

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter Visclosky
Ranking Member
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Gentlemen:

The Fiscal Year 2016 President's budget request includes funding for 57 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters. This is the first year of the production increases necessary to reach full rate production in Fiscal Year 2018. As you consider your respective Fiscal Year 2016 Defense bills, should additional funding become available for tactical aviation, we respectfully request that you add funding for two additional Navy F-35Cs, and six additional Marine Corps F-35Bs to mitigate the Navy's strike fighter shortfall, restore Marine Corps combat losses continuing to reduce unit fly away costs.

As you are aware, the F-35 is the nation's only current 5th Generation stealth aircraft in production. The F-35 is the key to future air superiority for all three US Services and our most important allies across the globe. The F-35s unmatched stealth, electronic warfare suite, situational awareness and targeting identification capabilities are crucial to achieving air superiority in future surface-to-air and air-to-air threat environments without incurring significant losses. Russia and China are rapidly developing and proliferating their own advanced stealth fighter jets and weapons systems. These countries are also building and proliferating advanced surface-to-air missile systems that threaten to make our 4th Generation fighter fleet obsolete. The rapidly advancing threats around the globe make a strong case for significantly increasing F-35 production to ensure the services have the 5th Generation inventory required to ensure air dominance in the mid-2020s.

Analysis using government models and scenarios shows that more F-35s significantly increase mission effectiveness and reduce combat losses compared to any other tactical aviation platform in the US inventory today. Additionally, analysis demonstrates that the F-35 requires far fewer

support aircraft than current 4th Generation aircraft. The Department of Defense has a current validated requirement of 2,443 F-35s between the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. We need to accelerate production to fulfill this requirement sooner in order to meet the future threat facing the joint and coalition force.

The fact is that the F-35 program is maturing and the design is stable. The Marine Corps will declare its first squadron operational later this year. During the last six years, unit costs have been reduced by over 57% and almost all future cost reduction is predicated on aircraft quantities.

Current low rate production supports over 1,200 suppliers in 45 states, directly and indirectly employing more than 129,000 and providing more than \$17.5 billion in annual economic impact. The economic impact from the program will only grow as production increases and eventually reaches full rate production in or about Fiscal Year 2018.

Again, we urge you to fully support the budget request and if possible increase F-35 production for two additional Navy F-35Cs and six additional Marine Corps F-35Bs. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued leadership for our nation.

Sincerely,

Kay Granger

R. V.

Elizabeth H. Esty

Jim Inhofe

R. Stump

John B. Larson

Carl Albert

P. Mc

Frank Velte

Carl "Buddy" Carter

~~Oran Holt~~

H. Ninth Army

Archie Scott

Rosa L. Dehauro

Harford D. B. By Jr.

~~Archie~~

Scientific

Doug Landon

Joe Courtney

Walter B. Jones

Ge Bureau

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Jimmy Ray

Juan Vargas

Kynda Simone

Van LaBrook

Jody Price

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Regan Williams

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Jim De

Ben Flom

Blake Funtell

Tommy Kraft

Julia Brawley

Chin Buster

Chris Collins

Tom Marino

Ted W. Green

Richard E. Huff

Jeff Miller

Paul Yant

Nickolas Kauer

Ed Brown

Benny Jordenwith

Don Scott

Alma Adams

Michael M'Carl

Jim Bidenstein

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John Cante

Bill Shuster

Bill Johnson

~~John~~

Pat WALK

Paul Cook

Patrick Murphy

Ed Be

Bob

John Culberson

Leslie T. Searcy

Rob Woodall

Paul A. Lear

Pete King

Will Hard

~~Y. King~~

Min

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Ray Mancini

Joe Wilson

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Hank Johnson

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Marc Veasey
Elizabeth Esty
James McGovern
Tom MacArthur
Duncan Hunter
Michael Conaway
Austin Scott
Rosa DeLauro
Sanford Bishop
Andre Carson
Trent Franks
Doug Lamborn
Joe Courtney
Walter Jones
GK Butterfield
Pete Sessions
Scott Peters
Blake Farenthold
Julia Brownley
Chris Collins
Ted Lieu
Jeff Miller
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Alma Adams
Jim Bridenstine
Don Young
John Carter
Bill Johnson
Adam Kinzinger
Rick Allen
Paul Cook
Patrick Murphy
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John Culberson
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John Larson
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Filemon Vela
Earl Carter
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Juan Vargas
Kyrsten Sinema
David Loebsack
Jody Hice
Susan Brooks
Roger Williams
Jim Himes
Bill Flores
Steve Knight
Cheri Bustos
Tom Marino
Richard Neal
Frank Guinta
Kevin Brady
David Scott
Michael McCaul
Ann McLane Kuster
Robert Brady
Bill Shuster
Paul Gosar
Peter King
Will Hurd
Ann Kirkpatrick
Mimi Walters
Lamar Smith
Kenny Marchant
Joe Wilson
Lucille Roybal-Allard
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