

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT  
COMMANDER STEVEN DAVIES

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, I am pleased to commend LCDR Steven Davies for his dedication to duty and service as a U.S. Coast Guard congressional fellow on my staff. Steve was recently selected to serve as executive officer of USCGC *Thetis* and will soon depart to fulfill that important responsibility.

A native of Lebanon, PA, Steve was commissioned after his graduation from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in management, served as vice president of his class, and captained the men's soccer team. He is in the process of earning a master's degree.

Steve has served in a broad range of assignments during his Coast Guard career. He has served overseas in Kuwait and deployed with Patrol Forces Southwest Asia in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, conducted national security missions on five ships in the Arabian Gulf. In addition to deployments overseas, he has served in vital roles in support of U.S. security interests. As commanding officer of USCGC *Sailfish*, he led search and rescue operations and various law enforcement missions in the Port of New York and New Jersey. As Commanding Officer of USCGC *Kathleen Moore*, Steve led a 26-person crew that interdicted \$18 million of cocaine and nearly 700 undocumented migrants attempting to reach the United States.

Most recently, Steve served as the congressional fellow on my staff and, prior to that, for the Honorable Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. Steve's operational experience in the Gulf of Mexico, Southwest Asia, and the Arabian Gulf, in addition to his technical expertise in counterdrug and migrant interdictions, search and rescue operations, and law enforcement missions, have been pivotal in helping to shape Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Coast Guard appropriations for fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

As a congressional fellow, he has served the State of Mississippi, the Coast Guard, and our Nation admirably. My staff and I have enjoyed the benefit of Steve's counsel and have truly enjoyed working with him. Steve's leadership has brought great credit to the Coast Guard, and I appreciate and commend his commitment to continue to serve our nation.

It is a pleasure to recognize and thank LCDR Steve Davies for his service to this country. My staff and I extend our gratitude to Steve and wish him "Fair winds and following seas" as he continues his journey in the U.S. Coast Guard.

NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY  
ADMINISTRATION FISCAL YEAR  
2020 BUDGET REQUEST

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of

my opening statement at the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development's budget hearing for the National Nuclear Security Administration's fiscal year 2020 budget request be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION  
FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET REQUEST

Mr. ALEXANDER. The Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development will please come to order.

Today's hearing will review the administration's fiscal year 2020 budget request for the National Nuclear Security Administration.

This is the second of the Subcommittee's four budget hearings this year.

We heard from Secretary Perry last week, and we'll have two more hearings in the coming weeks to review the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation budget requests.

Senator Feinstein and I will each have an opening statement.

I will then recognize each Senator for up to five minutes for an opening statement, alternating between the majority and minority, in the order in which they arrived.

We will then turn to Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty to present testimony on behalf of the National Nuclear Security Administration and then give Admiral Frank Caldwell an opportunity to give a brief statement.

At the conclusion of the witnesses' testimony, I will then recognize Senators for five minutes of questions each, alternating between the majority and minority in the order in which they arrived.

First, I would like to thank our witnesses for being here today, and also Senator Feinstein, with whom I have the pleasure to work with again this year to draft the Energy and Water Appropriations bill.

Our witnesses today include: Ms. Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, the Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA); Dr. Charles Verdon, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs; Dr. Brent Park, Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation (Dr. Park is a former Associate Laboratory Director from Oak Ridge National Laboratory); and Admiral Frank Caldwell, Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors.

Our subcommittee has a good record of being the first of the appropriations bills to be considered by the Committee and by the Senate each year. For each of the past four years, Senator Feinstein and I have been able to have our bill signed into law.

Last year, we worked together in a bipartisan way on the fiscal year 2019 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill that was signed into law before the start of the fiscal year—the first time that happened since 2000.

In last year's appropriations bill we provided \$15.2 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration, including \$1.9 billion for the six life extension programs, which fix or replace components in weapons systems to make sure they're safe and reliable.

We also funded the Uranium Processing Facility at the Y-12 National Security Complex at \$703 million, which will continue to keep this project on time and on budget, with a completion year of 2025 at a cost no greater than \$6.5 billion.

I look forward to working with Senator Feinstein on another strong bill this year.

We're here today to review the administration's fiscal year 2020 budget request for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the semi-autonomous agency within the Department of Energy that is responsible for a vital mission—maintaining our nuclear weapons stockpile, reducing the global dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, and providing the Navy with safe and effective nuclear power.

The president's fiscal year 2020 budget request for the NNSA is \$16.5 billion, an increase of \$1.3 billion (or 8 percent) over last year (the fiscal year 2019 enacted level).

Today, I'd like to focus my remarks and questions on three main areas:

1. Effectively maintaining our nuclear weapons stockpile;
2. Keeping critical projects on time and on budget; and
3. Supporting our nuclear Navy.

When the Senate agreed to ratify the New Start Treaty in December 2010, we also agreed to support funding to modernize and maintain our nuclear weapons stockpile, plus the facilities to do the work. A vital part of NNSA's mission is completion of the five ongoing life extension programs, which fix or replace components in weapons systems to make sure they're safe and reliable. The budget request includes \$2.1 billion to continue the life extension programs. I want to make sure we are spending taxpayer dollars effectively.

Completing all of the work that needs to be done for these weapons systems will result in a higher workload than the weapons program has had in any time since the height of the Cold War, and it will require a large number of highly-trained experts at the production sites, like Y-12 in Oak Ridge Tennessee, the weapons laboratories, and the federal employees that work for NNSA. I'd like to hear more today about whether NNSA has enough qualified people to do this work. I would also like to discuss today whether NNSA will be able to keep the life extension programs on time and on budget.

