



**Sarah Elfreth**  
CONGRESSWOMAN FOR MARYLAND'S THIRD DISTRICT

# MARYLAND DEFENSE REPORT

**2025**





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# Dear Friends,

In my first year in Congress and as a member of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), I set out to visit every major military installation in Maryland. On this year-long tour, I had the privilege of seeing first-hand the exquisite and unique capabilities Maryland installations, servicemembers, and civilian DoD employees provide to our collective national security. I also learned something true of most things in our state: these federal investments didn't happen by accident; they were the result of strategic focus and the collective work of Team Maryland, including the great Senators Barbara and Ben Cardin, Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger, Congressman Steny Hoyer, my predecessor, Congressman John Sarbanes, and many others. As the only Marylander in the House or the Senate serving on a committee focused explicitly on national security and defense issues, I am committed to building upon their distinguished legacy and continuing to deliver wins on behalf of our servicemembers, our state, and our nation – even in the face of DOGE and the challenges presented by this current Administration. In fact, I would argue that these partnerships and coordination are all the more important in today's political climate.



At each installation, I met with senior officers to discuss the larger needs and requests of that base. I toured base infrastructure, learned from senior command about the role in the larger defense network each base plays, and what each base needs to continue to modernize and succeed in its field. I also sat down with enlisted personnel and reservists, often over lunch and without their supervisors, to learn about their quality of life and what keeps them up at night. I toured base housing, spent time in child care centers and clinics, met with Medical officers, and so much more. Outside of the fence, we were embraced by alliances, community members, and business leaders, where we learned of the opportunities ahead, challenges faced, and the greater regional impact of each installation. According to the Maryland Military Installation Council's (MMIC) report in 2021, more than 390,000 Marylanders work in the defense ecosystem, making this industry a critical driver in our state's greater economic success.

This report is a reflection of each tour I've taken across Maryland's varied and unique commands, a summary of the meetings with command and flag officers, and a reflection of conversations with Corporals and Sergeants at each base – but it is also a preview of our work ahead, both in Maryland and on HASC. You will see central themes that were echoed across installations – those of base infrastructure and resilience, housing, child care, and health care – that I am sure are not unique to Maryland's defense community. We also included wins in my first National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which are a direct reflection of the challenges and opportunities we learned throughout this tour.

I am often asked: Why did you request to be appointed to HASC? My answer is simple: I came to Congress to legislate, to honestly and earnestly work with colleagues across the country and across the aisle, and to deliver for Maryland. My commitment and gratitude for my committee assignment to HASC have only grown after completing this tour and report. As a proud Army brat who now lives in a Navy town, I hope it accurately reflects my deep appreciation for our Armed Services and enthusiasm for the difficult and rewarding work ahead.

Finally, this report wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of my team, the hard work of our incredible servicemembers, and the candor and trust of hundreds of people in the Maryland Defense Network. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Elfreth*

Sarah Elfreth  
Member of Congress



## **INSTALLATION TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: A BASE BY BASE BREAKDOWN**



## U.S. Naval Academy

*Officially established in 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy is one of five (and the second oldest) United States Service Academies. As the undergraduate college of the U.S. Naval Service, the Naval Academy prepares young men and women to become professional officers of competence, character, and compassion in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. Naval Academy students are midshipmen on active duty in the U.S. Navy.*

*Midshipmen attend the Academy for four years, graduating with bachelor of science degrees and commissions as ensigns in the Navy or second lieutenants in the Marine Corps. Naval Academy graduates serve at least five years in the Navy or Marine Corps.*

*The Naval Academy Superintendent is Lt. Gen. Michael Borgschulte, U.S. Marine Corps.*



## Base Visit

It should come as no surprise that we kicked off our installation tour in January in the Third District's own U.S. Naval Academy, one of the most prestigious higher education institutions in the world. I have had the privilege of representing the Academy and our midshipmen since my time in the Maryland State Senate, and I am proud to represent them in the House of Representatives and as a member of the USNA Board of Visitors.

After meeting with Vice Admiral Yvette Davids, the former superintendent, and her team, we took a tour of the entire campus, visiting the world's largest dormitory in Bancroft Hall and learning of the multi-million dollar renovations needed. We discussed the symbiotic relationship the Academy has with the City of Annapolis, and how its infrastructure and flooding challenges mirror those of the City. We discussed Navy Athletics, Admissions, and Extracurricular Activities, and were invited to tour the Brigade of Midshipmen Chapel, as well as the crypt of John Paul Jones.

Finally, we were able to sit down as a staff and map out our goals for 2026; one of which was to visit every major installation in Maryland and build connections with the officers, enlisted personnel, businesses, and communities that support the larger Maryland Defense Community.



## NDAA Wins

We focused a great deal of energy on the Naval Academy in this year's NDAA. This included ensuring a strategy for the Naval Academy to address sea level rise and prohibiting a second golf course at environmentally-sensitive Greenbury Point. Having represented and worked closely with both the U.S. Naval Academy and surrounding communities for years, I knew these were tangible improvements for our midshipmen, the Academy, and our Annapolis neighbors. The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 2201 - \$86 million for the U.S. Naval Academy's Storm Water Management Facilities.
- Sec. 2850 - Requires the U.S. Naval Academy (and all military academies) to develop an Installation Resilience Master Plan to address the impacts of extreme weather, sea-level rise, land subsidence, cybersecurity risks, lack of access to clean water, and disruption to clean energy.
- Sec. 2862 - Prohibit the construction of a golf course or restrict public access to the Greenbury Point Conservation Area.

## What's Next

Based on my conversations with the Superintendent and Academy officials, as well as multiple Board of Visitors meetings, I will be focused over the coming years on delivering federal funding for an expanded **sea wall and a new Cistern** to help mitigate the effects of rising sea levels as well as long-term, renovations to **Bancroft Hall**, the largest dormitory in the world.



## Fort George G. Meade

*Fort Meade is a U.S. Army installation that serves as the key hub for the U.S. Intelligence and Cyber Operations. It is home to the Defense Information School (DINFOS), the Defense Media Activity, U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), the Defense Information Systems Agency, the Defense Courier Services, and the National Security Agency (NSA). Fort Meade employs more than 64,000 people and servicemembers from every branch of the Armed Forces.*



### Base Visit

In March, we visited Fort Meade and met with Garrison Commander Colonel Yolanda Gore, Deputy Commander Mr. Brian Foley, and Command Sergeant Major Richard Moore to discuss the Fort's role in the Defense Ecosystem and how the garrison and NSA work together on campus.

COL Gore then gave us a tour of the base, including one of the Child Development Centers that provides on-base services to children of servicemembers and on-base employees. While Fort Meade has multiple child development centers for children of all ages, we also discussed the needs and opportunities to expand these family services and address critical staffing challenges. We then toured the construction of new individual barracks and one of the family housing units on base.

Finally, I sat down for lunch with a group of Army, Air Force, and Space Force enlisted personnel to hear about their experiences directly. We talked about life on base and in the surrounding community, access to housing and child care, and more.

