

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

Hearing to Review the FY2018 Budget Request for the U.S. Air Force

June 21, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the Subcommittee will come to order.

Today we will receive testimony on the fiscal year 2018 budget request for the Department of the Air Force.

The budget request recommends \$132.4 billion in base funding and \$13.9 billion to support ongoing Overseas Contingency Operations. The Air Force leadership shaped the Fiscal Year 2018 budget submission to invest resources into Improving Warfighter Readiness, Achieving Program Balance, and Building Capacity.

Our witnesses are:

- The Honorable Dr. Heather Wilson, Secretary of the Air Force, and
- General David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

We are pleased to welcome Secretary Wilson and General Goldfein for their first appearance before the Subcommittee. Thank you for your service and leadership.

We look forward to hearing more about your priorities and the appropriations needed to ensure the United States Air Force is trained and equipped to defend our interests around the world.

Thank you for your testimony this morning. Your full statements will be included in the record.

I now recognize Vice Chairman Durbin, the distinguished Senator from Illinois, for his opening remarks.

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