

## August 05, 2004- President Signs Defense Bill into Law; Provides For OC Projects

President Signs Defense Bill into Law;  
Bill Provides For Projects with Orange County Defense Companies

WASHINGTON, D.C. &ndash; Today, President Bush signed H.R. 4613 into law. The bill, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2005, will provide funding for U.S. military activities, including projects from various defense contractors and subcontractors in Orange County and around California. This year, Congresswoman Sanchez was able to bring approximately \$15 million in projects back to Orange County.

Congresswoman Sanchez voted in favor of this bill and is pleased that there are some important provisions in this bill to better provide for the pay and benefits of the military, as well as to provide better force protection for our troops in harm&rsquo;s way.

Overall defense funding level is \$416 billion. The conference report includes an overall defense funding level of \$416 billion &ndash; composed of \$391 billion for the Pentagon&rsquo;s regular budget in FY 2005, a 7 percent increase from FY 2004 funding and nearly the full amount requested by President Bush, and \$25 billion for a war fund for Iraq and Afghanistan. It also includes \$1.3 billion in non-defense emergency funding.

Better pay and benefits for the military. Like the bill that was passed out of the House, the provides an average 3.5 percent pay increase for military personnel in FY 2005, and provides targeted pay hikes for a variety of personnel. It also fully funds the request to increase the basic housing allowance so that out-of-pocket housing expenses for military members would be reduced from the current 3.5 percent to zero in FY 2005.

Increased imminent danger pay and family separation allowance. As was true in FY 2004, the conference report includes funding in FY 2005 for increased imminent danger pay and family separation allowances for our troops. Imminent danger pay has been increased from \$150 to \$225 per month and the family separation allowance &ndash; which goes to help military families pay rent, child care and other expenses while soldiers are away &ndash; has been increased from \$100 to \$250 per month.

Increased force protection for U.S. troops. The bill provides added funds for increased protection for U.S. troops in Iraq, including funds for expedited production of up-armored Humvees, more body armor, additional armored trucks, and more explosive device jammers. \$25 billion war fund for Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill includes a \$25 billion war fund to pay for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan for several months.