

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 11, 2015

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter:

We write as members of the Senate who strongly support our national security, the Department of Defense, and its warfighters to urge that you rapidly recapitalize the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) and protect funding for this program in the Fiscal Year 2017 Defense Budget request.

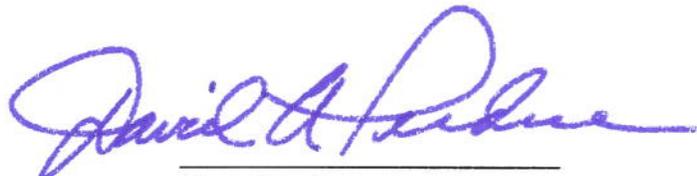
The combat proven current JSTARS platform, the E-8C, has provided unparalleled Battle Management, Command and Control and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (BMC2/ISR) capability since it was rushed into service in the early 1990's during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and its endurance continues to prevail in today's Global War on Terrorism. The service life of the legacy fleet, however, is now coming to an end while the demand from Combatant Commanders has only grown. Due to high demand over the years and increasing maintenance requirements, it is becoming increasingly difficult and costly to keep aircraft available to meet operational and training requirements. This leaves a growing capabilities gap that is unacceptable.

Based on an Air Force Analysis of Alternatives completed in 2011 that supports a rapid recapitalization of the legacy fleet with a low-risk business jet-type platform, Congress has consistently supported moving aggressively to replace the E-8C and its crucial warfighting capability with a modern, more cost-efficient and operationally-ready platform. We expect that you will seek full funding for this recapitalization effort in the FY2017 Defense Budget and pursue an acquisition plan and schedule that will increase the operational availability of this capability to support our warfighters.

Sincerely,



Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator



David Perdue  
United State Senator



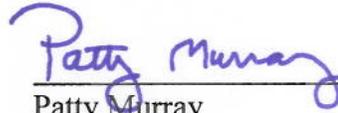
Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senator



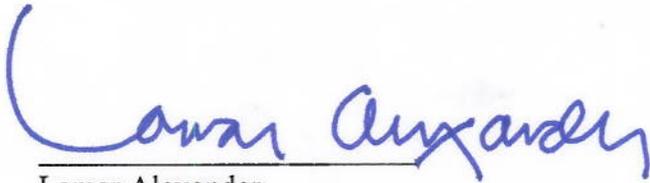
Bill Nelson  
United State Senator



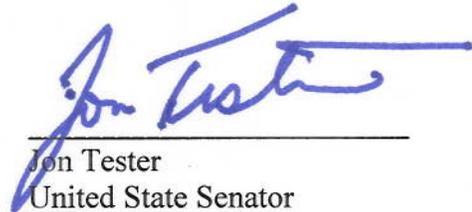
Susan Collins  
United States Senator



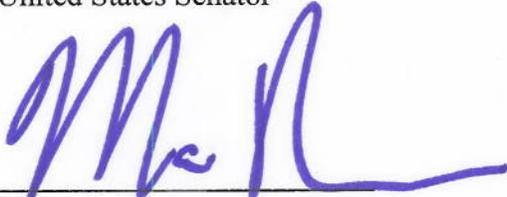
Patty Murray  
United State Senator



Lamar Alexander  
United States Senator



Jon Tester  
United State Senator



Marco Rubio  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United State Senator



Tim Scott  
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono  
United States Senator



Richard Burr  
United States Senator

Cc: Robert O. Work, Deputy Secretary of Defense  
Frank Kendall, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics  
Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force  
General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff of the Air Force