

May 18, 2009

Akin to Continue Pressing for Super Hornets to Address Fighter Shortfall

Washington, DC – Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), Ranking Republican Member of the House Armed Services subcommittee on Seapower, will continue to press the Department of the Navy on the need for addressing the imminent strike-fighter shortfall.

Congressman Akin, a strong proponent of the F/A- 18 Super Hornet as the appropriate aircraft to address the upcoming shortfall will inquire further of the Navy as to the shortfall during the upcoming Seapower and Expeditionary Forces Subcommittee hearing this Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 2:00 pm Eastern in Rayburn 2212. The committee will hear testimony from Vice Admiral David Architzel (USN), Rear Admiral Allen Meyers (USN), and Lieutenant General George J. Trautman (USMC) on the Fiscal 2010 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for Department of the Navy Aviation Programs.

During a May 14 House Armed Services hearing, Akin questioned Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Gary Roughead why the Navy was not supporting a multi-year Super Hornet buy to address the looming shortfall.

Inside the Navy – 5/18/2009 McHugh: 312 aircraft short in 2018

LAWMAKERS WANT FIGHTER GAP ANSWERS, ROUGHEAD URGES PATIENCE With a strike fighter gap of potentially hundreds of aircraft looming in the late 2010s, numerous lawmakers raised concerns last week that the Navy has not yet decided to buy more F/A-18E/F Super Hornets before the production line shuts down in the near future.

"Please explain to me why we aren't looking at a multi-year" Super Hornet buy, Rep. Todd Akin (R-MO) asked Chief of Naval Operations Adm.

Gary Roughead during a May 14 House Armed Services Committee hearing on the Navy's fiscal year 2010 budget request.

The Navy has said that it currently faces a strike fighter shortfall of

125 aircraft in 2017 – 69 in the Navy and 56 in the Marine Corps – between when the legacy Hornets begin retiring and the follow-on F-35 Joint Strike Fighter comes online. However, Akin estimated that the shortfall could be double that.

"We're talking about 44 airplanes per aircraft carrier," he said.

"According to the numbers, I see you have a potential for a projected shortfall of about 240-some fighter aircraft on these aircraft carriers.

You do the math and that comes out to more than five aircraft carriers."