

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 22, 2025

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 marks another fiscal year with zero C-130J variant (C/KC/HC/LC) aircraft in the President's Budget - an unfortunate precedent to continue as a part of the fiscal year planning process. As you consider the FY2026 defense appropriations bill we strongly urge the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense markup to add eight (+8) C-130Js to continue the unfunded recapitalization of the Air National Guard (ANG) / Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), add +\$100M for fleetwide Diminishing Manufacturing Sources (DMS) (i.e. obsolescence) as a result the of USAF funding shortfalls, add three to five (+3 to +5) Navy Reserve (USNR) KC-130Js to continue recap for the C/KC-130T, add two (+2) LC-130J ski-equipped aircraft for the ANG, add \$71 million for the LC-130J non-recurring engineering (NRE) requirements, and add two (+2) KC-130Js to replace operational losses by the USMC. These actions would continue the unfunded recapitalization of the remaining 80 legacy ANG and AFRC C-130Hs, sustain efforts to recapitalize the 30 aging USNR C-130T fleet logistics aircraft and recapitalize the 10 New York ANG LC-130H "artic ski birds."

The Multiyear Procurement III (MYP III, FY19-23) completed recap of the active-duty USAF with C-130Js. Since 2016 the President's Budget requests have not funded recap of ANG and AFRC C-130Hs and LC-130H polar mission aircraft. Congress has stepped in and added a total of 72 C-130Js from FY17-24 for the ANG and AFRC. In addition, the USAF, as lead service for C-130J, has not funded DMS requirements in recent years. This imperils sustainment for all services as well as new aircraft production.

The MYP III nearly completed the recapitalization of the USMC's older KC-130Ts. FY24 Appropriations funded the last two KC-130Js which completed the original program of record (POR). The USMC has added nine aircraft to the POR as backup and attrition, and two aircraft have been lost during operations. The remaining procurement is for 11 KC-130Js.

Due to continued low availability rates for the KC/C-130Ts, the Commander, Navy Reserve has made the KC-130T recapitalization to KC-130J her #1 recapitalization priority for FY25-26. As the Navy's only organic intra-theater airlift for oversized cargo, the aircraft remains the only Navy option to fulfill every airlift capability Distributed Maritime Operations requires. FY24 saw the first appropriated add of a USNR KC-130J, and at least +1 aircraft marked by the appropriations committees in FY25. We expect the Navy will continue to include KC-130Js on

the annual Unfunded Priorities List as they try to meet the Chief of Naval Operations' stated recapitalization timeframe of 2030. Moving forward, the Navy Reserve needs to replace their current fleet of 30 KC/C-130Ts with ~32 KC-130Js.

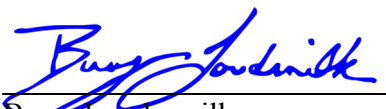
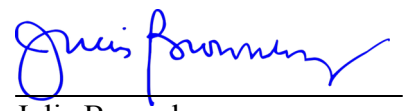
The Navy plans to replace the TACAMO nuclear sub C3 mission, currently performed by the E-6B Mercury, with a C-130J-30, dubbed "E-130J". The Navy funded the first three test (RDT&E) aircraft in FY23 and will fund mission system development from FY24 to FY27, with initial fleet production starting in FY28 (total of 31 aircraft). E-130J will initially augment the E-6, then eventually replace the E-6 and relieve it of TACAMO duties/orbits in the early 2030's. This recapitalization has been strongly endorsed by CDR USSTRATCOM.

MYP contracts deliver significant cost savings for the U.S. Government and guarantee stable production rates for industry. The last multiyear, MYP III (FY19-23), saved the government about 11%, or \$580M, when compared to annual procurement costs. As Navy TACAMO C-130Js budgeted production commences in FY27, we strongly recommend DoD consider a MYP or BB strategy beginning with FY26 EOQ (Economic Order Quantity) to reduce total procurement costs from FY27-31.

The C-130J program remains the only active U.S. airlifter production line and is the longest continuously running military production line in history. The current C-130J Super Hercules is the most capable tactical airlifter in the world. By design, the C-130J provides significant operational and support savings, more operational capability per aircraft, lower life cycle costs, common logistics and training support, and improved active duty and air reserve component interoperability. A stable C-130J production line supporting current and future validated DoD requirements is the best approach to preserving the 497 suppliers across 38 states that support the 33,563 direct and indirect jobs, yielding more than \$3.9 billion of total economic impact. C-130J production is currently declining from 2020's healthy rate of 24+ aircraft per year down to 20 per year, and only continued adds will keep it from falling further. The previous strong production rates were a direct result of MYP III as well as the 72 critical bipartisan adds appropriated during the FY2017-2024 Congressional appropriations cycles. A significant drop in production over the next three years could dramatically increase C-130J pricing, undermine our national security and that of our allies at a dangerous time in world affairs, and erode the strength of the national supplier base when many future requirements remain unfilled.