The NNSA is responsible for some of the largest construction projects in the federal government. Senator Feinstein and I have worked hard to keep costs from skyrocketing. We want to make sure hard-earned taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and that these projects are on time and on budget.

First we focused on our oversight on the Uranium Processing Facility in Tennessee. We held routine meetings with the Department's leadership to discuss the project—particularly how the Department implemented the recommendations of a Red Team review, completed in 2014, to get the project on track.

After completing more than 90% of the design for the nuclear facilities, NNSA began construction of the Uranium Processing Facility last year. I'd like to hear more about the progress on construction from the witnesses today.

Senator Feinstein and I also worked with the Department on ways to get excess plutonium out of South Carolina more quickly and for less cost. Last year, Secretary Perry canceled the MOX project in favor of the Dilute and Disposal alternative, which the Department of Energy estimated will save taxpayers more than \$20 billion. I'd like to hear more today on the progress NNSA is making at removing the plutonium from South Carolina.

Lastly, the NNSA is restarting our ability to make plutonium pits for the stockpile. The budget request includes \$712 million for plutonium sustainment, which is 97% more than the current funding level. This difficult, but important work, will be done in New Mexico and South Carolina. The NNSA has

decided to use existing facilities and expertise in New Mexico to make some pits, and repurpose the MOX facility in South Carolina to make the remainder. That's a good plan and I support it. I want to hear from Administrator Gordon-Hagerty today how NNSA is applying the lessons we learned from UPF and MOX to make sure we get the pit production restart done on time and on budget.

Naval Reactors is responsible for all aspects of nuclear power for our submarines and aircraft carriers. Naval Reactors has a lot on their plate right now—they are designing a new reactor core for the next class of submarines, refueling a prototype reactor, and building a new spent fuel processing facility for nuclear waste from defense activities.

Admiral Caldwell and I had an opportunity talk about the new spent fuel processing facility earlier this week. It is a part of the Navy's consolidated interim storage for its used nuclear fuel.

The Navy's program shows that it can be done safely and effectively, but that does not replace the need for a permanent repository at Yucca Mountain. That used nuclear fuel will still need to go to Yucca Mountain once it is built. I look forward to Admiral Caldwell's comments today on the progress he's making on his important work, and particularly how Naval Reactors stores used nuclear fuel. I'd also like to hear what is being done to keep the new Columbia-Class submarine design on track.

The NNSA needs to complete a lot of important work, and this work is going to require good planning and effective oversight. I look forward to working with Administrator Gordon-Hagerty as we begin putting together our Energy and Water Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2020, and also with Senator Feinstein, who I will now recognize for her opening statement.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING THE BIG CHEESE OF MIAMI

• Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to recognize a small business that exemplifies creativity, hard work, and dedication to improving their community. This week, it is my honor to name The Big Cheese of Miami, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Having just celebrated their 35 year anniversary, The Big Cheese has grown from a 12-seat and 2-person operation to a landmark Miami Italian restaurant. Lifelong friends Bill Archer and Garry Duell founded The Big Cheese in 1984 and due to their rapid success, expanded to a larger location across the street. Bill is the culinary expert of the duo and has developed original recipes for all 120 items on the menu, while Garry focuses on the day-to-day operations. Along the way, they have shared in the restaurant's success.

Today, The Big Cheese remains family-oriented and affordable and uses only the finest ingredients. They have an extensive menu that includes everything from Italian favorites to Miami classics. Many of their employees have

been there since inception, and others are second-generation employees, with an average employee tenure of 16 years. Bill, Gary, and longtime manager Salvatore Aiello strive to create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere and they have certainly succeeded.

Their dedication to fair prices and made-from-scratch dishes has not gone unnoticed. They were voted The Best Inexpensive Italian Restaurant in Miami and received the 5 Kids Crown Award from South Florida Parenting Magazine for their pizza. They are proud to feed people from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and remain focused on serving their community.

One example of their efforts to help community members in need was during Hurricane Irma recovery, when they donated food to the emergency operations center in Monroe County. They are also the official sponsor of the University of Miami Athletics Department, providing both the Hurricanes and their competitors with pregame meals. Since their founding, they have served thousands of University of Miami students and collected more than 200 pieces of original memorabilia. Their dedication to the school was recently honored when they were chosen to represent the University of Miami during the Taste of the NFL, a charity aimed at bringing awareness to the millions of Americans who struggle with hunger.

The Big Cheese is an exemplary community-focused small business. They have remained true to their original values and serve their community in times of need. Like many Main Street restaurants throughout our country, The Big Cheese is a place where community members have gathered and enjoyed meals together for decades. By focusing on quality food and superior customer service, The Big Cheese has stayed in high demand. It is with great pleasure that I extend my congratulations to Bill, Gary and all of the employees at The Big Cheese. I wish you well as you continue serving the people of South Florida, and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2030. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to execute and carry out agreements concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations, and for other purposes.

At 11:52 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 639. An act to amend section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-

gency Assistance Act to clarify that National Urban Search and Rescue Response System task forces may include Federal employees.

H.R. 1331. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to nonpoint source management, and for other purposes.

The message also announced the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 16. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

H. Con. Res. 19. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

#### ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

At 6:34 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that Speaker has signed the following enrolled joint resolution:

S.J. Res. 7. Joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 639. An act to amend section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that National Urban Search and Rescue Response System task forces may include Federal employees; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1331. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to nonpoint source management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following bill was discharged from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and referred as indicated:

S. 846. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to limit certain rolling stock procurements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 1585. An act to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-855. A communication from the Vice President, Government Relations, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting, pursuant to