

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Testimony for the Record from
Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (MO-03)
U.S. House of Representatives
April 13, 2015

“Member Day - National Defense Priorities from Members for the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act”

I would like to express my support for a strong, prepared and technologically-advanced national defense. Our defense capabilities should remain second to none throughout the world on all military aspects including in the air, on the sea and on the ground.

While we must be selective and make intelligent and sometimes difficult choices on spending, we should not jeopardize our nation’s security or ability to innovate and advance. Like many of my colleagues I agree that every federal agency should do more with less, including the Department of Defense. However, cuts that present immediate or future risks to national security or the safety of our men and women in uniform should be avoided at all costs.

As you consider requests for Fiscal Year 2016 I would like to highlight the F/A-18 aircraft as an area that drastically affects national security and numerous small businesses in Missouri. As you know, the president’s budget proposal for FY 2016 does not include any funding for the F/A 18 line which includes the F/A-18E/F Block II Super hornet and the E/A-18G Growler. The Super Hornet provides the Navy with superior strike capability from aircraft carriers and the Growler is the premier carrier-based electronic warfare aircraft for the Department of Defense.

The importance of these aircraft was reflected by Chief Naval Officer (CNO) Admiral Jonathan Greenert in his testimony before Congress last month, and in the Navy’s unfunded requirement request for 12 additional F/A-18F Super Hornet strike fighters which have the ability to be converted into and E/A-18 G Growler.

I thank you for your tireless efforts to ensure that our national defense remains strong and our men and women in uniform stay as safe as possible. Your consideration of the aforementioned request is greatly appreciated.