



**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES
TERRY EVERETT, ALABAMA
CHAIRMAN**

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
April 5, 2006

Contact: Josh Holly (HASC), 202-225-2539
Mike Lewis (Everett), 202-225-2901

Opening Statement of Terry Everett

Hearing on Plans for Transforming the Department of Energy's Nuclear Weapons Complex

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Strategic Forces Subcommittee meets today to receive testimony on plans for transforming the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons complex.

The subject of how to transform the nuclear weapons complex is not new—nor is it easy. There have been many studies conducted over the last twenty plus years on how best to modernize our Cold War era weapons complex. In spite of numerous studies, there has been little change and almost no actual transformation. We cannot continue to proceed down the same path year after year. Doing so will put at risk a key attribute of our Nation's defense: our strategic nuclear deterrent.

In last year's defense authorization bill, this subcommittee drafted and enacted, with bipartisan support, legislation setting forth the objectives of the Reliable Replacement Warhead or "RRW" program. That legislation was accepted by our Senate colleagues and is now established law. At the time, we saw the RRW program as laying down a foundation for the required capabilities of the future weapons complex infrastructure.

Today, with the RRW program concept in place, we will hear from our witnesses on what steps could or should be taken to modernize our complex, consolidate nuclear material and reduce security costs. There are many different opinions on how best to accomplish transformation. Along with my subcommittee colleagues, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on this critically important subject.

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