

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0302
April 23, 2015

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith,

As the committee prepares to mark up the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, we respectfully ask for your support for the EC-130H Compass Call fleet. The FY16 President's Budget Request asks to divest 7 of the 15 aircraft in the fleet even though the capabilities are in high demand from combatant commanders and there is no replacement in development. The Compass Call can perform electronic warfare, suppression of enemy air defenses, and offensive counter-information operations.

The Compass Call is the only dedicated U.S. Air Force Electronic Warfare aircraft. It entered inventory in the 1980s to jam enemy command and control communications and was successfully employed during Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. The Compass Call also provided electronic warfare support in operations in Kosovo, Haiti, Panama, Serbia, and Afghanistan. It was the most heavily tasked special mission C-130 during operations in Afghanistan.

The aircraft executes unique missions with its electronic countermeasures systems, specialized jamming equipment, the capability to aerial refuel, and upgraded engines and avionics. The Air Force has not identified follow on capability and no other platform currently performs the mission. In a March 26th subcommittee hearing, Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General James Holmes confirmed that there are things that only the EC-130H does, and things that the EC-130H does best. The Compass Call is currently deployed both in Afghanistan and in the fight against ISIS. With no replacement for the unique capabilities, already deployed at a high rate, we believe it is irresponsible to divest the Compass Call at this time.

We respectfully request that you continue to fund the entire Compass Call fleet until an alternative capability has been identified and a transition plan for the replacement has been approved and funding has been programmed.

Sincerely,


MARTHA McSALLY
Member of Congress


ELISE STEFANIK
Member of Congress