

## **CHAMBLISS, ISAKSON DISAPPOINTED WITH SECRETARY GATES' DECISION TO PROCURE ONLY 4 ADDITIONAL F-22 RAPTORS GOES AGAINST AIR FORCE LEADERSHIP'S RECOMMENDATIONS OF 60 ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. senators Saxby Chambliss, R-Ga., and Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., released the following statements today following Defense Secretary Robert Gates' announcement to procure only 4 additional F-22 Raptors.

"I am extremely disappointed in this decision by the Obama administration. America has maintained air dominance in every conflict since the Korean War, and now this administration is giving that advantage up and is willing to sacrifice the lives of American military men and women for the sake of domestic programs favored by President Obama," **said Chambliss, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.** "This is purely a budget-driven decision. When this administration is spending trillions of taxpayer dollars on everything from bailing out a failing auto industry to policymakers' pet projects at the expense of protecting our military men and women, its priorities are apparent. This decision will likely have long-term repercussions, as we don't know who our next enemy will be.

**Chambliss continued:** "Because it is unwise to invest billions of dollars in systems that are not adequately proven or tested, or that cannot evade sophisticated air threats, Air Force leadership recommended procuring 60 additional F-22s. I am disappointed that the Obama administration did not accept its recommendations.

"Simply put, this decision is imprudent. But this fight is not finished. I will work to overturn the secretary's recommendation to continue production of the F-22 to meet the Air Force's recommendations and ensure America's air dominance."

"The F-22 Raptor is the most sophisticated fighter jet in the world, and it provides a priceless service to our Armed Services. I'm severely disappointed in today's announcement by the Secretary of Defense to end production of this aircraft, which is absolutely essential to our national security and meeting future threats against our nation," **Isakson said.** "I also believe that it is unacceptable that this administration wants to eliminate 2,000 jobs in Marietta and potentially 95,000 jobs nationwide at a time when unemployment rates are rising across the country. Senator Chambliss and I will be taking the case of the F-22 to members of Congress and the Appropriations Committees. The F-22 is vital to 21st century American military superiority."

The F-22 is the nation's only 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighter aircraft in full-rate production and is in mature rate production and operationally deployed around the world. The F-22 continues to establish industry benchmarks for an aircraft production program. The program is on budget, has decreasing costs, and in 2008 every F-22 delivery was ahead of schedule. In 2008, nearly one-half of the F-22 deliveries were evaluated to be "zero defect" – an exceptionally high level of aircraft quality. Other contemporary aircraft programs have never delivered a zero defect aircraft.