

Defense Related Associations

November 1, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan

Speaker of the House
1233 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell

Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

House Minority Leader
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid

Senate Minority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader McConnell, Leader Pelosi, and Leader Reid:

We are writing to urge you to enact final FY 17 defense spending levels at no less than the current Budget Control Act levels before the end of the calendar year in both authorization and appropriations acts. The aerospace, maritime, and defense sector is the leading contributor to our net manufacturing trade balance and makes up 13% of the nation's manufacturing base. As Congress began debate on the FY 17 Budget Resolution last February many of us wrote to the Budget Committees' leadership supporting national security spending at the level that was agreed to under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015. The need is no less urgent at year's end.

If anything, the national security challenges that we face today are more daunting and complicated than they were eight months ago. Russian activities in the Crimea have been followed up with cyber adventurism that may end up affecting our 2016 elections. Syria and Afghanistan may be even more troublesome than was envisioned as the year began. Iran and North Korea are actively probing for weakness in US leadership and military posture.

There is always a temptation to extend the time for difficult final decisions. There will be plenty of those early in calendar 2017. However, a Continuing Resolution for defense that extends beyond the one under which we are currently operating will unnecessarily delay new programs, prevent the ramping up of mature programs, and affect defense readiness and operational issues. As Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said last month, "It injects a stutter step into a system that really thrives by predictability and confidence."

Please consider both the known and unpredictable national security challenges that the U.S. will face as our adversaries seek to take potential advantage of America's peaceful and democratic transition to a new Administration. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to ensure that those responsible for securing our nation and their families are provided adequate, balanced and stable funding in the form of final FY 17 defense authorization and appropriations enacted laws in this calendar year.

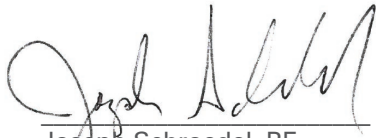
Sincerely,



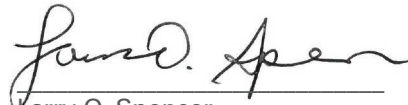
David F. Melcher
Lieutenant General, USA (Ret.)
President & CEO
Aerospace Industries Association



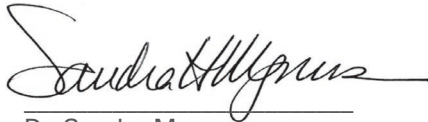
Craig R. McKinley
General, USAF (Ret.)
President & CEO
National Defense Industrial Association



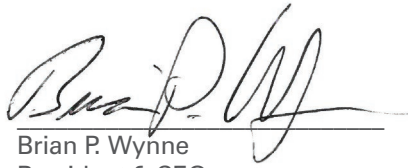
Joseph Schroedel, P.E.
Brigadier General, USA (Ret.)
Executive Director
Society of American Military Engineers



Larry O. Spencer
General, USAF (Ret.)
Air Force Association



Dr. Sandra Magnus
Executive Director
American Institute of Aeronautics
& Astronautics



Brian P. Wynne
President & CEO
AUVSI



Al Runnels
Executive Director
American Society
American Society of
Military Comptrollers



David A. Hime
President
Association of Old Crows



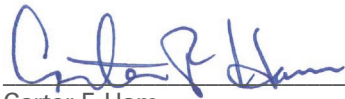
Gus Hargett
Major General, USA (Ret.)
President
The National Guard Association
of the United States



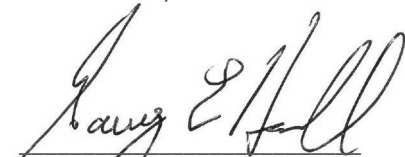
David J. Berteau
President & CEO
Professional Services Council



Barry McCullough
Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.)
President
Surface Navy Association



Carter F. Ham
General, USA (Ret.)
Association of the United States Army



Garry E. Hall
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)
President & CEO
Association United States Navy



RADM Cari Thomas, USCG, (Ret.)
Executive Director
Navy league of the United States