

CONTACT: SARAH SHELDEN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2000

CONTACT: Maureen Cragin

Ryan Vaart

(202) 225-2539

**Statement of Chairman Joel Hefley
Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities**

**Subcommittee Hearing on the FY2001 Budget Request
for the Military Construction and Military Family Housing Programs
of the Department of Defense**

This afternoon, the Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities continues its hearings on the President's request for funding for the military construction and military family housing programs of the Department of Defense for the coming fiscal year. The focus of our hearing today will be on the budget request supporting the programs of the active and reserve components of the Department of the Air Force, and the Department of the Navy, including the Marine Corps.

One month ago, the Department of Defense released its budget request for fiscal year 2001. I remain concerned about the underfunding of critical infrastructure investment accounts. Military construction and military family housing continue to receive too little attention in the overall competition for resources. While the President's defense budget request is a step in the right direction, it is only a step. Even as the Administration belatedly recognizes the need for increased defense spending, erosion in the overall MILCON topline continues.

The military construction accounts for the active and reserve components of the Navy and the Air Force are no exception to the general rule. The Administration's budget request proposes funding levels for Navy and Marine Corps military construction 16 percent below current spending levels; for the Naval Reserve, the reduction is 43 percent. Air Force military construction has been reduced in the request by 31 percent from current spending levels while the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve have taken reductions from current spending levels of 80 percent and 76 percent respectively.

While I am pleased that the Navy has at least maintained an even funding profile for the support of military family housing and has increased its commitment to family housing construction by six percent, the Air Force has reduced its commitment to renovation and new construction by 36 percent.

These core infrastructure accounts cannot continue to be used to pay bills elsewhere without accelerating the long-term degradation of quality of life, training, and readiness.

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