After the base visit, my team and I met with leadership from the Ft. Meade Alliance to discuss how they support the base and their year-to-year requests, as well as to learn about the alliance's history of supporting the base through annual appropriations and previous BRAC woes.

Later in the year, my team sat down with Garrison leadership again to discuss how Fort Meade can evolve in the Military landscape, as well as to tour the Defense Information School and Defense Media Activity.



## NDAA Wins

In this year's NDAA, Fort Meade sees more than a quarter-billion dollars in construction and base access improvements. The NDAA also includes strong support for the Defense Information Systems Agency (and the cyber enterprise as a whole), as well as reinforcement of USCYBERCOM and the NSA's roles in cybersecurity and AI.

### Construction Funding

- Sec. 4601 - **Authorized funding of \$230 million** for the continued construction of the National Security Agency West (NSAW) East Campus Building 5, including design, security systems, IT/SCIF build-out, and more. It also shows a continued growth in NSA headcount and missions on base, which means more demand for contractors with clearance, more opportunities for local housing and real estate markets, and more education and workforce pipelines.
- Sec. 4601 - **Authorized funding of \$26.6 million for the NSAW Verona Widening Project** to support on-post transportation and access investment tied to NSA. The long term benefits include improved traffic flow and access for NSA East campus, which will ease congestion for the broader Meade footprint.

### USCYBERCOM

The NDAA gives United States Cyber Command more direct control over its own planning, programming, and budgeting for the Cyber Mission Force. Congress continues to support and identify Fort Meade as the center of gravity for National Cyber Operations.

USCYBERCOM is headquartered at Meade, so more stable and explicit statutory authorities over its own budget is a net positive signal for:

- Long-term basing and mission permanence at Fort Meade.
- Predictability of resourcing for cyber forces and supporting agencies (NSA, DISA, service cyber components).
- Contracting and industry engagement opportunities tied to cyber operations, tools, and training.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 1501 - The USCYBERCOM Commander is made responsible for "directly controlling and managing the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution of resources to train, equip, operate, and sustain the Cyber Mission Force," including preparing its own program objective memorandum and budget estimate submissions.
- Sec. 1508 - Prohibits using FY26 funds to "reduce or diminish" the commander's responsibilities/authorities from what they were on June 1, 2025, with only narrow exceptions.

## NSA mission and AI/Cybersecurity

The bill expands the NSA's formal responsibilities in AI and codifies oversight of its core intelligence activities. That means more demand for AI, cyber, and data-science talent, as well as more scope for public-private collaboration around AI security. The bill explicitly tasks NSA with AI-Security leadership.

## Defense Information Systems Agency and Department of Defense Information Network Funding

Congress fully funded Fort Meade's cyber operations. In spite of a slight cut to funding, DISA's footprint at Ft. Meade remains steady.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 4301 - **Authorized funding of \$2.990 billion** for the Defense Information Systems Agency.
- Sec. 4301 - **Authorized funding of \$559.4 million** for the Defense Information Systems Agency Cyber.

## Larger DoD Provisions that Impact Fort Meade

The NDAA included multiple larger provisions on energy and resilience as well as Workforce, Training, Language, and Family Programs that benefit Fort Meade's work.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 4301 - Defense Language and National Security Education Office (language programs), Beyond Yellow Ribbon, and other people-focused lines often translate into programs or support services that touch base with servicemembers, families, and the civilian workforce.



## What's Next

Based on my conversations with base commanders and enlisted servicemembers, we will focus energy in the coming years on **renovating and expanding on-base housing** and addressing the gap that inhibits **DINFOS** from granting degrees.



## Fort Detrick

*Fort Detrick is a U.S. Army installation that serves as the center for biomedical research and biological weapons defense programs. It also supports a multi-governmental community that includes the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command (USAMRDC), the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), the National Interagency Confederation for Biological Research (NICBR), the National Interagency Biodefense Campus (NIBC), the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), and more. Fort Detrick is home to almost 2,000 active duty servicemembers and more than 10,000 civilian and contract employees.*



## Base Visit

I was joined by Congresswoman April McClain Delaney to visit Fort Detrick in Maryland's Sixth District for the third stop of the installation tour.

After arriving on base, we attended a briefing with Major General Paula Lodi, Commanding General of the USAMRDC, Command Sergeant Major Michael Dills, and Deputy to the Commanding General, Dr. Carrie Quinn. USAMRDC manages and executes research in five basic areas: military infectious diseases, combat casualty care, military operational medicine, chemical and biological defense, and clinical and rehabilitative medicine. Their team also helps develop vaccines and pharmaceuticals (like the COVID-19 vaccine), and works with the Army Medical Logistics Command to ensure medical products are battlefield ready.

We heard from Colonel Mark Hartell, Director of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, about how the CDMRP manages research that universities don't have the capacity to conduct. The CDMRP originated in 1992 via a Congressional appropriation to foster novel approaches to biomedical research in response to the expressed needs of its stakeholders—the American public, the military, and Congress. CDMRP fills research gaps by funding high-impact, high-risk, and high-gain projects that may not be done elsewhere. While individual programs are unique in their focus, all programs managed by the CDMRP share the common goal of advancing paradigm-shifting research and solutions that will lead to cures, improvements in patient care, or breakthroughs with clinical benefit.

Next, we received a briefing and tour of USAMRIID with Colonel Aaron Pitney. USAMRIID conducts biodefense research on behalf of the Department of Defense, with its primary mission being to develop medical countermeasures—such as vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics—against biological warfare agents and naturally occurring infectious diseases. We were able to tour containment laboratories, including Biosafety Level 4 (BSL-4) labs, the highest level of biological safety, where scientists study some of the most dangerous pathogens known to humanity, including Ebola, anthrax, and plague.

Finally, we took a base tour with Garrison Commander Colonel Christopher Chung, seeing the 21st Signal Brigade and the National Cancer Institute campus. We also learned about special projects on base, as well as toured the base housing and child care centers.

Afterwards, we met with the Fort Detrick Alliance, which was founded in 2003 to be a connection for businesses and organizations interested in the success of Fort Detrick's mission.



## What's Next

Based on my conversation with the base commander and USAMRIID personnel, it is clear that funding for a **new incinerator** to eliminate biological and chemical waste is urgent. We are committed to working with the Maryland delegation to see this long-term project to fruition.



## Naval Air Station Patuxent River

*Naval Air Station Patuxent River (NAS Pax River) is the U.S. Navy's aviation test-and-evaluation installation. Its official mission is to "enable mission partner success by providing the finest base operating support and customer service in direct support of research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) missions." NAS Pax River was established during World War II to centralize naval flight testing. It was officially commissioned as "U.S. Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, Maryland" on April 1, 1943. NAS Pax River is the headquarters of Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, the Atlantic Test Range, and is often described as a Center of Excellence for Naval Aviation. There are approximately 20,000 military, civilian, and contract employees at NAS Patuxent River.*



### Base Visit

In late May, I made my fourth stop on the installation tour with Congressman Steny Hoyer, Senator Chris Van Hollen, and Senator Angela Alsobrooks. Captain Douglas Burfield, Commanding Officer, and Stephen Cricchi, Executive Director of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, gave an overview of the base's storied history and its role in the Navy's larger mission.

