



Don't Overload the Supplemental

Keep C-17s and earmarks out of the 2009 war spending bill

June 2, 2009

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our combined memberships, we urge you to prioritize taxpayer interests and our national security by eliminating unnecessary weapons and earmarks from the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009.

The House and Senate versions of the bill each added substantial funds for programs that the Pentagon did not request. In the House, the most egregious of these "committee imperatives" is \$2.25 billion for eight C-17 Globemaster airlift aircraft. This is a plane that the Pentagon has tried unsuccessfully to kill for more than a decade. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and the Air Force agree that we have sufficient airlift capacity with our current fleet, and that any decision to move forward with expansion in advance of the Mobility and Capability Study this fall would be premature.

The Senate version of the bill deleted \$147 million in shut-down costs for the F-22 Raptor fighter jet requested by the administration. This is another program that Congress has kept alive despite the Pentagon's request to end the program at 187 aircraft. The Senate bill also contains nearly \$550 million in earmarks for parochial projects such as Mississippi Barrier Island restoration and a "vision center of excellence" in Maryland.

President Obama demanded that the bill not be "loaded up with unrelated items." It's hard to see how billions for unwanted aircraft and local pet projects are anything but unrelated to the wars we are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Again we urge you to eliminate these unnecessary weapons and earmarks from the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009.

Sincerely,

Ryan Alexander
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Susan Shaer
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