

**Chairman Thad Cochran Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

Hearing to Review the FY2018 Budget Request for the U.S. Army

June 7, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

The Committee will come to order. This hearing is to review the fiscal year 2018 budget request for the Department of the Army. Today we are pleased to welcome:

- The Honorable Robert M. Speer, Acting Secretary of the Army, and
- General Mark A. Milley, Army Chief of Staff

We appreciate very much your appearing today to provide us with information and observations about the content of the Department of the Army's budget request. We also take the opportunity to thank our distinguished witnesses, the Acting Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff, for their service. We appreciate the fact you've agreed to serve in these capacities.

These are challenging times because of budgetary constraints. The proposal before the Committee contains a number of significant changes and important budgetary issues for the Army. These will receive considerable attention and debate over the next few months.

We look forward to working with you closely to be sure we understand what the needs are and how we can best carry out our responsibility for national security. We want the Committee to respond to the budget request in a responsible way on how to best sustain and modernize our All-Volunteer Army.

Today, the Army remains heavily engaged around the world. Soldiers are performing remarkably well and our Nation owes them a debt of gratitude for their service.

We look forward to your testimony. Your full statements will be included in the record.

Now I will turn to the Vice Chairman Durbin, the distinguished Senator from Illinois, for his opening remarks.

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