

Chairman Floor Statement

HR 4681—The Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015

Mr. Chairman, the intelligence authorization act is the annual blueprint for the work of the intelligence community and America's military intelligence efforts. The bill sets the priorities for our critical intelligence efforts, and the legal framework of guidance and oversight for those efforts. Since the Ranking Member and I have held the leadership positions on the Intelligence Committee, we have passed three intelligence authorization bills in a bipartisan fashion, and hope to continue the trend with H.R. 4681. Passing a yearly Intelligence Authorization bill is the primary method by which Congress exerts its budgetary and oversight authority of the Intelligence Community.

As most of the intelligence budget involves highly classified programs, the bulk of this Committee's recommendations each year are found in the classified annex to the bill, which has been available for Members' review. Among other initiatives, the bill increases funding to address insider threats and improve personnel security programs.

At an unclassified level, I can report that the annex for Fiscal Year 2014 authorizes funding that is slightly below the President's budget request level. Its funding levels are in line with the levels appropriated by the enacted

appropriations act for the National Intelligence Program and with the National Defense Authorization Act for the Military Intelligence Program.

For Fiscal Year 2015, the bill increases the President's budget request by less than one percent and stays within the Bipartisan Budget Act funding caps. This modest increase reflects the Committee's concern that the President's request does not properly fund a number of important initiatives and leaves several unacceptable shortfalls.

The legislative provisions that the Committee and Congress consider each year are comprised of changes to statute that better enable the Community to conduct its important mission and strengthen oversight mechanisms where needed.

Mr. Chairman, we find ourselves in a very interesting time in history. Al Qa'ida has metastasized into dangerous affiliates, and safe havens have emerged in Syria, parts of Libya, Yemen, Somalia, and the tribal areas of Pakistan. Al Qa'ida is also regaining a foothold in northeast Afghanistan, just as the President announced a complete withdrawal of U.S. military forces, and the counterterrorism capability that comes with it, by the end of 2016.

Uneven leadership in recent years has emboldened adversaries like Russia and China, who are increasing their military and intelligence spending

and working to change the international order as we speak – to the detriment of our interests.

Russia occupies 20% of the nation of Georgia, invaded and occupied Crimea, and threatens invasion of Eastern Ukraine. China is bullying its neighbors and expanding claims in the South and East China Seas, through which 40% of world trade travels.

At the same time, North Korea continues its belligerent behavior, and Iran is maneuvering to preserve its capability to develop a nuclear weapon. A nuclear Iran would threaten Israel with annihilation and send the Middle East into a dangerous nuclear arms race.

We rightly demand that our intelligence agencies provide policy makers with the best and most timely information possible on these and other threats. We ask them to track terrorists wherever they train, plan and fundraise. We ask them to stop devastating cyber attacks that are stealing American jobs. We ask them to track nuclear and missile threats. And we demand they get it all right – every time. Now we are asking them to do it with fewer resources, and with what can be described as confusing direction from our Commander in Chief.

The dedicated men and women of the Intelligence Community who volunteer to serve in some of the most difficult places on earth are some of the finest patriots I have ever had the privilege to meet. And within budget constraints and unclear policy guidance from the White House, this bill

ensures they have the resources and authorities necessary to keep our nation and people safe.

As this is the last Authorization Act I will advance as Chairman of the Intelligence Committee, I want to publicly thank my Ranking Member and my friend Dutch Ruppersberger. I can't tell you what a privilege it has been to have a partner like Dutch. National security policy should not be partisan and we have done everything in our power to ensure that at the Committee. It is an honor to work with someone also interested in governing and in making progress on an issue so important to our nation's future.

I thank the Chair, urge Members' support of H.R. 4681, and reserve the balance of my time.