

(WASHINGTON)-- Congressman Allen West (R-FL) released this statement tonight after voting Yes, in favor of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2012:

"The 2012 defense bill is a key mechanism by which the Congress of the United States fulfills its constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense. This bill marks the 50th consecutive enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act, and I am proud to have served as a Core Conferee working on the final language that passed the House of Representatives with bipartisan support by a vote of 283-136.

"Included in the Fiscal Year 2012 NDAA are two of the three YouCut bills that I introduced on March 29, 2011 which will generate a total savings of more than \$180 million in wasteful DOD spending through 2016. One of these – H.R. 1246 – passed the House of Representatives unanimously by a vote of 393-0. As a Freshman Member of the United States Congress, I am proud the 2012 NDAA includes my bipartisan provisions that target wasteful spending at the Department of Defense.

"Ten years after September 11, 2001, the extremist and terrorist threat against the United States and our allies continues to evolve. As we begin drawing down forces in Afghanistan, and are conscious of the rise of al Qaeda affiliates in places like Yemen, the 2012 NDAA recognizes the war against radical Islam is broader than operations in any single country. The bill strengthens policies and procedures used to detain, interrogate, and prosecute al Qaeda, the Taliban, affiliated groups, and those who substantially support them. And finally, the NDAA recognizes the importance of investing in future capability and technology and of ensuring DOD has robust capabilities, especially those residing within Special Operations Forces, to meet emerging challenges on the battlefield of today and in the future."

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Background on the NDAA:

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (NDAA) authorizes \$554 billion for the base budget, and \$114 billion for overseas contingency operations. The NDAA includes

\$530 billion for the Department of Defense and \$11.1 billion for the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration. The National Defense Authorization Act extends vital troop pay and war-related authorities. Other vital authorities include enlistment and reenlistment bonuses, retention and accession pay for critical skills, and pay for hazardous duties.

Funding levels authorized by the Fiscal Year 2012 NDAA have been reduced significantly from the original House of Representatives-passed version to comply with the first tier of the Budget Control Act's requirement to cut Defense spending by an estimated \$465 billion over ten years.

Authorized funding has been reduced by \$19 billion from the Fiscal Year 2011 NDAA, \$21.8 billion from the House-passed version of the Fiscal Year 2012 NDAA, and \$24.1 billion from President Obama's budget request for Fiscal Year 2012. Under sequestration, an additional \$500 billion will be cut over ten years, beginning in 2013.

Additional important aspects of the National Defense Authorization Act include:

- Ensures our troops deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and around the world have the equipment, resources, authorities, training, and time needed to successfully complete their missions and return home;
- Provides a 1.6 percent increase in military pay;
- Provides our warfighters and their families with the resources and support they need, deserve, and have earned;
- Invests in the capabilities and force structure needed to protect the United States from current and future threats;
- Mandates fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability within the Department of Defense;

- Incentivizes competition for every tax-payer dollar associated with funding Department of Defense requirements.

- Freezes nearly \$700M in aid to Pakistan pending DOD delivery of a strategy for improving the effectiveness of such assistance and assurances that Pakistan is countering Improvised Explosive Devices networks in their country that are targeting coalition forces. This freeze includes the majority of the \$1.1 billion in Pakistan Counterinsurgency Funds.

- Includes critical provisions to clarify and reaffirm the military's responsibility and authority to detain al Qaeda terrorists. The bill strengthens policies and procedures used to detain, interrogate, and prosecute al Qaeda, the Taliban, affiliated groups, and those who substantially support them.

- Prohibits the transfer or release of Guantanamo detainees to or within the United States;

- Prohibits the use of funds to house Guantanamo detainees in the United States;

- Reaffirms the lawful detention of individuals from al Qaeda, the Taliban, and associated forces engaged in

armed conflict with the United States, without extending new authority to detain U.S. citizens;
and

- Requires military custody for al Qaeda and associated terrorists who are captured plotting an
attack on

the United States, except where the Secretary of Defense waives this requirement as not being
in the

national security interest of the United States. This provision explicitly exempts U.S. citizens.