President Signs Budget Boosting Navy Ship, Aircraft Procurement

ARLINGTON, Va. – The fiscal 2019 defense budget, part of a multiagency appropriations bill signed into law Sept. 28 by President Donald J. Trump, reflects the will of Congress to plus-up Navy Department ship and aircraft procurement.

The law appropriates $606.5 billion for base defense spending and $67.9 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations funds, totaling $675 billion. This is $20.4 billion over fiscal 2018 funding levels and matches the fiscal 2019 request.

The law, the first defense budget in 10 years that was passed before the fiscal year it funds began, added two littoral combat ships, two F-35B and four F-35C Lightning II strike fighters, two E-2D Advanced Hawkeye early warning aircraft and seven MV-22B/CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor transport aircraft. The law deleted funding for two C-40A Skytrain II transport aircraft.

The law funds 13 ships in 2019 at $24 billion, $2.3 billion more than the Navy's request. These include:
■ Two Virginia-class attack submarines ($4.3 billion)
■ Three Arleigh Burke-class Flight III guided-missile destroyers ($5.3 billion)
■ Three littoral combat ships ($1.6 billion)
■ One expeditionary sea base ship ($647 million)
■ One Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport ($225 million)
■ Two John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oilers ($1 billion)
■ One towing, rescue and salvage ship ($80.5 million)

The law also funded advance procurement for several ships:
■ $350 million for an LPD Flight II amphibious transport dock

ship
■ $350 million for the LHA 9 amphibious assault ship
■ $250 million to purchase an additional Arleight Burke guided-missile destroyer in fiscal 2020
■ $3 billion to support the construction of the Colombia-class ballistic-missile submarine
■ Adds $18 million for industry studies and requirements definition for the Common Hull Auxiliary Multi-Mission Platform (CHAMP) to replace sealift and auxiliary vessels and directs the Navy to present an updated acquisition strategy for CHAMP.

Aircraft funded for fiscal 2019 ($20 billion, $1 billion more than the Navy's request) include:
■ 22 F-35B and 13 F-35C Lightning II strike fighters ($3.5 billion)
■ 24 F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighters ($1.9 billion)
■ 10 P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft ($1.8 billion)
■ Nine E-2D Advanced Hawkeye early warning aircraft ($1.1 billion)
■ Three MQ-4C Triton maritime patrol UAVs ($544 million)
■ Two KC-130J Super Hercules refueler/transports ($150 million)
■ 13 MV-22B and CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor transports ($1.1 billion)
■ Eight CH-53K King Stallion heavy-lift helicopters ($1 billion)
■ 25 AH-1Z Viper attack helicopters ($798 million)
■ Six VH-92A presidential transport helicopters ($49 million)

Sara Fuentes, staff vice president, legislative relations, contributed to this report.