Following the briefing, base leadership gave us a look inside what pilot and aircraft testing looks like on base. Patuxent River is a key site for the F-35 Lightning II developmental testing. The F-35 Integrated Test Force – led by NAVAIR's Air Test & Evaluation Squadron VX-23 (based at Pax) – conducts flight testing of the U.S. Marine Corps F-35B (vertical take off) and U.S. Navy F-35C (carrier) variants.

We were able to see how the base completed its mission on flight testing and pilot testing as part of the Atlantic Test Range (ATR). The ATR encompasses land ranges, airspace, and instrumentation assets in the Chesapeake Bay region and serves as the Navy's principal Research, Development, Training, and Evaluation (RDT&E) range for aviation and weapons testing. The centerpiece is the Patuxent restricted airspace: about 2,700 square miles of controlled skies around Pax River (extendable by ~50,000 square miles offshore).

Finally, we toured the manned flight simulators and the Anechoic Chamber. The Patuxent River Anechoic Chamber is a shielded Radio Frequency test facility (part of NAVAIR's Air Combat Environment Test & Evaluation Facility) that provides an isolated, reflection-free environment for evaluating aircraft sensors and electronic systems. The room is large enough to accommodate large fixed-wing aircraft suspended inside. This lets engineers test radars, antennas, Identification Friend-or-Foe (IFF) interrogators, and Electronic Warfare jammers in a controlled setting without weather or flight-safety constraints. The Anechoic Chamber is so unique and critical for readiness that there is a current years-long waitlist to utilize its capabilities.

After the tour on base, we met with the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance (SMNA) and saw the UMD Matrix Lab. Founded in 1992, SMNA is a non-profit organization that supports U.S. Naval Aviation at NAS Patuxent River. The Alliance fosters partnerships with the Department of Defense, industry, nonprofits, and academia to strengthen the base's strategic value and ensure long-term viability.



## NDAA Wins

In the NDAA, my team and we prioritized language that will help military labs and research centers, like Pax River. The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 2874 - The threshold for conducting minor military construction projects has been increased from \$4 million to \$6 million. This will help keep military labs and research centers up to date with modern technology and research programs.

## What's Next

Based on my conversations with PAX River personnel and the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance, it is clear that Congress should consider doubling down on the one-of-a-kind **Anechoic Chamber**. We will focus our energy over the coming years to bring members of HASC to see the Chamber in person and begin socializing the idea of investing in building a **second Anechoic Chamber at PAX** to meet the readiness demands of the Navy.



## Maryland Defense Forum

In June, I had the honor of joining the Maryland Defense Forum, a two-day event hosted by the Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Economic Development Corporation, and the Federal Business Council.



The Forum is an annual event bringing together Maryland's military installation commands, the relevant alliance partners, and industry partners for discussion on military resilience and readiness, emerging technologies, supply chain diversity, government contracting, current and upcoming challenges, and more.

I was joined by former Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and the Environment under President Biden, Rachel Jacobson, for a fireside chat on my role as Maryland's only member on the House Armed Services Committee. Together, we discussed the NDAA and DoD's budget, military housing, quality of life challenges, power grids and data centers, the national defense ecosystem, and Maryland's priorities. We also took questions from the audience around supply chain and logistics challenges, as well as challenges faced by active duty and reserve personnel, military spouses and families, and more.



## Coast Guard Yard

*The Coast Guard Yard is the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's sole shipbuilding and major ship repair facility. It is an essential part of the Coast Guard's core logistics, industrial base, and fleet support operations. The Yard is responsible for the construction, repair, and renovation of vessels and weapons systems, as well as the manufacturing and repair of miscellaneous Coast Guard equipment. The Yard employs approximately 1,700 people.*



## Base Visit

In early July, I completed the fifth installation tour stop at the Coast Guard Yard in Curtis Bay, just within the Third Congressional District. The Yard is the premier ship repair facility for the Coast Guard on the East Coast, and routinely completes massive In-Service Vessel Sustainment (ISVS) on boats and cutters in need of repair and renovation. ISVS is critical to the long-term sustainability of the CG fleet, replacing major hull, mechanical, electrical, and electronic systems on aging vessels.

I met with Commanding Officer, Captain Emily Tharp, to discuss the critical role of the Yard in the Coast Guard fleet. With Captain Thomas Lowery, Chief of Naval Engineering for the Coast Guard, and Mr. John Bragaw, The Yard's Production Manager, we discussed the infrastructure challenges faced with a growing fleet.

We started with a walk around the Yard, visiting buildings for maintenance and repair of small parts to the giant dry-docks that house some of the Coast Guard's largest cutters and patrol boats when in need of maintenance. These repairs include everything from hull renovation to engine and deck replacement. In addition to servicing Coast Guard ships, the Yard also performs maintenance on ships for the city of Baltimore and the U.S. Navy.

On the day we visited, we were fortunate to walk one of the medium endurance cutters being worked on to see the extensive work being executed by the expert maintenance team. The vessel, a 270-foot cutter, was in the midst of a 15-month refurbishment by replacing aging equipment and engines.

## What's Next

Even with the latest \$500 million in federal funding, it is clear that more investment is needed for a new Dry Dock Infrastructure project to maintain U.S. Coast Guard vessels and ensure that search-and-rescue and counter-narcotics operations are not impacted. Outside of direct federal action, we will focus energy on working with state and local leaders to **ensure regular dredging** around the Yard and to **expand critical workforce and training pipelines** to help meet growing demand and work.



## Annapolis Coast Guard Station

*The Annapolis Coast Guard Station provides maritime safety, environmental protection, and emergency response to the upper Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The station is responsible for all maritime security in the Bay around Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. The station has 30 active and 15 reserve guardsmen.*



### Base Visit

The Annapolis Coast Guard Station welcomed me aboard in early August for a check-in with the leadership and enlisted personnel. This response station is staffed by about 30 guardsmen near Thomas Point and protects some of our most important waterways from the Magothy River to the Chesapeake Bay. The station is the home to two small and one medium response boats, which patrol and respond to emergencies on the Bay.



On base, I met with the officer in charge, Chief Boatswain's Mate Nickolas Meegan, and the Executive Petty Officer, Boatswain's Mate First Class Daniel Mazzei, to tour the barracks and other quarters, including the gym and classroom area. Joining a patrol on the medium response boat, I was able to get a glimpse into their daily schedule and work. I was also briefed on the ongoing infrastructure projects and needs of the base, including minor facility improvements and water treatment equipment.



## Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

*Walter Reed National Military Center (WRNMMC) represents a merging of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the National Naval Medical Center in 2005 to create a more integrated health care system within DoD. The merger construction was completed in 2011. Walter Reed is specifically responsible for the care of the President of the United States when they are in D.C., and has cared for every President, as well as members of Congress and the Supreme Court. It also serves as the primary point of care for members of the military, veterans, and their families. Walter Reed contains units for maternal health, pediatric care, behavioral health, amputation and rehab, and more. It is also considered a Level II Trauma Center, and provides 24-hour availability of essential critical and trauma care personnel. Walter Reed employs more than 7,000 military and civilian employees.*



### Base Visit

In late August we visited Walter Reed, the all-encompassing integrated system within DoD that serves as a Level II Trauma Center in Bethesda. Currently, WRNMMC is undergoing a modernization project to improve navigation and operational efficiency on site.

