

## Tauscher; House Armed Services Committee, Approve Fiscal Year 2009 Defense Authorization Bill

Washington, DC - Early this morning Rep. Ellen Tauscher, Chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, and her House Armed Services Committee colleagues passed H.R. 5658, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, by a unanimous vote of 61 to 0. H.R. 5658 authorizes \$531.4 billion in budget authority for the Department of Defense (DoD) and the national security programs of the Department of Energy (DoE).

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Tauscher successfully defends missile defense funding levels that focus on real and current threats;

Inserts language to better train Iraqi Police Personnel

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"Every year we strive to create a defense bill that above all, reflects a strong commitment to the men and women of our armed forces and their families so that they have the necessary resources to protect the American people," said Rep. Tauscher. "This year we did so by restoring military readiness; taking care of our troops, veterans, and their

families, increasing the focus on the war in Afghanistan, and improving interagency cooperation, oversight and accountability. Overall, we focused deploying defenses for real and current threats while we invested wisely in programs that will protect our national interests from future threats."

Rep. Tauscher also succeeded in overcoming Republican efforts to reverse a \$372 million cut, made by her Strategic Forces Subcommittee, to the Pentagon's \$712 million request for a missile defense site in Europe. Rep. Tauscher told the committee that the money provided by the bill is roughly \$100 million more than the amount approved by Congress last year and that the program still lacked formal approval from either Poland or the Czech Republic.

"Republicans talk about slashing programs and failing to look over the horizon but these are misleading characterizations. I do not believe that the American people should begin digging holes in Poland or the Czech Republic for an untested system that will eventually cost over \$4 billion dollars when we don't have ratified or signed agreements with the host governments," Rep. Tauscher told the Committee.

"This bill does in fact look far beyond the horizon and also funds the systems we need to protect us today," said Rep. Tauscher. "We have included \$1.4 billion in R&D funding for four of MDA's "over the horizon" programs, including ABL, MKV, KEI, STSS, and MDA special programs. The total grows to \$3.3 billion if you include funding for ground-base midcourse defense, including the proposed European sites; this money is specifically marked for dealing with threats that don't exist today."

Also included was an amendment authored by Rep. Tauscher that provides for a study and report by the Secretary of Defense on the appropriate number of police training team personnel necessary to train the Iraqi police forces, the funding necessary to accomplish this, and the feasibility of moving this function from the Department of Defense to the State Department as recommended by General James Jones' Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq.

This provision is part of broader legislation the congresswoman drafted to implement the recommendations of the Jones Commission to reform and improve the Iraq police forces.

"This study will ensure that the most qualified people are training the Iraqi Police Force and ensuring that they have the tools and resources to bring order and stability to their country. The ability of this force to stand up will take strain off our Armed Forces and allow them to return home sooner and safer."

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