

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 26, 2016

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith:

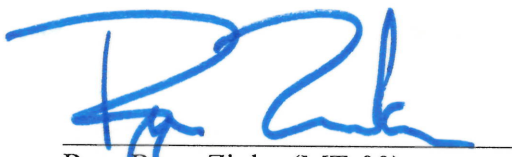
We write to request that you include in the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act legislative language that will direct the U.S. Air Force to purchase UH-60M Black Hawk Helicopters from the U.S. Army's current block buy grant. We believe that the FY17 NDAA should contain sufficient funding to begin buying UH-60-Ms in FY17.


As you know, the nuclear security forces located at Malmstrom AFB, Minot AFB, and F.E. Warren AFB currently use Vietnam-era UH-1N Huey helicopters to provide security for our nation's ICBMs. These helicopters were declared obsolete many years ago but the Air Force has consistently put its resources into other priorities. Furthermore, the Independent Review of the Department of Defense Nuclear Enterprise has stated that force-on-force exercises revealed serious vulnerabilities in our ICBM's security due to the shortcomings of the UH-1N helicopter—which has insufficient range, speed, payload, and defensive systems to carry out their mission effectively. Not only does the Huey create security vulnerabilities, it has been proven inefficient and costly to operate and maintain.

The failure to modernize these helicopters has created a glaring gap in the security of our nation's nuclear weapons. By adding Black Hawks to the Army's current block buy contract and directing the Air Force to purchase them, we can address the problem immediately rather than more delayed action. The security of the nation's nuclear weapons must be paramount and it is time to address this longstanding weakness.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

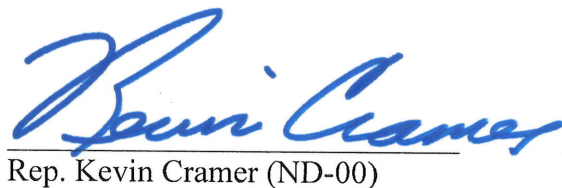
Sincerely,

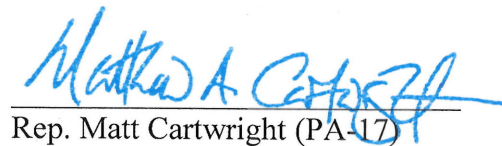
  
Rep. Ryan Zinke (MT-00)

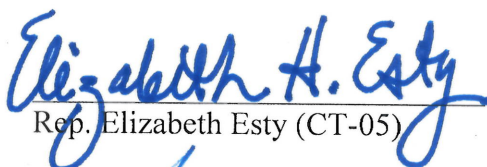
  
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT-03)

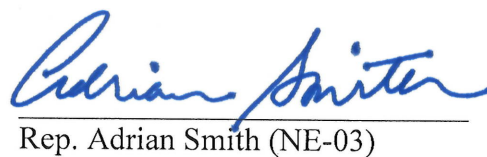
  
Rep. Mike Rogers (AL-03)

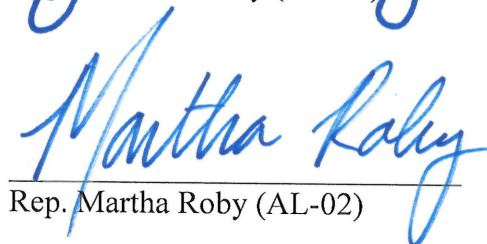
  
Rep. Cynthia Lummis (WY-00)

  
Rep. Kevin Cramer (ND-00)

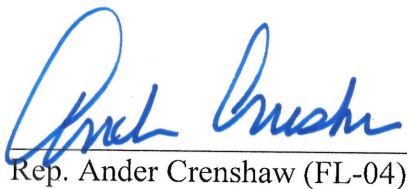
  
Rep. Matt Cartwright (PA-17)

  
Rep. Elizabeth Esty (CT-05)

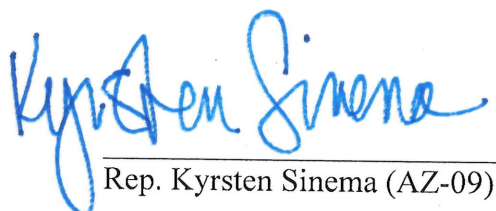
  
Rep. Adrian Smith (NE-03)

  
Rep. Martha Roby (AL-02)

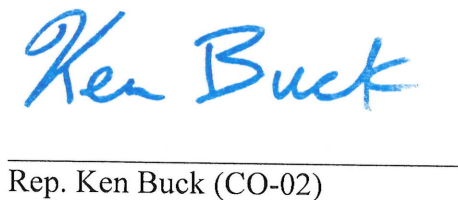
  
Rep. John Garamendi (CA-03)

  
Rep. Ander Crenshaw (FL-04)

  
Rep. Seth Moulton (MA-06)

  
Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ-09)

  
Rep. Trent Franks (AZ-08)

  
Rep. Ken Buck (CO-02)