I met with Captain Melissa Austin, the Director of WRNMMC, to discuss the modernization efforts and the role Walter Reed plays in the community and for servicemembers, their families, and veterans alike. After a briefing, I was given a tour of some key departments on the grounds, including the Military Advanced Training Center (MATC), a state-of-the-art facility that utilizes a similar model to Sports Medicine and offers much of the same equipment and techniques found at sports rehabilitation training rooms across the country.

The MATC features world-class rehab tools, including a Computer Assisted Rehabilitation Environment (CAREN) (one of only ten in the world). The CAREN is an immersive virtual reality system with a motion platform and 360° projected scenarios, allowing patients to practice balance and movement in a safe, controlled environment. WRNMMC also serves as a referral center for complex limb-loss cases and houses an advanced Orthotics and Prosthetics Lab that designs and builds customized prosthetic limbs on-site. The center serves active duty and retired servicemembers and their families.

I then visited the comprehensive Women's Health services on site, including obstetric care, gynecology, and reproductive medicine, with a focus on providing family-centered care for military families. The Mother Infant Care Center (MICC) at Walter Reed is a labor, delivery, and postpartum unit and has seen a strong rebound in births post-pandemic. The MICC averages 100–150 births per month. WRNMMC also just opened a new labor and delivery unit and Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) as part of the hospital's large modernization project.



Walter Reed runs an Assisted Reproductive Technology program that includes in vitro fertilization (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI), egg freezing, and related treatments. Walter Reed's IVF clinic is operated in partnership with Shady Grove Fertility, which maintains the IVF laboratory on site, while Walter Reed's own physicians manage patient care and treatment cycles.

Finally, I toured the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) and learned about the extensive outpatient TBI and psychological health treatment work they do. At NICoE, active duty servicemembers (and other DoD beneficiaries) undergo a several-week Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) that brings together neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, physical and occupational therapists, speech therapists, social workers, and other specialists. This team provides each patient with an individualized treatment plan aimed at healing mind, body, and spirit, with the ultimate goals of maximizing recovery and, whenever possible, returning warfighters to active duty. NICoE's approach is holistic and is often described as a "safe place" where servicemembers can get the care and support they need for complex TBI symptoms that aren't visible to others.

## NDAA Wins

After visiting Walter Reed and hearing about their challenges connecting with veterans, I was determined to tackle the issue in this year's NDAA. I worked with my colleague Representative Derek Schmidt on bipartisan language to strengthen access to medical care at state-of-the-art facilities, like Walter Reed, for our veterans.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 4601 - \$70 million for Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
- Sec. 731 - Improves the availability and access of military medical treatment facilities, like Walter Reed, for veterans' care.



## What's Next

Three unique opportunities were made clear in our visit:

- After including the language in the final NDAA to **expand access for veterans**, we will partner with Walter Reed and the Navy in implementing and communicating these services throughout Maryland.
- While a designated Trauma Center, Walter Reed can't currently **bill Maryland Medicaid** for services provided, often leaving families with high bills. We are looking to other states that have addressed this challenge and will work with Maryland partners to find a solution.
- Touring the IVF clinic was nothing short of heartbreaking. Despite years of bipartisan efforts to **expand IVF access to more active duty servicemembers and their families**, the measure was once again struck out of the final NDAA. I am committed to continue working with colleagues in Congress to right this wrong.



## Aberdeen Proving Ground

*Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) is a U.S. Army facility in Harford County, MD, established in 1917 as a larger and less populated space for testing new war munitions. At the end of the war, APG transitioned to researching and developing new munitions. Today, APG employs more than 21,000 military, civilian, and contracted employees across 92 mission partners, including Communications & Electronics Command (CECOM), Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM), Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC), and the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command. APG employs more than 21,000 military, civilian, and contract employees.*



### Base Visit

In late September, I was joined by staff from Senator Alsbrooks's office and Congressman Harris's office for our visit to Aberdeen Proving Ground. We met with both base command and leadership, including CECOM Major General Jim Turinetti IV, CECOM Command Sergeant Major Jay High, Garrison Commander Colonel Troy Johnson, and Garrison Command Sergeant Major Richard Williams. Leaders from each unit, including DEVCOM, ATEC, Capability Program Executive Command, Control, Communications, and Network, Capability Program Executive Intelligence, Electronic Warfare & Sensors, and the 20th CBRNE, were in attendance. I then met with five enlisted soldiers who talked us through life on base and their needs.

On the base tour, I had the opportunity to see some of the cutting-edge research and development work and spoke with the brilliant researchers and scientists in charge of developing the next generation of energetics and power capabilities for the Army. I learned about the research and testing of batteries for the war fighter, and we discussed the need for U.S. energy and resource independence to effectively prepare for potential threats.

After the base tour, I sat down with the Army Alliance and Harford County Executive (and my former State Senate colleague) Bob Cassilly to discuss strategies for advocating for the base going forward, as well as their current wishes and needs.



## NDAA Wins

While this year's bill did not authorize a military construction project on base, there are many provisions that help Aberdeen (and other bases) continue to modernize.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 2804 - Improvements to storm water management and security on military installations. This will help APG and other bases better plan and mitigate impacts from stormwater infrastructure in need of repair and updates.
- Sec. 2805 - Modification to assistance for public infrastructure projects and services. This provides the Office of Local Defense and Community Cooperation with the authority to provide grants and assistance to states and localities that are planning for future needs around an installation. These grants could help APG prepare workforce development and infrastructure for future priorities set by Congress and DoD.
- Sec. 2806 - Modifications to the Defense Community Infrastructure Program. This creates flexibility to align the DCIP with Congressional intent, which could enable a broader range of infrastructure projects.

## What's Next

During an enlisted servicemember panel, I was informed that APG has only a medical clinic on base, which offers limited health care services. For other services, servicemembers and families have to travel to Walter Reed or Fort Meade. Otherwise, they have to go through a lengthy referral process for "off-base" care. **Medical Services Options** need to be improved for servicemembers and their families, as this directly impacts readiness and their quality of life.

Considering the potential for both defense and civilian benefits of the exciting battery research conducted at Aberdeen, I am committed to focusing both the House Armed Services and Natural Resources Committees' energy on **addressing critical mineral shortages** and **expanding energy storage solutions on installations worldwide**.



