

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 28, 2023

The Honorable Christine E. Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Wormuth:

Thank you for your commitment to, and leadership of, America's Army. We write to ask you to proceed with the CH-47F Block II modernization program. As you know, the Army paused the Block II program despite certifying to Congress that the program was a critical modernization priority in 2017. We understand that, given limited departmental resources in 2019, Army leadership prioritized other modernization goals at the expense of the Chinook. Almost five years later, the Army has yet to make a decision on heavy lift modernization, with dangerous long-term consequences for our military readiness and defense industrial base.

The Chinook serves as the Army's sole heavy lift helicopter and will very likely continue to serve in that capacity for the next four decades. While the Future Vertical Lift program has set in motion a process to replace the Black Hawk, there is no heavy lift modernization program to improve the critical capability provided by the Chinook. The Army's inaction on a path forward for heavy lift modernization has created acute short- and long-term risks for the warfighter and the rotorcraft industrial base. By not committing to the Block II modernization program, the Army is forgoing cost-effective, currently available upgrades that allow the Chinook to meet the Army's stated heavy lift modernization requirements. According to the Army's own analysis, Block II would save the service nearly \$3 billion compared to a new build program.

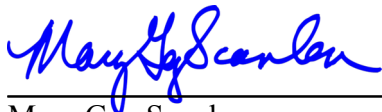
The consequences of the five-year pause go beyond the Chinook—for any vertical lift modernization plan to be successful and cost efficient, the Army will need to maintain its existing skilled workforces, production facilities, and supplier networks. The Army's indecision has already caused the loss of more than 1,000 skilled labor jobs across the Chinook's national supplier base. The Chinook's current rate of production is below the minimum sustaining rate for the line, and Congressional adds for procurement and foreign sales cannot substitute for a long-term procurement commitment. Continued indecision will lead to additional job losses throughout the Chinook's production facilities and supplier base as well as business decisions by critical suppliers to turn away from the program.

Over the past four fiscal years, Congress has intervened to provide roughly \$1 billion in appropriations to continue the CH-47F Block II modernization program. This bipartisan and bicameral support continues because Congress recognizes the Chinook's tremendous military value, as well as its critical role in the nation's defense industrial base and in responding to increasingly frequent and severe natural disasters.

If Block II production does not continue, there will be serious consequences for both the Army and the industrial base. The Block II program is the most cost-effective plan available to the Army that meets its stated heavy lift modernization goals. Please reconsider the decision to delay Block II production as you assess your modernization priorities this fall. We are confident that continued investment in the Block II program will benefit the warfighter and the men and women who are vital to our defense industrial base.

Thank you for considering our views. We look forward to working with you on a path forward for the program.

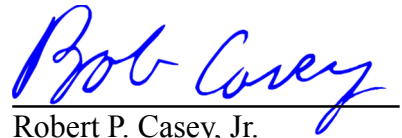
Sincerely,



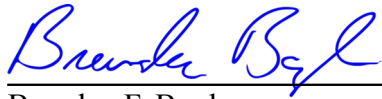
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Member of Congress



Mike Bost
Member of Congress



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United States Senator



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Member of Congress



John Fetterman
United States Senator



Dwight Evans
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Lisa Blunt Rochester

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Tina Smith

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Susan Wild

Susan Wild
Member of Congress

Raphael Warnock

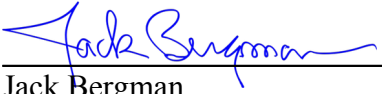
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

Mike Kelly

Mike Kelly
Member of Congress

Don Bacon

Don Bacon
Member of Congress



Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



Juan Ciscomani
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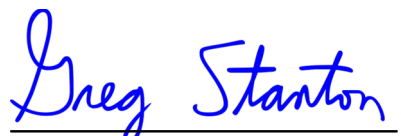
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Bruce Westerman
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CC: Shalanda Young, Director, Office of Management and Budget