OPENING STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR JIM INHOFE
RANKING MEMBER, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ROOM SD-G50
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
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To conduct a hearing on the Army budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2023

(As prepared for delivery)

Thank you, Chairman Reed. I join you in welcoming our witnesses.

For four years this committee has used the 2018 National Defense Strategy and Commission report as the roadmap for the resources and tools needed to meet the threats we face.

Rightly, the Biden administration's recently-released defense strategy underscores the accelerating threat of the Chinese Communist Party and its unprecedented military modernization.

Unfortunately, the administration has sent to Congress a budget request that does not provide the resources required to combat that threat or the others we face.

Not only does it fail to provide the 3 to 5 percent real growth recommended by the Commission…it doesn't even keep up with the record-high inflation we are facing.

The absence of real growth in the request, combined with record-high inflation, would leave our military under-resourced.

This is nowhere more evident than in the budget request for the Army. The 1.6 percent increase requested for the Army is well below inflation…amounting to a de-facto cut.

The request cuts military construction by 39 percent; cuts research and development by 6 percent; and cuts procurement by 7 percent.

Notably, the procurement cut substantially slows modernization of armored brigade combat teams that are essential to deterring further Russian aggression.

Given the inadequate budget request, it is no surprise that General McConville's unfunded priorities list – what I call the risk list – totals $5.1 billion.

I look forward to understanding from our witnesses the risks associated with this budget request.

Mr. Chairman…Clearly we have much work to do to ensure our military have the resources they require. Thank you.

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