

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF REPRESENTATIVE ROB BISHOP

It has become readily apparent in this year's defense budget and authorization process that the Obama Administration has taken a haphazard approach to cutting several important defense programs, such as missile defense programs, and the F-22 fighter. At a time when the Administration is spending upwards of a trillion dollars on everything else BUT defense, I feel compelled to raise a voice of warning.

Missile Defense Cuts (GMD and KEI): I strongly oppose the cuts proposed by Secretary Gates and President Obama to missile defense programs such as Ground Midcourse Defense (GMD) and Kinetic Energy Interceptor (KEI). It seems that the "savings" from these cuts, at \$1.8 billion, are rather small in comparison to the lost opportunities for further research and development in improving our defense of the homeland against emerging and future missile threats which will have implications on our ability to adequately defend our homeland a decade and two decades from now. These cuts will also have a devastating impact on the defense industrial base, particularly with regard to large defense solid rocket booster production. If these decisions are allowed to stand, practically every program associated with solid booster production will be decimated with significant negative long-term implications for our future defense readiness. It seems as if no one at DoD has been paying attention to the cumulative impact of these different programmatic budget decisions on the solid rocket booster industrial base as a whole. It also seems wasteful and, frankly, ridiculous that DoD and the Missile Defense Agency will not proceed with a planned booster test firing in September of this year with the KEI program when the booster has already been produced and delivered to the test site at Vandenberg AFB. Even if KEI termination is upheld, it makes perfect sense to move forward with this test that has already been bought and paid for by U.S. taxpayer investment since 2004, and which could result in a significant harvest of scientific data for use on future defense projects.

F-22 Program: Defense Secretary Robert Gates' decision to terminate this next-generation fighter program at 187 aircraft is simply not supported by any objective military analysis. When the F-22 program requirement was first established, it was based on procurement of 750 aircraft. That number has been constantly whittled away until Secretary Gates asserts that 187 are sufficient. We have repeatedly requested that the Department provide the Committee and members with analysis upon which this budget decision was based. That analysis has not yet been provided, leading to a strong indication that it is a budget drill, pure and simple. I am pleased that a majority of Committee members supported an amendment to restore F-22 long-lead procurement funding for 12 additional aircraft in FY10. There were strong indications during

markup that many members, a good majority on both sides of the political aisle, would like to have supported additional F-22 production, and some members otherwise disposed to support the amendment voted no due to concerns about the offset to defense environmental accounts.

It is also ironic that, at a time when the Obama Administration is spending hundreds of billions in tax dollars to create jobs and put people back to work, that it would be so intent on cutting the F-22 program which is responsible for approximately 95,000 direct and indirect jobs in most of the 50 states. These are good jobs that are producing a vital defense weapons system to protect our homeland as well, which will now be lost unless funding is restored.

One of the most disturbing recent developments on the F-22 is the release of a letter signed by Air Force Combat Commander, General John D. W. Corley, USAF, in answer to questions asked of him by U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss, which authoritatively states that there are NO studies which support Secretary Gates' number of 187 aircraft. In this letter, a copy of which I include following these remarks, General Corley maintains that 250 aircraft are necessary to ensure U.S. Air Superiority at a "moderate risk" level. The Secretary of Defense also apparently developed his F-22 termination plan without consulting with Air Combat Command, as further outlined in the letter. It is only common sense that the Secretary should at least have consulted with and seriously considered the professional and technical views of the very operational command tasked with air superiority requirements both during peace and wartime operations.

I have included a copy of this letter so that the public will have access to this information. I urge Secretary Gates and my colleagues to work cooperatively on an F-22 termination plan that is reasoned and based on real military requirements and analysis; not budget drills. There is nothing more fundamental to the future prosperity and very survival of America than the United States military. Everything else is a corollary to that fundamental principle. It is my profound hope that we work together over the next 3 to 4 years to build the additional F-22s until we reach the 240-250 numbers that Air Force planners have repeatedly stated are absolutely necessary.

Enclosure.

ROB BISHOP.