

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2011

Majority Leader Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Carl Levin
269 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member John McCain
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Levin and Ranking Member McCain:

First, we want to thank you for bringing up the fiscal year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This important piece of legislation has been passed 49 years in a row and we are pleased that this year will be its 50th year. It ensures that we continue to support our warfighters in the most effective way possible.

As conference negotiations begin on a final FY 2012 NDAA, we want to highlight two provisions that we believe are critical in the House-passed NDAA. Section 323 of the House-passed bill would include military industrial facilities in the designation of Centers of Industrial and Technical Excellence. We appreciate that this provision was also included in the Senate Armed Services Committee-passed bill.

Section 325 of the House-passed bill would allow Army industrial facilities to enter into an unlimited number of cooperative arrangements with non-Army entities and would lift the sunset on that authority. As you know, current law caps these partnerships at 8 for all arsenals and Section 341 of the Senate version only increases the cap to 15 partnerships for all arsenals. We encourage you to consider eliminating this cap and lifting the sunset date as Section 325 of the House FY 2012 NDAA has done.

Lifting this cap would allow for more job creation and greatly leverage the support of localities for their military manufacturing facilities. At this time the Department of Defense is finding ways to be effective and efficient and our government is searching for ways to promote economic growth and jobs. The House provision would encourage job growth and more innovation in the defense industrial base. As Secretary Panetta has indicated, a strong defense industrial base will encourage our domestic manufacturers to maintain our technological edge and unique skill sets. It will also ensure that our military has the ability to be flexible as it meets new threats in the future.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this important provision that will not only allow our country to maintain a flexible and superior military, but will also allow us to encourage economic growth and job creation at a time when it is dearly needed.

Sincerely,


Bobby Schilling
House Representatives

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Dave Loebsack
House of Representatives