

Senator Jim Talent Has Expressed His Strong Support for the Rapid Deployment Fortification Wall in the U.S. Defense Budget

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United States Senate

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Senator John W. Warner
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Carl Levin
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Warner and Ranking Member Levin:

As you prepare the National Defense Authorization Act Conference Report for Fiscal 2004, I ask that you consider including in the report a provision that authorizes funding for the Rapid Deployment Fortification Wall (RDFW). This funding is important for the evaluation of a potentially valuable force protection tool.

The RDFW program is a collaboration between Geocell Systems, Inc., Eastman Chemical Company, and Spartech Plastics, a company that is headquartered and operates a production facility in Missouri. The RDFW was developed through a cooperative research and development agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is an expandable, stackable, modular wall made of a tough, lightweight plastic that can be filled with sand, or other locally available fill material, for use in a number of disaster, emergency and military protection applications. RDFW is a flexible tool with multiple applications and can serve as a direct replacement for sandbags in a wide variety of field fortifications.

H.R. 1588 includes \$3.5 million for the RDFW under *PE 603640M for Marine Corps Advanced Technology Demonstrations*. The U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Lab is currently purchasing sample grids of RDFW with funds authorized and appropriated in FY 2003. These samples will be used for testing revetments and bunkers. The \$3.5 million requested for FY 2004 would support Marine Corps efforts to conduct ballistics and bomb blast testing.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please don't hesitate to contact my military Legislative Assistant Lindsey Neas if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James M. Talent



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