



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
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April 7, 2008

The Honorable Adam Putnam
U.S. House of Representatives
Longworth House Office Building, Rm. 1725
Washington, DC 20515-0912

Dear Congressman Putman:

On behalf of the approximately 725,000 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I write in opposition to the Pentagon's recent award of a \$40 billion contract to the European Aeronautic Defense and Space (EADS) Company, along with Northrop Grumman, to build 179 refueling tankers based on the Airbus A330. I find it unconscionable that while America is economically distressed, taxpayer dollars will be used to fund a European stimulus package.

At \$600 billion annually, U.S. defense spending constitutes the largest discretionary component of the federal budget. It is common sense that we invest our own tax dollars in the United States to create jobs here and, for the sake of national security, we make what we need to defend ourselves. Sadly, the EADS/Airbus deal represents the culmination of alarming increases in Department of Defense (DoD) waivers to the Buy American Act. The Airbus tanker contract will shatter existing records for foreign purchases of defense products.

The awarding of this contract exposes "free trade" for what it is: unfair trade. EADS, the parent company of Airbus, is heavily subsidized by the European Union (EU). The EU's ongoing subsidies to EADS/Airbus total some \$100 billion and are the subject of one of the largest lawsuits ever brought before the World Trade Organization (WTO). It is clear the bidding process for this contract was unfair. American companies were disadvantaged and our own government is complicit.

In light of DoD's actions I request Congress do the following:

- Conduct a full investigation of the circumstances surrounding the awarding of the tanker contract to a foreign contractor.
- Conduct additional hearings on the scope, nature, and quantity of waivers granted by the Administration.
- Defund the award of the Air Force's contract to EADS/Northrop Grumman.

The DoD and Air Force plan to outsource America's industrial base is unacceptable. The Pentagon's plan to purchase 179 tankers presents an opportunity to fulfill two important goals; stimulate the American economy and provide for the nation's defense.

Sincerely,

Edwin D. Hill
International President

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