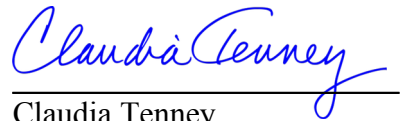
Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,


Barry Loudermilk
Member of Congress
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



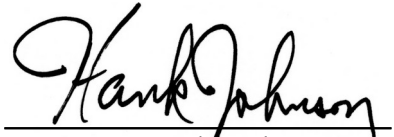
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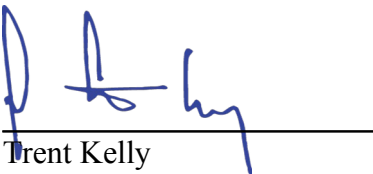
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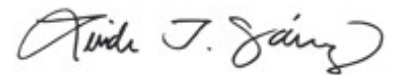
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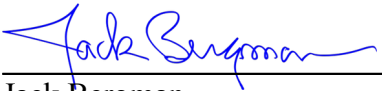
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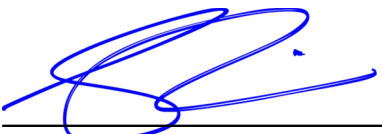
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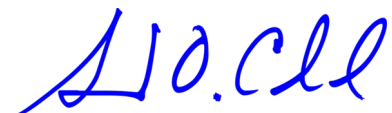
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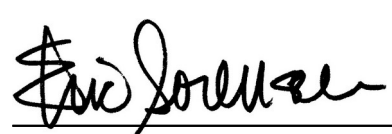
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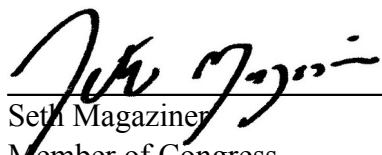
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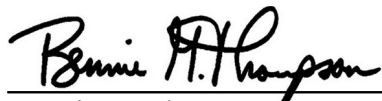
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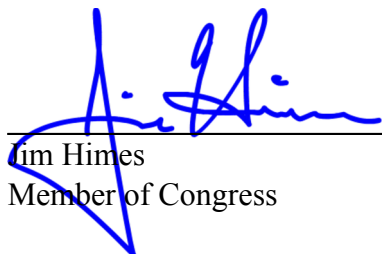
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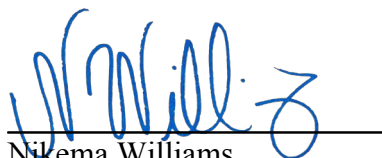
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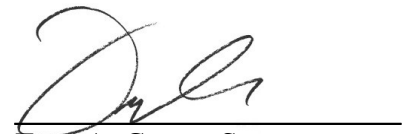


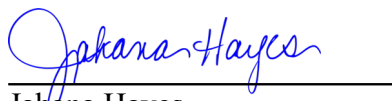
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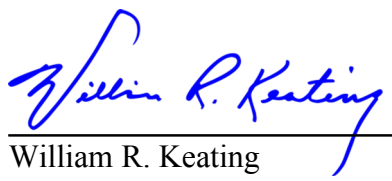
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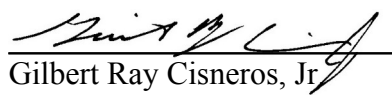

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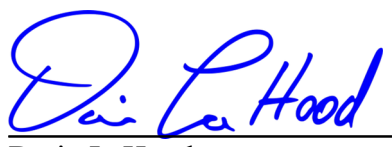

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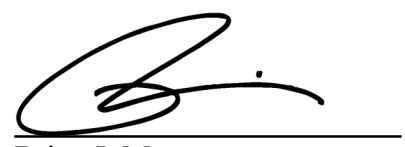

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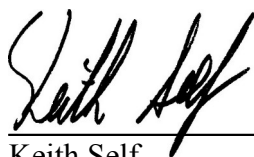

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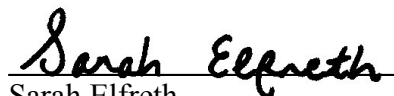
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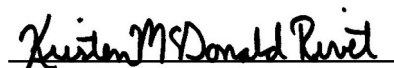
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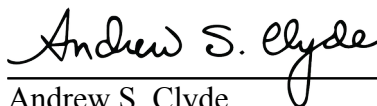
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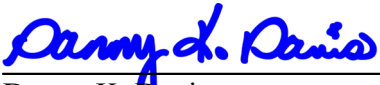
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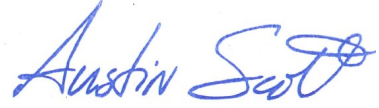
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