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BUDGET COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3001

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SUPPORT THE COMPETITIVE ENGINE
FOR THE JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

Dear Colleague,

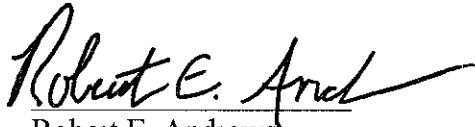
As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Defense Acquisition Reform Panel, House Armed Services Committee, we strongly encourage you to fund the competitive engine for the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). As you know, the competitive engine was strongly supported by the full House on May 27, 2010. During the floor debate of the 2011 National Defense Authorization bill, an amendment to strike funding for the program was soundly defeated.

We are firmly convinced that engine competition will be of enormous benefit to the JSF program, which is the largest acquisition in DoD history. According to the GAO, development cost for the primary JSF engine will exceed the target by 50 percent—or \$2.5 billion. Equally important, production engines in 2009 cost approximately \$5.5 million more per engine than DoD's estimate. The lack of competition in this program in 2009 alone resulted in an additional \$110 million burden on the taxpayer. We simply have to do better than this, and the 2009 Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act provides the roadmap. The law requires the Department of Defense to ensure competition on major defense programs and their subsystems. If there was ever a program that needs competition—it is the JSF engine.

That is the lesson we learned in the 1980's with the F-16 aircraft engine competition. According to the GAO, our government saved 21 percent in life cycle savings due to annual competitions to power the F-16. Further, competition promoted both engine contractors to invest their own money to make the engines better. As we look to the future with the \$100 billion JSF engine program, we would be foolish to ignore the lessons of the past. Annual engine competitions will improve both engines and save the taxpayer real money—up to \$21 billion based upon the F-16 experience.

As you consider the fiscal year 2011 Defense Appropriations bill, we strongly urge you to fund the JSF competitive engine. This program best exemplifies the objectives of the unanimously passed 2009 Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act. There is too much at stake to take any other course.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Andrews
Chairman,
House Acquisition Reform Panel



K. Michael Conaway
Ranking Member,
House Acquisition Reform Panel