

May 7, 2009

Akin and Richardson Take Lead in C-17 Letter to President Obama

Washington, DC – Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), ranking member on the House Armed Services Seapower Subcommittee spearheaded an effort along with Representative Laura Richardson (D-CA) that gathered over 60 signatures for a letter to President Obama requesting that he reconsider the importance of the C-17 to national security.

The letter which is being sent today is as follows:

Dear President Obama:

We are writing to express our strong support for the C-17 Globemaster III airlift program and to state our disagreement with the opinion of Defense Secretary Robert Gates that the Department “complete production of the C-17 airlifter program this fiscal year.”

As you noted on your own website, the C-17 is the Air Force’s premier strategic transport aircraft and remains the military’s most reliable and capable airlift aircraft. It currently flies more

than 80 percent of all U.S. airlift missions, while comprising only 60 percent of the airlift fleet. The C-17 has proven capable of delivering more cargo, troops, and non-war humanitarian supplies than any other aircraft. In 2005 alone, the C-17 was instrumental in humanitarian missions in response to the Pakistan earthquake, the tsunami in Thailand, and Gulf Coast relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina. Given its strategic capabilities, the C-17 is being used at 172 percent of its planned usage rate.

Discontinuing production of our nation's premier tactical transport aircraft would be an enormous mistake and further strain our military's future airlift capability. Attempts to restart a closed production line of this magnitude at a time when we know more C-17s are necessary would be a grave fiscal mistake and contradicts strong bipartisan Congressional intent.

In addition to compelling national security and humanitarian needs, C-17 production has a national economic impact estimated at \$8.4 billion through its support of 30,000 jobs across 42 states nationwide. With all our efforts to put America back to work through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, massive manufacturing layoffs that weaken our national security and economy are ill advised.

Your Administration has and continues to publicly support the C-17 as an aircraft "which provides the backbone of our ability to extend global power." In addition, your Administration has publicly stated its intention to "preserve our unparalleled airpower capabilities to deter and defeat any conventional competitors, swiftly respond to crises across the globe, and support our ground forces." This statement could not more accurately reflect the benefit of additional C-17's.

We respectfully urge your support and consideration for the C-17 and we want to work with you to ensure that funding for this critical aircraft will go forward. We have no doubt that it is in America's national and economic security to do so.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rep. Laura Richardson

Rep. W. Todd Akin

To see a copy of this letter, please [click here](#) .

Also signing the letter:

**Democrats**

**Republicans**

Rep. Danny Davis

Rep. Calvert

Rep. Napolitano

Rep. McKeon

Rep. Linda Sanchez

Rep. Rohrabacher

Rep. Michael McMahon

Rep. Shimkus

Rep. Jim Marshall

Rep. Bishop

Rep. Robert Brady

Rep. LoBiondo

Rep. Rick Boucher

Rep. Wilson

Rep. Martin Heinrich

Rep. John Carter

Rep. Eddie Johnson

Rep. Kenny Marchant

Rep. Norm Dicks

Rep. Reichert

Rep. Visclosky

Rep. Lamar Smith

Rep. Maurice Hincey

Rep. Don Young

Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay

Rep. Aaron Schock

Rep. Gene Taylor

Rep. Mary Bono Mack

Rep. Joe Courtney

Rep. Dan Burton

Rep. Cleaver

Rep. Roy Blunt

Rep. Gary Miller

Rep. Aderholt

Rep. Costello

Rep. Jo Ann Emerson

Rep. Gonzalez, Charlie

Rep. Fallin

Rep. Phil Hare

Rep. Joe Barton

Rep. Engel

Rep. McCaul

Rep. DeLauro

Rep. Sam Johnson

John Larson

Rep. Michael Conaway

Rep. Marcia Fudge

Rep. Kay Granger

Rep. Luetkemeyer

Rep. Ed Royce

Rep. Jim Gerlach

Rep. Dean Heller

Rep. Tiahrt

Rep. Souder

Rep. McMorris-Rodgers

Rep. Latta

Rep. Judy Biggert

Rep. Doc Hastings

Rep. Peter King

Rep. Henry Brown