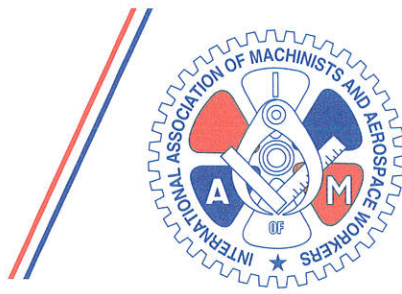


**International  
Association of  
Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301  
967-4500



OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

April 5, 2017

Dear Representative,

**On behalf of the largest Defense and Aerospace Union in North America, I am writing to urge you to sign on to an important bipartisan Dear Colleague letter (see attached) to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee requesting support in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Defense budget amendment and FY18 National Defense Authorization and Defense Appropriations bills for the F-35 program in three critical areas; \$623.2 million in production non-recurring tooling to meet future production goals, the DoD production rate of 60 F-35As, 24 F-35Bs, and 12 F-35Cs in FY18 to further reduce unit costs, and funding for spare parts to support future the increased number of future F-35s.**

Since its inception, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter has been proudly built by IAM members and is our nation's only 5th Generation stealth aircraft currently in production. The F-35 is the key to future air superiority for all three U.S. Services and our most important allies across the globe. Ramping up needed production is the quickest way to drive down unit costs. After dropping this year to \$94 million per F-35A, the estimated cost of an F-35A is expected to drop further to \$79 million by 2020 if Congress funds the necessary increase in production rates.

The positive economic impact of the F-35 program continues to grow. This mature program supports more than 45,000 direct and over 125,000 indirect American jobs at approximately 1,400 suppliers across the nation; this results in an annual economic impact to the U.S. of over \$24 billion. Importantly, these numbers are expected to increase as production increases in the coming years.

I urge you to support the Department of Defense's most important tactical aviation priority by signing on to the attached Dear Colleague being led by Representative's Tom Rooney and John Larson. To do so, please contact Jessica Moore with Representative Rooney at [Jessica.moore@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jessica.moore@mail.house.gov) (5-5792) or Serj Banjac with Representative Larson at [srdan.banjac@mail.house.gov](mailto:srdan.banjac@mail.house.gov) (5-2265).

Please contact Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert Martinez, Jr.  
International President

April X, 2017

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Armed Service Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

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

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

Gentlemen and Madame Chairwoman:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Defense budget amendment and FY18 National Defense Authorization and Defense Appropriations bills, we strongly urge your continued support for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. As our nation's only 5<sup>th</sup> generation stealth fighter being built today, investing in increasing production capacity to meet F-35 full rate production is critical to ensuring the U.S. maintains air superiority. Further, this action would allow the Department and our allies to continue bringing costs down by leveraging economies of scale.

Continued commitment to the F-35 is essential to meet the growing global threat. As our adversaries continue to develop their own stealth fighters and proliferate advanced surface-to-air missile systems, the need to boost F-35 production has never been clearer. Current Department of Defense (DoD) force structure plans leave the Services with a capability gap that additional 4<sup>th</sup> generation legacy aircraft cannot adequately address, particularly in an advanced integrated threat environment. Procuring more F-35s faster is the best way to fill this capability gap. The F-35 program delivers more than just air combat superiority, it also helps bolster our nation's economy. The program supports more than 1,400 first tier suppliers and more than 170,000 direct and indirect jobs across the United States.

As such, we would urge the committees to invest in three critical areas: capacity (production non-recurring (PNR) tooling); production rate (aircraft); and readiness (spares). We would urge the committees to invest in PNR tooling to ensure that the program can achieve full rate DoD production of 80 F-35As, 36 F-35Bs and 30 F-35Cs in 2021. This would require an investment of \$328 million for A's (80), \$196.8 million for B's (36), and \$98.4 million for C's (30) (Total: \$623.2 million).

Additionally, to help address the critical need to maintain air superiority and support a ramp up to full rate production, we urge the committees to support a DoD production rate of 60 F-35As, 24 F-35Bs, and 12 F-35Cs in FY18. This production rate would continue to restore previously

planned F-35 procurement. It is anticipated that the FY18 budget will include, based on the FY17 request -- 44 F-35As, 20 F-35Bs, and 6 F-35Cs.

Furthermore, to address readiness and aircraft availability, we would ask that the committee direct the services to invest in a robust spares plan to adequately fund the spare parts and reparability needed to sufficiently support the number of aircraft expected in the near future.

We would further support any identified unfunded requirements. With more than 200 aircraft flying today, it is time to support a build plan towards full rate DoD production of 80-110 F-35As, 25-36 F-35Bs, and 24-30 F-35Cs.

F-35 unit costs have come down more than 60 percent since the procurement of the first production aircraft a decade ago. In fact, the cost of an F-35A today is just over \$94 million and falling. The F-35 industry team has committed to reducing the costs to \$79 million for an F-35A in 2020 with investments in the profile and capacity. To achieve these costs savings and maintain future air superiority, we must significantly increase production and provide the necessary infrastructure investments.

Thank you for your continued support of the F-35 program and leadership of our nation in these critical times.

Sincerely,

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