## Naval Support Facility and Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head

*The work carried out at Naval Support Facility (NSF) Indian Head has long proven essential to the mission of the United States military and the defense of our nation. Today, this facility serves the U.S. Navy, DoD, and allied nations through the research, development, testing, and evaluation of energetics and their systems, and provides all armed services with knowledge and safety regarding every aspect of explosive threats. Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Indian Head is the field activity of the Naval Sea Systems Command and part of the U.S. Navy's Science and Engineering Establishment as well as the largest tenant. It is the leader in ordnance, energetics and EOD solutions. The division focuses on energetics research, development, testing, evaluation, in-service support and disposal. It provides warfighters with solutions to detect, locate, access, identify, render safe, recover, exploit and dispose of explosive ordnance threats.*

*NSF Indian Head became the United States Navy's first permanent presence in Southern Maryland when the base was founded in 1890. Today, the base employs a broad cross-section of sailors, Marines and Defense Department civilians, and it remains one of our region's largest and most vital employment centers. The work carried out on the base has long proven essential to the mission of the United States military and the defense of our nation.*

*In addition to NSWC, Indian Head is home to the Naval Ordnance Safety and Security Activity, the Naval Sea Logistics Center Detachment, the U.S. Marine Corps Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Washington, and the Expeditionary Exploitation Unit 1. NSA South Potomac employs more than 10,000 people between the Indian Head campus and the Dahlgren campus in Virginia. NSWC Indian Head employs more than 2,700.*



## Base Visit

My ninth installation visit was to both Naval Support Facility and Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head with Congressman Steny Hoyer.

To begin the day, Congressman Hoyer and I met with Captain John Nadder, the Commanding Officer of NSA South Potomac (which encompasses Indian Head and the Dahlgren campus in Virginia) to discuss the broader mission and scope of the Indian Head division and current needs. We also met with senior base leadership to talk about the ongoing Energetics Comprehensive Modernization Plan and efforts for continued efficiency.

Following the briefing, we took a window tour of the base before stopping at the Burn Point, the area at which all explosives, propellants, and other hazardous waste generated from munitions manufacturing and testing on base is disposed of through controlled burns. Here, we learned about the controlled burn process, challenges that come with burning waste, and the urgent need for a Controlled Burn Facility to more safely and efficiently dispose of unexploded ordnance and hazardous material.

We continued through the base, seeing examples of on-base housing and barracks, child care centers, and other munitions manufacturing and test facilities. We then stopped to meet with a group of Marines stationed on base, to talk about the quality of life amenities afforded to them and other concerns. We talked through housing, off-base entertainment, schools, child care, and more. On a lighter note, we were able to procure four tickets to the 2025 Army-Navy game in Baltimore for four of the Marines we met at lunch after they shared that going to the game was a lifelong goal. Special thanks to United States Naval Academy Superintendent General Michael Borgschulte for accommodating this special request.



After the base visit, we met with the senior leadership of the Military Alliance Council, Indian Head's Maryland Alliance entity. The MAC was founded in 2015 with the goal of working with leadership in government and the business community to advocate for the community in Indian Head and the base itself.

## NDAA Wins

After visiting Indian Head, we authorized funding to support the Controlled Burn Facility to safely and efficiently dispose of unexploded ordnance and hazardous material.

The specific bill language includes:

- Sec. 4601 - **Authorized \$65 million in funding** for Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head's Contained Burn Facility.



## What's Next

It is abundantly clear that the new **Contained Burn Facility** and **a new mixer** are critical for both the base and national readiness, and I am committed to working with the Maryland delegation to see full funding in future budgets.



## Joint Base Andrews

On Oct. 1, 2009, Andrews Air Force Base, along with Naval Air Facility Washington, became a joint base known as Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington, or Joint Base Andrews (JBA). Joint Base Andrews plays a dynamic and critical part in the defense of our nation. It has evolved from the muddy fields and wooden buildings of the 1940s supporting the P-47 Thunderbolt and F-80 Shooting Star, to a modern airfield supporting multi-million dollar nationally significant mission assets, including Air Force One, the F-16 Fighting Falcon, the KC-135 Stratotanker, and the UH-1N Huey, solidifying itself as "America's Airfield." There are more than 14,000 employees on base.



### Base Visit

Again joined by Congressman Steny Hoyer, our tenth installation visit was to the multiple Air Force, Navy, Space Force, and National Guard units at Joint Base Andrews. Its host wing is the 316th, which operates, administers, and maintains JBA. It is responsible for maintaining emergency reaction rotary-wing airlift and other National Capital Region contingency response capabilities critical to national security and for organizing, training, equipping, and deploying combat-ready forces for Air and Space Expeditionary Forces. The 316th Wing also provides installation security, services, and airfield management to support the President, Vice President, other U.S. senior leaders, and more than 50 tenant organizations and federal agencies.



JBA is also home to the 113th Wing, which is the DC Air National Guard unit, the 1st Helicopter Squadron, Space Force Delta 13, the 459th Air Refueling Wing, and two Boeing VC-25's, which become *Air Force One* when used by the President.

We met with Colonel Jun Oh (the Commander of the 316th Wing), as well as Captain Christopher Lemon (Commander, Naval Air Facility - Washington), and Chief Master Sergeant Kevin Helms (Command Chief, 316th Wing) to discuss the history and missions of all the units on base. We also discussed innovative solutions for energy resilience and cost savings on military installations via the Defense Innovation Unit.

Congressman Hoyer and I then went to visit the 1st Helicopter Squadron and discussed their primary mission of being prepared to evacuate government and military personnel from the Capital area in the event of a national emergency.

Afterwards, we met with the Andrews Business and Community Alliance to discuss the on- and off-base partnerships in the community.

## What's Next

Andrews is in need of a **third runway** in order to safely conduct maintenance on its current runways without interrupting flight operations that are critical to national security. From our conversation with enlisted servicemembers, it is clear that Maryland's **expensive housing and child care market** is disproportionately impacting quality of life on base. I am committed to working with the Maryland delegation to find a long-term funding solution for the third runway and work with my colleagues in the Maryland government to brainstorm creative policy solutions around housing and child care affordability.



## National Surface Warfare Center Carderock

*The Carderock division is the Navy's expert in maritime technology. It provides cradle-to-grave support for its technical products over an enormous range of scientific areas related to surface and undersea platforms. The Division addresses the full spectrum of applied maritime science and technology, from the theoretical and conceptual beginnings, through design and acquisition, to implementation and follow-on engineering. This includes all technical aspects of improving the performance of ships, submarines, military watercraft, and unmanned vehicles, as well as research for military logistics systems. Every naval warship ever designed has been designed and tested at scale at Carderock. National Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Carderock employs more than 2,800 scientists, engineers, and support personnel.*

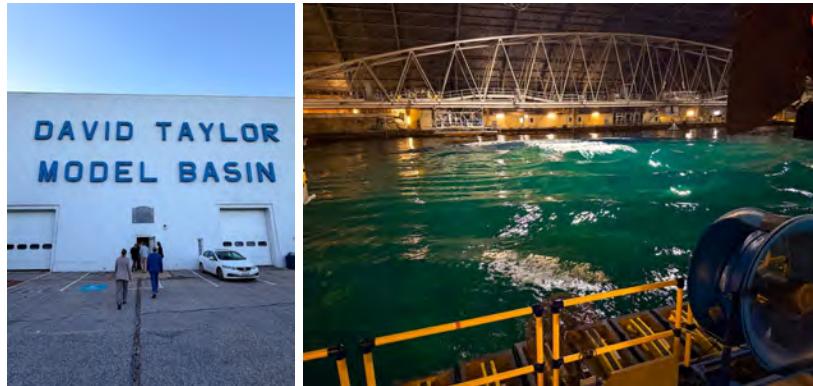


### Base Visit

Every U.S. Navy warship since 1940 has been tested here in Maryland at the Naval Surface Warfare Center at Carderock. This storied history and critical capability made for the perfect capstone of our installation tour. For over a century, the NSWC Carderock Division has been at the forefront of technologies vital to the success of the U.S. Navy and Maritime Industry. Carderock Division's unique laboratories, modeling and simulation facilities, at-sea assets, and large-scale, land-based engineering and test sites at nine locations across the country contribute to the full-spectrum nature of our mission.

