

# Wittman, Ryan Relaunch House Defense Modernization Caucus



From the office of Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Virginia

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA-01) and Congressman Pat Ryan (D-NY-18) relaunched the House Defense Modernization Caucus (HDMC) for the 119th Congress to continue their efforts to advance the national security ecosystem through the integration and adoption of emergent technologies. The relaunch was unveiled at the “Defense Modernization Outlook for the 119th Congress: Priorities and Pathways” event on Capitol Hill, featuring expert discussions with leaders from government, private capital, and the defense industry.

Originally [founded by Wittman and Ryan](#), the bipartisan caucus serves as a driving force behind key policy and funding

initiatives aimed at modernizing the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and strengthening national security.

“As warfare continues to evolve with emerging technologies, our national security agencies must prioritize agile and responsive modernization efforts. Ensuring this progress requires dedicated focus and support,” said Congressman Wittman. “As the founding co-chair of the bipartisan Defense Modernization Caucus, it’s been a pleasure to watch our caucus grow, and I’m eager to collaborate with colleagues on both sides of the aisle during the 119th Congress to drive innovation and strengthen America’s security through cutting-edge advancements.”

“There’s no more time for screwing around. We need to deliver and scale capabilities at the speed of combat, not the speed of Congress,” said Congressman Ryan. “The incredible growth of the HDMC in just the past few months shows the bipartisan appetite for action. Now we need to push – hard. And probably piss some people off along the way. Get on board with a software-centric Pentagon, PPBE reform, and increased partnerships with VC and the private sector, or get out of the way.”

“The Silicon Valley Defense Group applauds Representatives Wittman and Ryan and the critically important work of the House Defense Modernization Caucus,” said Jacqueline Tame, executive director, Silicon Valley Defense Group. “These long-needed efforts to catalyze systemic modernization via digital transformation, comprehensive and lasting acquisition reform, and forging pathways towards emerging technology readiness, require strong, unwavering, bipartisan leadership. We are proud to support your vision and agenda for the 119th Congress.”

During the HDMC relaunch event, Tame moderated a panel discussion featuring Wittman and Ryan, exploring key initiatives such as streamlining the DoD’s Planning,

Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process, accelerating defense acquisitions, and leveraging venture and private capital to drive innovation.

A follow-up expert panel examined the Pentagon's efforts to enhance collaboration with private-sector tech firms, scale emerging technology adoption, implement AI at scale, and address ethics and security concerns in AI integration. Panelists included:

- Colin Carroll, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of Defense
- Liz McNally, Deputy Director, Defense Innovation Unit
- Dan Tadross, Head of Federal, Scale AI
- Michael Brown, General Partner, Battery Ventures

In December, Wittman and Ryan announced several key wins they [secured](#) in the *Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act* to bolster the defense innovation ecosystem. Wittman and Ryan led efforts to streamline and accelerate the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)'s Authority to Operate (ATO) process, expand rapid hire authority for DoD innovation engines, and increase access to classified space for startup and scaleup companies.