

Bill includes measure secured by Courtney to extend doubled submarine production through 2018, raises troop pay, funds Pratt & Whitney's F-35 engine, rejects efforts to eliminate C-27 program

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WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Joe Courtney and the House Armed Services today passed the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), building on gains in submarine production and bolstering our nation's security and eastern Connecticut's industrial base. The bill authorizes billions of dollars of investments for Electric Boat and other key defense priorities for eastern Connecticut and the state.

It includes measures secured by Rep. Courtney to ensure doubled submarine production in 2014.

The NDAA sets the federal budget for the Department of Defense for the next fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2012.

The NDAA includes \$4.9 billion in funding for the Virginia-class attack submarine program, including \$3.2 billion to build two submarines in 2013 and \$1.7 billion - \$778 million above the President's budget request - in advanced procurement for two boats in both 2014 and 2015. The bill marks the third-consecutive year of fully funding doubled submarine production – a goal Courtney worked on for nearly five years, beginning in his first year in Congress.

The bill also authorizes up to 10 Virginia Class Submarines as part of the Block IV multi-year contract for 2014-2018 (the budget requested nine, with one submarine in 2014).

“Doubled submarine production at Electric Boat is good for EB, and has massive economic benefits that will ripple across Connecticut,” **said Congressman Courtney**. “Earlier this month, Navy CNO Adm. Jonathan Greenert visited Electric Boat to accept delivery of the USS Mississippi – the newest Virginia class submarine – which was completed 363 days ahead of schedule and \$60 million under budget.

“While we are all mindful of the pressures facing the defense budget, the fact remains that a steady submarine production rate today will ensure that the Navy has the submarine force

structure it needs, and that EB will still continue to produce the savings and efficiency that have made the Virginia class submarine program an example for all Pentagon programs. While there are several steps ahead of us, this is an important show of support for the Virginia Class submarine program.”

The bill also includes a provision to undo a plan that would have eliminated the C-27 program and sent already-purchased planes to the boneyard for retirement. The bill prohibits the retirement of the planes, which Connecticut’s 103rd Airlift Wing had planned to field beginning in 2013.

Below are selected provisions of the bill.

Major Highlights:

•**Virginia Class Submarines.** The bill supports a steady, two-per-year production rate for the Virginia Class submarine program through 2018 by authorizing \$4.9 billion in procurement funding, including \$3.2 billion for two submarines in 2013 and \$1.7 billion, \$778 million above the President’s budget request, in advanced procurement for two boats in both 2014 and 2015. The bill authorizes up to 10 Virginia Class Submarines as part of the Block IV multi-year contract for 2014-2018 (the budget requested nine, with one submarine in 2014). To allow the Navy to achieve a two-boat production rate in 2014, the bill authorizes an additional \$778 million for advanced procurement for long-lead items needed to support that schedule. The bill also fully authorizes the budget request of \$100 million in 2013 research and development work on the Virginia Payload Module (VPM).

•**Bipartisan Rejection of BRAC.** The 2013 budget requested two new base closing and alignment rounds (BRAC) in 2013 and 2015, a proposal that Congressman Courtney has been an outspoken opponent of. As approved in the Readiness Subcommittee last week, the NDAA did not authorize any new BRAC rounds. Further, during committee consideration last night, Congressman Courtney crossed party lines to support an amendment offered by Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA) to explicitly reject a new BRAC round and prohibit the DOD for planning for a new round.

•**F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.** The bill authorizes \$5.9 billion for F-35 procurement: \$3.31 billion

for Air Force variant, \$1.1 billion for the Navy's variant and \$1.5 billion for the Marines STOVL variant. This funding supports procurement of 29 F-35s. Pratt and Whitney provides the F135 engine for each new F-35 fighter.

•**Connecticut Air National Guard.** Connecticut's 103rd Airlift Wing had been planned to field the C-27J starting in 2014 as a replacement to its current C-21 mission and its former A-10 mission. The 2013 budget request included a plan to eliminate the C-27 program, which would have sent already purchased planes to the "boneyard" for retirement and canceled the procurement of 17 planes that have been funded by Congress but not yet ordered by the Air Force. The bill includes a provision prohibiting retirement of C-27 aircraft in 2013 pending the completion of an analysis of the Air Force's cost estimation for the program by the Congressional Budget Office. Further, Congressman Courtney joined a bipartisan coalition of members in passing an amendment to block the Air Force's restructuring plan for the Air National Guard pending further review and study by the Government Accountability Office.

•**Helicopters. The bill authorizes** \$1.2 billion for 59 UH-60 Black Hawks for the Army and Guard, equal to the president's request; \$401 million for 18 MH-60S Navy Knighthawk helicopters, roughly equal to the president's request, which is used by the Navy for combat search-and-rescue, special-warfare support and airborne mine countermeasures, and; \$1.013 billion for 24 MH-60R Navy Seahawk helicopters, \$170 million and 5 aircraft more than the budget request, which features advanced radar, missiles and low frequency sonar.

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•**Troops to Teachers.** The bill includes provisions from the bipartisan Troops to Teachers Enhancement Act, which he introduced with Rep. Tom Petri (R-WI) and Sen. John McCain, to lower service requirements to allow more servicemembers from recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan to get training as teachers and expands the numbers of schools they can qualify to teach in.

•**Military Personnel.** The NDAA Authorizes a troop pay increase of 1.7 percent, provides new regulations and procedures for combating and prosecuting sexual assault within the military, extends some TRICARE benefits to members of the Selected Reserves who are involuntarily separated, and makes clear that non-monetary contributions to health care benefits made by our troops and their families through a career of service to America represents pre-payment of health care premiums in retirement.

•**TRICARE.** The NDAA calls for no increases to co-pays or premiums for TRICARE beneficiaries.

•**Afghanistan.** During consideration of the NDAA in committee, Congressman Courtney supported an amendment offered by ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) to strike language in the underlying bill that supports a significant troop presence in Afghanistan past 2014. Although the amendment was defeated largely on party lines, the issue will likely be debated again during the bill's consideration on the House floor next week. The Bill also includes an amendment authored by Congressman Courtney direct the GAO to conduct a study of the planning underway for the reduced role of the U.S. military and the DOD in Afghanistan after 2014.

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