Before sitting down with leadership, I was able to speak with a few reservists about their work on base and their time in the reserves. I was also honored to be on hand as one reservist received a Navy commendation for his work.

I met with Captain Christopher Matassa, Commanding Officer of Carderock, as well as Dr. David Drazen, Deputy Technical Director, and Ms. Katherine Terwilliger, Acting Technical Director, to discuss Carderock's history and role in Naval Vessel design and testing. The briefing touched on Carderock's importance to the current life cycle of Navy vessels and future technology, as well as how Carderock's unique capabilities make it a critical point in all ship manufacturing in America's fleet.



Captain Matassa then took me on a tour of the base, visiting the Wave Pool facility where scaled models are put through multiple intense tests replicating extreme conditions that vessels may end up facing in order to see what works and what doesn't.

We also saw the David Taylor Model Basin, which is one of the largest ship model basins used for the development of new ships in the world at more than 3,200 feet long. The basin can simulate speeds up to 20 knots and has both shallow and deep sections.

At the basin, I was able to speak to the reservists and civilians on base who make the models, and I learned about the incredible Advanced Additive Manufacturing work they do. This work involves finding solutions to common problems vessels of all sizes may face by fabricating parts for vessels that may no longer be manufactured or take too long to replace in the field. I saw how this team can manufacture anything from small replaceable parts, all the way to entire flotillas, using 3D modelling.

## What's Next

Advanced Additive Manufacturing applied research has huge potential for **addressing ship maintenance and readiness**, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. We will focus our energy over the next year to showcase this exciting research to HASC colleagues. Additionally, Carderock routinely does Minor Construction projects related to shipbuilding and design, so we will be exploring **increasing the Unspecified Minor Military Construction threshold**.

On a lighter note, Carderock leadership reminded us that the Navy's model ships are available to loan to Congressional offices... and we are actively pursuing the USS Chesapeake!

# CONGRESSWOMAN ELFRETH'S FY26 NDAA WINS

*While we previously broke out the many provisions of the NDAA by military installation, this list provides a greater overview of the many wins in the NDAA by category. In all, I am proud to say that thanks to the many conversations on my installation tour, 28 of my provisions were included in the final legislation.*

## Maryland Priorities

- Requires the US Naval Academy (and all military academies) to develop an Installation Resilience Master Plan to address the impacts of extreme weather, sea-level rise, land subsidence, cybersecurity risks, lack of access to clean water, and disruption to clean energy.
- Prohibit the construction of a golf course or restrict public access to the Greenbury Point Conservation Area.
- Shields the DoD civilian workforce by strengthening protections against arbitrary reductions in force.
- Expresses the Committee's support of critical University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), including Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.
- DoD will establish and carry out a program to train the next generation of cybersecurity leaders with academic institutions, including the University of Maryland.
- Improves the availability and access of military medical treatment facilities, like Walter Reed, for veterans' care.

## Installation Readiness and Environmental Resilience

- Delivers \$25 million for the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI), allowing military services and partners to develop off-base natural infrastructure solutions to protect critical infrastructure, military personnel, and testing or training operations from climate change impacts.
- Directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a Natural Disaster Report on the financial impact of extreme weather events on military installations and their impact on military readiness.
- Requires the Department to provide more information on PFAS investigation and remediation, as well as setting requirements for replacement of PFAS-containing firefighting foam and protective gear.

## Women and Families in the Military

- Requires the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services on preeclampsia, a hypertensive disorder that can occur during pregnancy. Preeclampsia is a serious condition that occurs at higher rates for women in the military compared to civilian women. Future studies and briefings will help female servicemembers prevent and, if necessary, manage this condition.
- Extends the Child Care in Your Home Pilot Program to help military families with the cost of full-time child care.

## Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

- Delivers \$5 million to support the development and maintenance of harmful behavior databases, which track suicide, sexual assault, harassment, domestic abuse, and child abuse.
- Directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the Committees on Armed Services, not later than December 1, 2026, on the Department's current processes, systems, and practices for the collection, management, analysis, visualization, and reporting of data related to harmful behaviors.

## **Support Cyber Personnel and Cyber & AI Readiness**

- Provides access to mental health support for cybersecurity personnel at CYBERCOM and the Cyber Mission Force. Mental and behavioral health physicians will ensure our cybersecurity professionals have the support that they need.
- Requires the Department to update its annual cybersecurity awareness training to include artificial intelligence.

## **Authorizing Funding for Maryland**

- \$256 million for Fort Meade's Facilities
- \$86 million for the U.S. Naval Academy's Storm Water Management Facilities
- \$73 million for Naval Support Activity Washington Suitland Foreign Materials Exploitation Lab
- \$70 million for Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
- \$65 million for Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head's Contained Burn Facility

# CENTRAL THEMES

*Throughout the year, we prioritized meeting with senior officers, enlisted personnel, and the surrounding business community at each installation. I wanted to ensure that I was talking directly with the soldiers, sailors, and guardsmen – many times without their direct supervisors – so that I could best understand the opportunities and challenges of life on and around base. As you will see below, there were some common threads. These central themes will also guide where we go from here and the priorities that I will continue to champion in the coming years and NDAs ahead.*

## Base Infrastructure

Every installation faces infrastructure challenges related to housing, child development centers, increased mission capacity, energy resilience and independence, and modernization. Projects including new testing facilities for air combat, increasing the minor construction threshold for smaller projects towards a larger mission, buildings and apparatus to more efficiently dispose of energetic and medical waste, and more are all of need and priority around the state.

The FY26 NDAA does address many of the challenges I noticed on many installations, but there are so many mission-critical projects that require future investment and strategic planning.

## Housing

For decades, on-base housing has suffered from neglect, resulting in poor living conditions for military families (in base housing units) as well as unmarried personnel and married servicemembers on temporary orders who are geographically separated from their families (typically housed in barracks).

In 2018, surveys and investigative reports revealed widespread neglect in privatized military housing, with issues such as flooding, black mold, and pest infestations. In response, Congress passed the Tenant Bill of Rights to provide servicemembers with greater protections and hold private housing companies accountable.

A subsequent Government Accountability Office report exposed similar conditions in barracks housing unaccompanied servicemembers. In response, the House Armed Services Committee established the Quality of Life Panel to investigate these issues and address broader concerns affecting servicemembers' well-being.

