

# Project On Government Oversight

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July 9, 2009

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

Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader, United States Senate  
361-A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Carl Levin  
Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

John McCain  
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senators,

The Project On Government Oversight (POGO) is writing to express our serious concerns about the integrity of the process to add seven unneeded F-22s to the Senate's version of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010.

Numerous congressional hearings and press reports have demonstrated that Air Force leadership supports Defense Secretary Robert Gates' decision to end production of the F-22 at 187 aircraft. But it appears that even after Air Force leadership informed Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) of their support of the Secretary's decision to end production of the F-22, the Senator continued to pursue funding for the program—made in Marietta, Georgia—by soliciting a request from Air National Guard Director Lieutenant General Harry M. Wyatt III, which the Director not surprisingly provided.

The Director's request flies directly in the face of the overarching strategic needs expressed by the Secretary of Defense and repeated by the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as recently as this morning.

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501(c)(3) ORGANIZATION

Beyond the appalling nature of this solicitation, POGO is concerned by the “Additional Views of Senator Chambliss” section of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 that encourages the Air Force to position F-22s in Massachusetts, California, Oregon, Louisiana, Florida, Alaska, and Hawaii. It appears that the specificity of this request may have been a politically motivated decision to garner support from the Senators and Governors of these states.

National security spending should be based solely upon strategic needs. Parochial interests have no place in our national defense. Both the Secretary of Defense and Air Force leadership have made it clear that continued procurement of the F-22 does not support our national security. To sell our national security as part of a horse-trade calls the integrity of Congress’s procurement process into question.

We would welcome an opportunity to share our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Brian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Brian  
Project On Government Oversight