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Congress of the United States
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GLOBAL HEALTH, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

January 5, 2012

The Honorable Michael Donley
Secretary
U.S. Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Donley:

I write to express my concern regarding the Obama Administration's recent decision to award the U.S. Air Force (USAF) contract to produce light air support (LAS) aircraft to the Brazilian-owned company Embraer S.A. after excluding American-owned Hawker Beechcraft Defense Company, LLC (HBDC) from the LAS competition. I ask that you provide my office with the basis for the Administration's exclusion of HBDC from this USAF competition and the basis on which the Administration awarded Embraer the LAS contract.

Given HBDC's significant presence in the Second Congressional District of Arkansas, which I represent, I am keenly aware of the billions of dollars invested by the USAF and Navy fleets in T-6 trainer aircraft built and maintained by HBDC and its U.S. supply chain. Their long, successful history with the USAF and Navy trainer fleets also enabled HBDC to submit a competitive LAS proposal that leveraged existing logistics, support, and pilot training investments already made by the federal government.

After a year-long process in which HBDC submitted its proposal to the USAF and worked closely with the USAF to tailor their proposal to fit the USAF's varied requirements, the Administration chose to exclude HBDC from the contract competition. It is my understanding that until the Administration excluded HBDC, the competition for the LAS aircraft contract was a closely fought contest between the American-owned HBDC's AT-6B and the Brazilian-owned Embraer S.A.'s Super Tucano. HBDC's exclusion left the Brazilian-owned Embraer S.A. as the only possible producer for LAS aircraft, and, on December 30, 2011, the USAF announced the Administration's decision to award the contract to Embraer S.A.

I believe it is important that the Administration is transparent and forthright about their actions surrounding the LAS contract given that it appears an American-owned company was excluded arbitrarily from a significant competition after a substantial investment of time and resources were expended to prepare a competitive proposal. I request that your office provide me with the Administration's reasoning for the exclusion of HBDC and why Embraer was awarded the LAS contract. Please respond to my office by January 31, 2011.

Sincerely,



Tim Griffin
Member of Congress