In my visits, I asked leadership and personnel about their experiences with barracks and privatized housing, and I was fortunate to see first-hand some of the barracks and privatized housing on base. Answers varied, but on-base housing and barracks remain a critical factor in quality of life for officers and enlisted personnel, and having a safe and clean space to call home is still, and always will be, something to improve. The affordability of off-base housing, especially given Maryland's housing market, was also a consistent theme.

## Child Care

Military Child Development Centers (CDCs) provide child care services for infants, pre-toddlers, toddlers, and preschoolers, operating Monday through Friday. Due to ongoing space and staffing shortages at CDCs, the DoD established the Family Child Care (FCC) Program, which allows qualified individuals to provide professional child care in their homes. FCCs offer full-day, part-day, and even 24/7 care to accommodate military families' needs.

The DoD determines child care fees using a sliding scale based on total family income. Some locations offer additional discounts for child and youth employees as well as for families with multiple children enrolled.

CDCs continue to face space and staffing shortages, resulting in long waitlists for servicemembers. This often forces military spouses to stay home, limiting their ability to seek employment, or to rely on expensive off-base child care options. One of the primary challenges in recruiting and retaining CDC staff is competitive pay – many off-base child care centers offer higher starting wages, and in some cases, fast food establishments pay more than base CDCs.

Once again, answers to whether there was a waitlist or reliable hours varied from base to base, but like housing, child care will always remain a consistent need and priority.

## Health Care

Health care options for base personnel can be tedious and confusing. During my tours, I found that some installations lacked access to a clinic or a primary care provider, and that access to services, such as family planning or routine care, can be difficult for personnel and their families. This meant personnel had to obtain a waiver to visit an off-base provider or travel to another installation for medical care. Some servicemembers and their families would have to travel over an hour for appointments, missing work and responsibilities, because policy required them to go to the nearest military treatment facility. Our servicemembers and veterans deserve the highest quality of care. We began to address the issue of veterans' care in this year's NDAA, but I remain committed to working with my colleagues to expand access to care for servicemembers and their families.

## Community Support

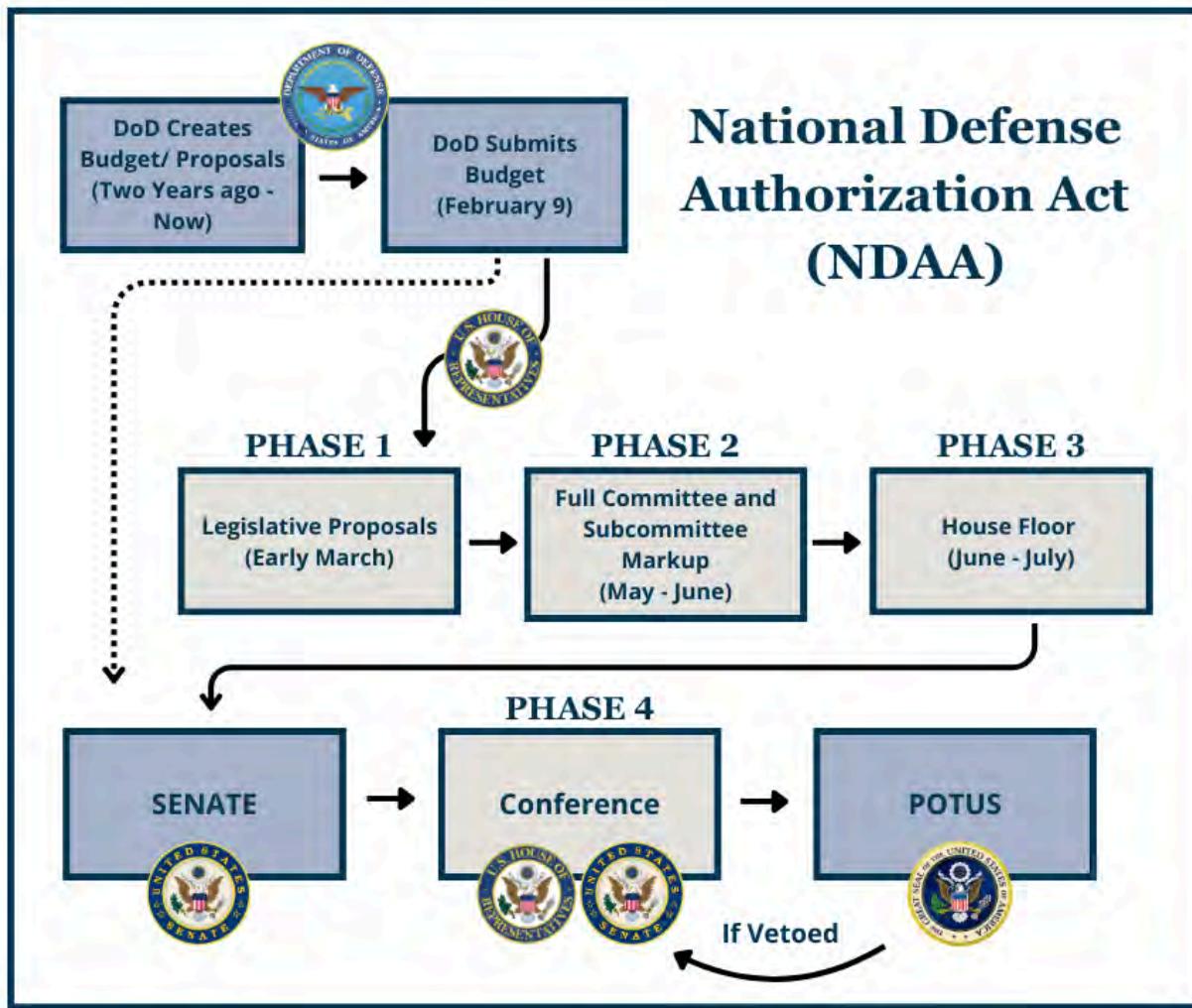
The strength of Maryland's Military Bases is its coordinated alliance structure. Almost every base and mission in our state has an alliance of community and business leaders advocating for and advancing priorities that benefit the installations and the surrounding areas.

These alliances are independent, but coordinated by the Maryland Department of Commerce's Office of Military and Federal Affairs (OMFA). The Maryland Military Installation Council was created by OMFA to ensure alliances and bases can share mutually beneficial updates and needs every quarter. This linking is critical to building a strong, coalesced defense community in Maryland. I look forward to working with the alliance and the state to continue to strengthen that partnership and deliver wins for the whole of the state.

# The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)

***“It’s never too early to start talking about the NDAA, but there comes a day when it is too late.”***

***“Widgets don’t drive policy. Solutions do.”***



The National Defense Authorization Act is “the annual legislative vehicle for authorizing appropriations for the Department of Defense and ensuring our warfighters have the equipment, resources, authorities, time, and training to conduct their missions and return home safely.” The bill establishes defense policies and restrictions and addresses organizational administration matters in the DoD. The NDAA is the best way for elected officials to influence U.S. defense policy and represent their constituents’ interests.

