

Courtney praises House passage of Defense Authorization Act as victory for Connecticut manufacturers, troops

May 26, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Joe Courtney and the House of Representatives today passed the FY12 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), building on gains in submarine production and bolstering 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. The NDAA sets the federal budget for the Department of Defense for the next fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2011.

The NDAA includes \$4.8 billion in funding for the Virginia-class attack submarine program, including \$3.2 billion to build two submarines in 2012 and advanced funding to prepare to build two each in 2013 and 2014. The bill marks the second-consecutive year of fully funding doubled submarine production – a goal Courtney worked on for nearly five years, beginning in his first year in Congress.

“Doubled submarine production at Electric Boat is good for EB, and has massive economic benefits that will ripple across Connecticut,” **said Congressman Courtney**. “Additional manufacturing and design work on the OHIO replacement program has already directly led to EB’s expansion into Pfizer’s New London complex last June. The new work already underway and the work bolstered by today’s vote solidify those gains, providing security for our region’s economy and for the men and women of EB who routinely complete submarines ahead of schedule and under budget.

“Although there were additional amendments which I was disappointed to see fail, I am hopeful the House bill still can be improved as it is considered in the Senate and in conference.”

The bill also includes a bipartisan amendment offered by Congressman Courtney to expand the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program. TTT offers educational stipends to qualifying veterans who wish to transition to careers in education. Rep. Courtney’s amendment, which was adopted today, reduces the service requirement, allowing more Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to participate in the program.

“Our men and women in uniform are among the most talented, public-spirited Americans in today’s workforce,” **said Congressman Courtney**. “Expanding this program will direct their unmatched experience, discipline, and leadership skills into America’s classrooms. This is a win-win situation for our schools, military personnel, and especially our children.”

Below are selected provisions of the bill.

Major CT Programs:

•**Virginia Class Submarines.** The bill fully supports the procurement of the two submarines requested in the President’s budget. Of the \$4.8 billion provided for the program, \$3.2 billion is

for the two 2012 submarines and \$1.5 billion is for advanced procurement for 2013 and 2014. In 2007 – his first year in Congress – Courtney secured \$588 million to acquire the long lead materials needed to beginning building two submarines a year in 2011, a year earlier than the Navy’s plan at the time. Courtney’s effort came to fruition in FY11 and was solidified with NDAA passage today.

•**Development of the replacement Ohio-Class SSBN.** The bill fully supports the president’s budget request of for the development of the SSBN(x), including \$1.067 billion for the OHIO-class replacement submarine. That total includes \$781.6 million for advanced development of the submarine and \$285.4 million for development of the submarine’s advanced nuclear power systems.

•**F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.** The bills includes \$3.3 billion for 19 F-35As for the Air Force, \$1.1 billion for six F-35Bs for the Marine Corps and \$1.5 billion for seven Navy F-35As, all equal to the President’s budget request. The measure also authorizes \$2.7 billion in research and development funds for F-35 JSF development.

•**F-136 Alternate Engine.** The bill authorizes zero funding for the development of the F136 alternate engine for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. However, Congressman Courtney is concerned about two provisions: one that requires the department to restart the program if additional work is needed to improve the performance of the current F135 engine, which is being testing and is being flown in the F-35 today; and another that requires the department to preserve and store of property owned by the federal government that would allow the development of the alternate engine to be restarted, and requires the Secretary of Defense to allow the F136 contractors to use the equipment at no cost to the taxpayer. He opposes these provisions, and will continue to work with the Senate and in conference to oppose them.

•**Tanker Replacement.** The bill includes \$850 million in development funds for the replacement of the tanker fleet, which was recently awarded to Boeing. Pratt and Whitney will provide the engines for the new tankers.

•**C-27 Spartan.** The bill authorizes the president's request of \$480 million for nine aircraft, which will serve as the future mission of the Connecticut Air National Guard and will serve as a critical element in the National Guard’s ability to carry out their federal and state airlift missions at home and abroad.

Helicopters

• **UH-60 Black Hawk** — \$1.3 billion for 71 Black Hawks for the Army and Guard, equal to the president's request.

• **CH-53K Super Stallion**— \$677 million to develop the Super Stallion transport, equal to the president's request. The Super Stallion is a large, heavy-lift cargo helicopter currently being developed by Sikorsky Aircraft for the Marine Corps. It will be the largest and heaviest helicopter in the U.S. military.

- **MH-60S Knighthawk** — \$409 million for 18 Navy Knighthawk helicopters, equal to the president's request. The multi-mission Sikorsky MH-60S is used by the Navy for combat search-and-rescue, special-warfare support and airborne mine countermeasures.
- **MH-60R Seahawk** — \$791 million for 24 Navy Seahawk helicopters, equal to the president's request. The MH-60R features advanced radar, missiles and low frequency sonar.

Other Major Provisions:

•**National Guard Equipment.** Equipment shortfalls continue to persist across non-deployed National Guard and reserve units, particularly among items that are critical for dual-use roles of combat operations and domestic emergencies. The bill authorizes \$5.3 billion – \$325 million more than requested by the President – for the Guard and reserves. The total includes funding for aircraft missiles, wheeled and tracked combat vehicles, ammunition, small arms, tactical radios, logistic automation systems, and other equipment for the National Guard and Reserve components.

•**Military Pay Raise.** The bill authorizes an across-the-board 1.6% pay increase for military personnel, equal to the president's request. It is the 12th year in a row that military pay increases would exceed those of the private sector. This raise would match the pay raise rate in the private sector as measured by the Employment Cost Index.

Rep. Courtney Initiative Approved:

•**Level funding for PTAP.** The bill increases the Procurement Technical Assistance Program by \$6 million, requested by Congressman Courtney, to provide level funding for the program in 2012 (\$30 million). PTAP supports offices across the country that help connect small businesses with contracting opportunities in the federal government. Connecticut's PTAP Center is located in New London, working out of SECTER.

Congressman Joe Courtney is the sole member of the Connecticut Congressional Delegation to sit on the House Armed Services Committee.

###