

WASHINGTON, DC –Congressman Joe Courtney today released the following statement after the Pentagon released the Defense Strategic Review:

“Even in Washington D.C., where reports and studies are churned out every day, the release of the Strategic Review signifies a groundbreaking change of direction. This plan is different for a number of reasons. First, it comes in the wake of the bipartisan Budget Control Act of 2011, which passed last August, averting a default crisis. The law mandated significant defense reductions over the next 10 years, changing the budget landscape at the Pentagon. Perhaps more importantly, it is the first concrete analysis of what our military will look like after more than a decade of ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“After a year of in-depth hearings before the House Armed Services Committee that were focused on the future of our military, the content of today’s report is not a surprise. The report is a forward-looking analysis of what America’s strategic challenges in the 21st Century will be. After the bruising experience of two ground wars in the Middle East, it is clear that large-scale interventions will not be the premise of future force structure.

“In fact, today’s report emphasizes the need for a leaner, more agile force – one whose focus will increasingly be on the Pacific. It also emphasizes ‘sustaining our underseas capabilities,’ ‘Maintaining a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent,’ and protecting investments in ‘new technologies like ISR and unmanned systems’ while underscoring the importance of sustaining our national defense industrial base. While many of the details on how this strategy will impact our defense budget will not be fully known until the release of the 2013 budget in the coming weeks, the emphasis this new document makes in sustaining and bolstering the capabilities offered by our submarines is positive and welcome news.

“Submarines are versatile and effective, and the vital role their unique capabilities will play in a changing defense landscape was reaffirmed again by today’s report. Secretary Panetta said it best last fall when he called submarines ‘indispensible,’ but maintaining that distinction requires vigilance – both in Washington amidst continued budget debates and in the shipyard, where the talented men and women of Electric Boat produce ships under budget and ahead of schedule.”

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