

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary
Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Austin:

As the Department of Defense (DOD) finalizes its Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) programmatic and budgetary priorities, it does so at a pivotal time when the United States is facing growing challenges from adversaries around the world. While we work closely with our NATO Allies and partners to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's unprovoked, full-scale invasion in the immediate term, we must also not lose sight of the longer-term threats we face. As the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) lays out, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is "our most consequential strategic competitor and the pacing challenge for the Department."¹ As well, we know that we will continue to face persistent threats from Iran, North Korea, foreign terrorist organizations, and more.

Balancing current needs to maintain readiness with investments in next-generation capabilities that ensure our warfighters are equipped to fight and win the conflicts of tomorrow is of utmost importance. It's not enough that DOD keeps up with our adversaries. We must make strategic funding decisions that bring us the technological leaps that will enable us to maintain our competitive edge.

To support the administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy, we must continue to develop and field advanced propulsion systems which will enable our servicemembers to fly into the theater of operation, complete their mission and return home safely. We support the prior funding that the Department put forth over the last fifteen years to develop technologies to meet these critical threats and urge your continued support for these advanced propulsion systems, which will fuel additional aircraft capabilities such as powerful radars and infrared sensors.

As DOD prepares its FY24 budget request, we support these and other efforts to ensure that these significant investments will yield the best results for the warfighter. During its analysis and preparation of the FY24 budget request, we ask that DOD ensures capability and the cost of failure are included within each of these assessments. By continuing to capitalize on the investments made over the last fifteen years, we can take the steps necessary to yield the levels of deterrence that are critical to security of our nation.

¹ <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Mar/28/2002964702/-1/-1/1/NDS-FACT-SHEET.PDF>

We urge DOD to fund adaptive propulsion engineering and manufacturing development in the FY24 budget submission and deliver adaptive technology to the services as quickly as possible. If we do not continue to pursue advanced propulsion systems for our fighter aircraft, we risk opening the door for U.S. adversaries to overtake our advantages in fielded engine technology.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress




Mike Braun
United States Senator



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



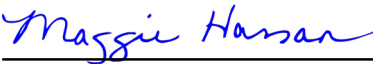
Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



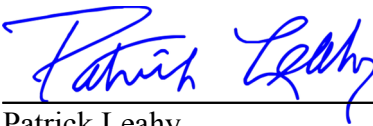
Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Chris Pappas
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Patrick Leahy
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Ted Budd
Member of Congress



Tim Scott
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Tim Ryan
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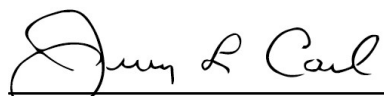
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



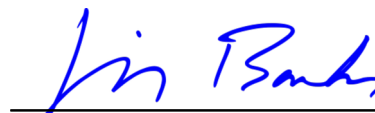
Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Jerry L. Carl
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Jim Banks
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Steven M. Palazzo
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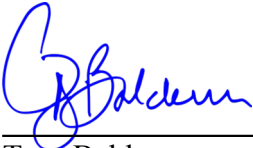
Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



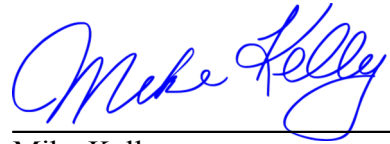
David Rouzer
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André Carson
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Troy Balderson
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Mike Kelly
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Warren Davidson
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Seth Moulton
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Paul Tonko
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Chris Stewart
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Robert E. Latta
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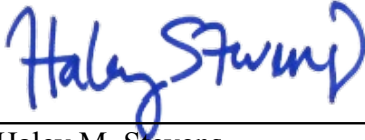
Ann McLane Kuster
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Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
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Shontel M. Brown
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Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Ben Cline
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Mike Carey
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense
Army General Mark A. Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff