller General to brief the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives not later than March 15, 2018, on preliminary findings of the evaluation with a final report to follow by June 30, 2018.

**National Guard role in enhanced border security**

The committee acknowledges an increased emphasis on enhancing our nation’s border security to address illegal immigration, illicit drug smuggling, human trafficking, and other criminal activities that threaten our national security. The committee notes there may be additional opportunities for National Guard units to conduct valuable unit and individual training events that would contribute to readiness as well as enhanced border security.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Air Force to submit to the congressional defense committees, in consultation with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, the Commander of U.S. Northern Command and the Secretary of Homeland Security, a report by December 1, 2017, with recommendations on how the Army National Guard and Air National Guard could gain effective unit and individual training while also enhancing the border security capabilities of the continental United States. This report should contain a description of: the types of activities that would achieve such training and enhanced border security; the costs associated with such activities and the delineation of state and federal funding required; the potential impact on operations and personnel tempo for tasked units; any limitations of current operating authorities for each potential training activity; and any other information the Secretaries consider relevant.
Assessment of designating a Joint Chemical-Biological Defense Logistics Distribution Center
The committee recognize that in fiscal year 2006, Congress urged the Secretary of the Army to designate the U.S. Army Pine Bluff Arsenal, Arkansas, as the Center of Industrial and Technical Excellence for Chemical and Biological Defense.

The committee hereby directs the Secretary of Defense to evaluate the feasibility of designating a Joint Chemical-Biological Defense Logistics Distribution Center to consolidate the Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear sustainment functions and provide enhanced military readiness to the warfighter. Accordingly, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to submit an assessment to the congressional defense committees not later than December 1, 2017.