

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 22, 2015

Chairman Thad Cochran
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran,

Last year the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee included report language regarding the Joint Surveillance/Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) recapitalization program that directed the Secretary of the Air Force to reassess the acquisition strategy to shorten the development phase and enter into production earlier. Unfortunately, the Air Force ignored the Committee's direction and extended the development program two years, which will cost more and delay the retirement of the legacy aircraft that were built in the 1960s.

In 2011, the Air Force conducted an Analysis of Alternatives which recommended the legacy aircraft be replaced by more affordable commercial business jets outfitted with technologies that are mature and available today. The recapitalization program does not require a long and expensive development effort; thus, we believe the Air Force needs to reconsider its current lengthy acquisition strategy and request that you include the following report language in the Fiscal Year 2016 Senate Defense Appropriations Committee report:

Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System [JSTARS] Recapitalization — *The fiscal year 2016 budget request contains \$44,300,000 for Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System [JSTARS] Recapitalization. In fiscal year 2015, the Committee directed the Air Force to shorten the development phase and enter into JSTARS production sooner. This approach would significantly reduce development costs and support the conclusions of the Air Force's Analysis of Alternatives (AoA) study, which determined that a business jet aircraft outfitted with existing ground moving target indicator (GMTI) radar and battle management command and control (BMC2) technology would meet or exceed the combatant commanders' warfighting requirements at the lowest cost. The Department, however, lengthened the acquisition schedule by two years even though existing, mature technologies can more quickly and affordably be integrated onto a business jet. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Air Force to realign this effort so that it is in accordance with the AoA and provide a briefing on an accelerated, more cost effective acquisition strategy to the congressional defense committees within 90 days of enactment of this Act.*

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



David Perdue
United States Senator