

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 21, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Fiscal Year 2009 National Defense Authorization act requires your certification on continued F-22A Raptor production by March 1, 2009. We strongly urge your certification of continued production of this vital program.

Continued F-22 production is critical to the security of our nation. The F-22 is the nation's most capable fighter and the world's only operation 5th generation fighter aircraft in full-rate production. It is the weapon system we need to respond to potential adversaries who are increasing their air combat capabilities both in terms of technology and numbers of aircraft. Several nations have announced that they are developing stealthy, twin-engine, high-altitude, 5th generation fighters that will reach production within the next five to ten years. Additionally, sophisticated and highly lethal air defense systems such as the SA-20 and S-300/400 are proliferating worldwide.

Our nation has committed to procuring a total of just 183 F-22 aircraft. We are convinced that this number is insufficient to meet potential threats. After accounting for test, training, and maintenance aircraft, only about 100 F-22s will be immediately available for combat at any given time. Given that over 30 air campaign studies completed over the last 15 years have validated a requirement for far more than 183 F-22 Raptors to replace the original force of 800 F-15 A-D Eagles, it is clear that such a lean F-22 fleet is not consistent with America's national security interest.

The F-22 is a model production line. Since full-rate production began, the unit flyaway cost has decreased by 35 percent. If this certification is delayed, layoffs will begin as this critical supplier base shuts down. Once we begin to lose the F-22 industrial base that was created with billions of dollars of investment over many years, it will quickly become virtually impossible to reconstitute a production capability.

The F-22 program annually provides over \$12 billion of economic activity to the national economy. As our nation faces one of the most trying economic times in recent history, it is imperative to preserve existing high paying, specialized jobs that are critical to our national defense. Over 25,000 Americans working for more than 1,000 suppliers in 44 states manufacture this aircraft. Moreover, it is estimated that another 70,000 Americans indirectly owe their jobs to this program.

Finally, your certification of continued F-22 production by March 2009 will enable production to continue while the Department of Defense undertakes a more in-depth analysis of the F-22 requirement in the context of the total national security requirement that will be examined in the 2009 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).

With these points in mind — growing worldwide threats, substantiated requirements for larger numbers of F-22s, a high-performing, production capability, and a vital industrial base that sustains high quality jobs — we urge you to expeditiously certify that continued production of the F-22 Raptor is in the economic and national security interest of the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Phil Pingray

Liz Haney

Neil Abernethy

John H. Zell

Danny K. Davis

Chet Edwards

Ted T. Cruz

Max Baucus

Norm Dicks

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Brian

Carl King

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Pat J. [unclear]
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