

LARSON: STRONG DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL GOOD FOR CONNECTICUT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 24, 2003

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HARTFORD- The House on Wednesday passed the Defense Appropriations bill, H.R. 2658, providing a total of \$368.2 billion for the nation's Armed Forces. U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) voted in favor of the legislation which includes funding for national defense projects important to Connecticut, including the F/A-22 Raptor, the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) and the C-17 aircraft.

"This legislation fully funds the major national defense programs that are critical to the nation's military as well as Connecticut's defense industry and workforce," said Larson. "I am pleased that the state's priorities have received the levels of support they deserve."

Funding levels in H.R. 2658 for programs important to Connecticut:

F-22 Raptor - \$3.6 billion for 22 aircraft

Joint Strike Fighter - \$4.3 billion

C-17 - \$2.1 billion for 11 aircraft

Comanche - \$1.1 billion

Black Hawk / Sea Hawk - \$917 million for 38 aircraft

Virginia Class Submarine - \$1.5 billion for 1 submarine, including multi-year contract authority for the Virginia-class submarine

SSGN Conversion - \$930.7 million for 2 conversions

The legislation also includes an average 4.1 percent military personnel pay raise and selected targeted pay raises for mid-career officers and senior non-commissioned officers. It also includes \$128 million for the continuation of increased rates for Imminent Danger Pay and Family Separation Allowances. The bill approves housing allowances for the buy down of service personnel's out of pocket housing expenses from 7.5 percent in fiscal year 2003 to 3.5 percent in fiscal year 2004.

It also includes approximately \$8.5 million for fuel cell and hydrogen technology programs throughout Connecticut.

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Congressman Larson Serves on the House Armed Services Committee