



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503**

April 29, 2014  
(House Rules)

**STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY**  
**H.R. 4486 – Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies**  
**Appropriations Act, 2015**  
(Rep. Rogers, R-Kentucky)

This Statement of Administration Policy provides views on H.R. 4486, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. The Administration supports investments in military infrastructure, housing, and services for men and women in our armed forces and their families. H.R. 4486, however, does not provide the President's budget request for Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) medical care and includes unnecessary restrictions that could undermine national security and the provision of benefits to our veterans.

The Administration looks forward to working with Congress to move forward with an orderly appropriations process that supports economic growth, opportunity, and our national security while avoiding unnecessary fiscal crises that hold the Nation's economy back. This process should include reconciling funding levels for individual appropriations bills to promote economic growth, and national security, and passing bills without ideological provisions that could undermine an orderly appropriations process.

The President's fiscal year (FY) 2015 Budget provides a roadmap for making investments to accelerate economic growth, expand opportunity for all hard-working Americans, and ensure our national security, while continuing to improve the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. At the same time, the Budget takes key steps to both continue and enhance the Administration's efforts to deliver a Government that is more effective, efficient, and supportive of economic growth.

The President's Budget adheres to the FY 2015 spending levels agreed to in the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) and shows the choices the President would make at those levels – including strong support for our nation's servicemembers and veterans. However, the levels agreed to in the BBA are already below FY 2007 funding levels adjusted for inflation and are not sufficient – either in FY 2015 or beyond – to ensure the Nation is achieving its full potential. For that reason, the Budget also includes a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative – evenly split between defense and non-defense priorities – that presents additional investments to grow the economy, expand opportunity, and enhance security. The Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative would support our servicemembers and veterans by providing additional resources for military construction and family housing projects that satisfy new requirements or replace obsolete facilities, as well as high priority VA capital projects to address critical safety issues, improve VA services, and meet the increased demand for veterans' services.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill and urges Congress to resolve these issues during the FY 2015

appropriations process.

*Veterans Affairs Funding.* The Administration is disappointed with the funding level for VA Medical Care, which is \$368 million below the President's request. This funding level could delay the timely delivery of health care services to veterans and impede the Administration's efforts to end veterans' homelessness in 2015. Further, the bill provides \$50 million below the request for Information Technology operations and maintenance programs, which may result in delayed technology infrastructure improvements that ensure continuity of operations for services that support all of VA's services and benefit delivery.

*Electronic Health Records.* The Administration appreciates the funding level provided for electronic health record interoperability and VistA Evolution, but objects to the continued restriction on obligations for VistA modernization efforts. The Administration is committed to achieving seamless data integration and interoperability between the Department of Defense, VA, and also with private healthcare providers. Significant steps toward improved interoperability have already been taken, including deployment of a joint legacy viewer to view patient records and improvement of data standardization between the Departments and patient identity management within both Departments. Additional capabilities are planned to continue to improve efforts to share standards-based, computable data among the Departments, private sector providers, and patients. Uncertainty in funding availability will delay needed enhancements for improved clinical decision support and better care for veterans.

*Military Construction.* The Administration appreciates the overall level of funding provided by the Committee for military construction and family housing. The projects requested in the FY 2015 Budget reflect the highest priority projects for the Department of Defense, and the Administration supports full funding for each of those projects.

*Joint Intelligence Analysis Complex (JIAC) Consolidations Project.* The Administration strongly objects to the Committee eliminating funding for the JIAC. This consolidated intelligence analysis center, which supports both U.S. and NATO activities, would facilitate multi-national training and promote international intelligence sharing and interoperability. Its proximity to counterpart organizations would enable collaboration and enhance our ability to function effectively in coalition contingency operations. This project was reviewed as part of the European Infrastructure process, and would achieve important infrastructure savings while helping fill U.S. intelligence gaps.

*Detainee Matters.* The Administration strongly opposes section 411 of the Committee bill, which would prohibit the use of funds to construct, renovate, or expand any facility in the United States to house individuals held in the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay. Although the Administration appreciates that the prohibition does not apply to modifications of facilities at Guantánamo Bay, it would nevertheless constrain the flexibility that the Nation's Armed Forces and counterterrorism professionals need to best protect U.S. national security, intruding upon the Executive Branch's ability to carry out its mission.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as the FY 2015 appropriations process moves forward.

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