The process to pass the annual NDAA begins in January and typically takes the majority of the year to reach the President's desk. The process can be broken up into four main phases. Please note that any month or date may change for a number of reasons, including the will of the majority, delays in the President's Budget request, a new administration, etc.

**Phase 1: Member Request (Jan – Mar)**

**Phase 2: Hearings and Markup (Apr – Jun)**

**Phase 3: Floor Consideration (Jun – Jul)**

**Phase 4: Conference (Timeline TBD)**

For constituents and the defense industry, Phases 1, 2, and 3 all offer opportunities for requests to be made and included in the bill.

### **Phase 1: Member Request**

In Phase 1, HASC members will submit non-controversial items within the committee's jurisdiction to be included in the base text of the NDAA. Items should be fully "baked" or nearly baked when submitted to HASC. This avoids meetings to fix the issue during a stressful time and prevents the proposal from being excluded or dropped from the NDAA. HASC has limited resources and suggests members limit submissions to roughly 30. During Phase 1 (or earlier), stakeholders should schedule a meeting with my defense team to discuss the proposal as soon as possible. In-person meetings, whenever possible, benefit your request by giving staff time to ask questions and understand some of the challenges of including the proposal in the NDAA. Staff may provide critical feedback or advice in order to strengthen the proposal. It is also never too early to identify potential Senate champions.

By late January, I will open my NDAA proposal request form for interested parties. Along with other information requested on the form, submissions should include the following details to explain the problem you are trying to address: Proposal Name, Description, Justification, Type (Policy or Budgetary), PE Line if applicable, and Point of Contact.

Lastly, stakeholders should share which other offices they are working with and who else is interested in the proposal. HASC responds to well-baked, bipartisan proposals. It is important to note that, in order to protect members' work, HASC will not share if another office is working on a similar or the same proposal.

The deadline for the NDAA request varies based on the committee schedule. Typically, the deadline is mid to late February. The date is static, so check the office's website frequently for updates on the NDAA timeline and deadline.

### **Phase 2: Hearings and Markup (Apr – Jun)**

During Phase 2, HASC staff will inform my team and me of any challenges, questions, or concerns in the proposals. Stakeholders should be prepared to discuss or revise proposals in response to the committee's feedback with urgency, oftentimes within mere hours or days.

Constituents and stakeholders may still schedule a meeting with the office to discuss newly developed NDAA provisions and policy ideas, but time constraints may hinder their inclusion in the NDAA. For best results, bring an idea that is as close to developed as possible and understand if there are other interested parties in the DoD or on HASC.

Parallel to this, HASC will start organizing posture hearings with the Secretary of Defense, senior officials, combatant commands, and other DoD stakeholders and commands. For example, the Military Personnel Subcommittee will hold a hearing on military justice and legal issues. I can use this time to raise priorities and proposals with the DoD.

The phase culminates in the markup of the NDAA base text and is another opportunity for HASC members to get their priorities or proposals into the NDAA. Only HASC members can submit amendments during markup, and amendments are often reserved for items that:

- (a) developed after the Member-request deadline;
- (b) lack majority and minority support; or
- (c) trigger issues of concurrent jurisdiction (and which require waivers from committees that share jurisdiction).

### **Phase 3: Floor Consideration (June – July)**

Once reported favorably out of committee, the NDAA will be brought to the floor for consideration. This is the last opportunity for members of Congress to add a proposal to the NDAA text. Amendments may be submitted by any member of the House. The Rules committee determines if an amendment is “made in order” and will be considered on the floor. An amendment that is bipartisan always has the best chance to be “made in order.” Typically, floor amendments are provisions planned for markup, but HASC needed more time to work. New ideas can be brought forward, but it is even more important that they are fully developed, and HASC has reviewed the text. If that is not the case, the Rules committee will not include the provision. Please schedule a meeting with the office no later than NDAA markup, which is typically one month before floor consideration, to discuss a floor amendment.

### **Phase 4: Conference (Timeline TBD) and Preparing for Next Year**

During Phase 4, if the Senate passes an NDAA, House leadership will appoint senior members of HASC as conferees and work with the Senate to resolve differences between the two bills. If the Senate did not pass an NDAA, the Senate would amend the House version of the NDAA based on the Senate Armed Services Committee’s (SASC) passed NDAA and send it back to the House for consideration.

Regardless of the path taken, we engage by sending letters to HASC and SASC leadership advocating for our priorities. Unfortunately, at this stage, new proposals are not the priority. the NDAA. Rather, my team and I are focused on ensuring our existing priorities remain in the bill.

However, it’s not too late to discuss proposals and requests for the next NDAA, as Phase 1 is only a few months or even weeks away. Schedule a meeting, ask when the form will go up, and start the cycle again. We are always ready to work with you on your next idea.

## **FAQs**

### **Where is Rep. Elfreth’s NDAA request form?**

<https://elfreth.house.gov/services/national-defense-authorization-act-requests>

### **If I miss the request deadline, is it too late for my request to be included in the NDAA?**

No, but it does decrease the likelihood. Please contact my office as soon as possible to discuss the request. The deadline for the NDAA request varies based on the committee’s schedule. Typically, the deadline is in the middle to late February. The date may change, so check the office’s website frequently for updates on the NDAA timeline and deadline.

### **Does the project need to be related to Maryland or Maryland's Third District?**

No, the project does not need to be related to Maryland or Maryland’s Third District, but preference is given to these requests. If your request isn’t related to Maryland, please provide as much detail as possible about the problem your request addresses, and you can schedule a meeting with my staff.

### **What can I do to ensure that my request is considered?**

Be clear on the problem you are trying to solve and the solution you are proposing. Keep your description clear and concise to help staff understand the proposal. Don’t be afraid to ask for a meeting to discuss the request. Be open about obstacles it may face, feedback from the committee, and what other members you are working with. Help us brainstorm allies across the aisle and in the Senate.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report wouldn't be possible without so many dedicated partners throughout the state of Maryland. I cannot emphasize how much each and every conversation across the installation tour influenced my work serving on the House Armed Services Committee and crafting the NDAA. My team and I are incredibly grateful for the many thoughtful and strategic partners that we have across the state.

For all of my on-base meetings, thank you to each of the commanding officers, command sergeant majors, and officers and enlisted personnel who took the time out of their busy days to meet with me and my team.

Thank you to the Maryland Office of Military and Federal Affairs team for welcoming me and my team into the Defense ecosystem, but especially the Maryland Military Installation Council.

Thank you to the following alliances for your partnership, advocacy, and support throughout the year and leading up to the FY26 NDAA:

- Ft. Meade Alliance
- Ft. Detrick Alliance
- Southern Maryland Navy Alliance
- Maritime Technology Alliance
- Army Alliance
- Military Alliance Council
- Andrews Business and Community Alliance

Finally, thank you to the entire Maryland Congressional Delegation for your support, including Senator Chris Van Hollen, Senator Angela Alsobrooks, Congressman Steny Hoyer, and Congresswoman April McClain Delaney for joining on my installation tours.