

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 6, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwomen and Ranking Members,

As you negotiate the Fiscal Year 2024 Defense Appropriations Act in conference, we ask that you maintain the \$122.6 million for Aircraft Procurement for the Air Force included in H.R.4365, the House passed Department of Defense Appropriations Act. Specifically, we ask these funds to be referred for the advanced procurement of F-15EX fighters to best recapitalize the A-10 fighter squadron at Selfridge Air National Base (Selfridge).

Americans are witnessing the rise in global threats, from the wars in Ukraine and Israel, to heightening tensions in the Indo-Pacific. With all these concerns, now is not the time to create hurdles for our defense industrial base and our various defense assets as they seek to meet the demand that will come with responding to these threats. One key element that is always needed in our military is homeland defense, particularly through the mission of the Air National Guard (ANG). That is why the loss of an ANG fighter mission would be a tremendous setback for the Total Force.

Michigan is home to the 127th Wing that flies the A-10 fighter mission out of Selfridge in Harrison Township, just north of Detroit. This base has a long proud history of serving both Michigan and our nation. Today, Selfridge is composed of some of the most experienced fighter pilots and maintainers, including five Air Force Weapons School graduates. The training and utility provided by the men and women at Selfridge is a clear value added to the Total Force, not a burden.

Selfridge will, however, be facing A-10 divestment in fiscal year 2027, which means a loss of its fighter mission with no replacement. That can only mean that all those pilots and maintainers will be lost. To put it in broader context, that is valuable experience that both the Air Force and the ANG will be losing and likely not getting back. We understand that the A-10 is an aging


aircraft that is being phased out to help offload costs to cover the priorities of the Air Force and the Total Force.

The Michigan delegation is therefore pursuing increasing advanced procurement funding for F-15EX fighters to take the current procurement numbers from 24 to 32 total for the next fiscal year. This ask also matches what passed out of the FY24 National Defense Authorization Act in the House, which also included language that prioritized the funding to go to A-10 squadrons without an identified replacement fighter mission, like Selfridge. This plan comes as the Michigan delegation heard from Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall and then-Chief of Staff of the Air Force CQ Brown that the Air Force would appreciate increased procurement of the F-15EX.


Broader efforts to recapitalize our ANG fighter missions are vital for the Total Force and the security of our nation. Losing ANG fighter wings at Selfridge and Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Maryland would reduce the ANG fighter wings to 23 from 25. That is a reduction in our capabilities to address threats to our nation.

We look forward to your work on the conference version of the FY24 Defense Appropriations Act. We, along with our staff, are ready to provide any additional information or to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



John James
Member of Congress



John R. Moolenaar
Member of Congress



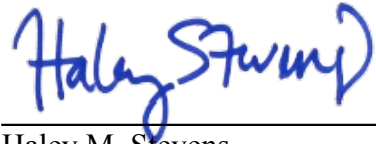
Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Lisa C. McClain
Member of Congress



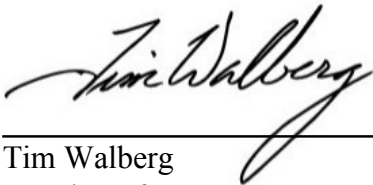
Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



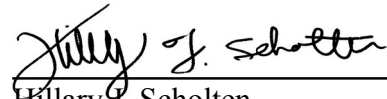
Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress