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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

March 19, 2013

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ROBERT L. SIMMONS, II, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
 Secretary of Defense
 1000 Defense Pentagon
 Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel:

The President's embrace of the missile defense strategy of the previous Administration regarding the deployment of 44 ground-based interceptors at our sites in Alaska and California was welcome and long overdue. Likewise, we believe it was very important that the Administration embraced modernizing that system, such as the next-generation kill vehicle—which we believe should be developed to be common across the SM-3 and GBI interceptors and to engage multiple threat objects. We were, however, concerned about the decision to terminate the SM-3 block IIB missile, which could have provided additional capability to defend the United States from the Iranian threat. We believe this termination creates a large capability gap to defend the United States from Iran.

On Tuesday of last week, three days before your announcement, the Director of National Intelligence, General James Clapper, testified before the House and Senate Intelligence Committees that:

"We judge Iran would likely choose a ballistic missile as its preferred method of delivering a nuclear weapon...Iran's ballistic missiles are capable of delivering WMD...In addition, Iran has demonstrated an ability to launch small satellites, and we grow increasingly concerned that these technical steps—along with a regime hostile toward the United States and our allies—provide Tehran with the means and motivation to develop larger space-launch vehicles and longer-range missiles, including an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)."

Indeed, last week's announcement suggests the Administration underestimated the North Korea threat. For example, Under Secretary of Defense Jim Miller, in defending the Administration's two year old decision to mothball Missile Field 1, which it has now reversed, said: "But at that time, the threat was uncertain. Right?...[W]e didn't know that we would see today." If the Administration was this wrong about the North Korea threat only two years ago,

we are deeply troubled by the implications for its assessments of the Iranian missile and nuclear threats.

In fact, it appears Iran could flight test an ICBM this year. Yet, with the cancellation of the SM-3 IIB missile, even with the deployment of 44 GBIs in Alaska and California, as was the previous Administration's plan, there is a large gap in the missile defense of the United States against the Iranian threat.

Also last week, General Kehler, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that, "I am confident that we can defend against a limited attack from Iran, although we are not in the most optimum posture to do that today... it doesn't provide total defense today." What he was referring to was what the National Research Council described in its 2012 report as the basis of an East Coast missile defense site, "to provide the battle space necessary for shoot-look-shoot of the entire country." Indeed we have shoot-look-shoot coverage of the continental United States from threats originating from North Korea; there is no legitimate reason to not similarly defend the eastern third of the United States from Iranian missiles.

While the Defense Department acknowledged on Friday that it was conducting the environmental impact statement required under section 227 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, it was also clear that the Department was not yet ready to decide to move forward on the deployment of such a site. We believe such reluctance is ill-advised and risky.

As you may know, in the 2007-2008 timeframe, NORTHCOM conducted a three part "GBI study" to "examine potential enhancements to homeland defense against long-range intercontinental ballistic missile threats." That study concluded an East Coast site would have clear and specific benefits to the defense of the United States, in particular, the Eastern third of the United States not now protected with shoot-look-shoot capability from the extant sites in Alaska and California. Specifically, it stated that "a mix of OBV2 [two stage GBIs] and OBV3 [three stage] GBI...provides the most flexible option for defense of CONUS."

In 2010, the Commander of NORTHCOM, Admiral Sandy Winnefeld (the current Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), determined that the conclusion to move forward on the East Coast Site was "superseded" by the European Phased Adaptive approach, particularly because of the "promising future technologies such as the SM-3 Block IIB." Now, however, that missile defense program has been cancelled by the Administration. We believe it is therefore appropriate for the Department to reaffirm the NORTHCOM endorsement of an East Coast Site and to take steps to begin its deployment now.

Specifically, we urge that you include, in the President's budget request, not less than \$250.0 million for long-lead procurement related to parts and components for the site, and the 20 ground-based interceptors to be deployed at that site based on the Missile Defense Agency's presentation of March 5, 2012. Additionally, we urge you to complete the required contingency plan for deployment of the additional homeland missile defense site called for in section 227 not

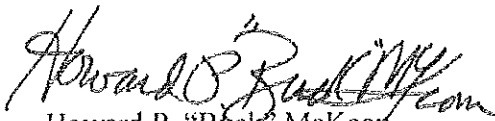
The Honorable Chuck Hagel
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Page 3

later than May 31, 2013 and to make it available to the congressional defense committees on that date.

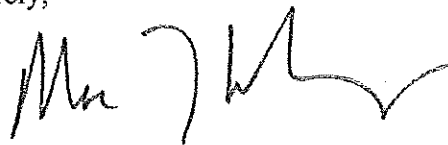
Further, we are deeply concerned by the message this latest rushed announcement sends to our allies and other states. Poland, for example, has now experienced two dramatic shifts in U.S. missile defense planning on the Obama Administration's watch. This pattern is very clearly fraying relations with that important ally. We urge you to take additional steps to promote military-to-military cooperation with our ally to ensure there is no question of United States commitment to our bilateral relationship with that state.

The missile defense of the United States must be the highest priority for the Nation's missile defense policy. Friday's step was a positive step to affirming Administration support for that priority. We urge you to build on the momentum of this announcement and take the steps we have outlined to build a bipartisan basis for future cooperation.

Sincerely,



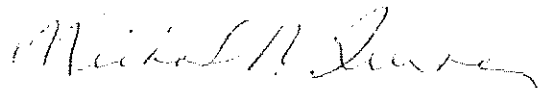
Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
Chairman
Armed Services Committee



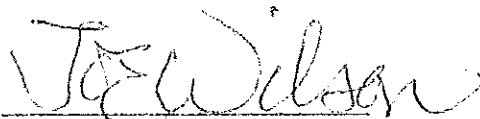
Mac Thornberry
Vice Chairman
Armed Services Committee



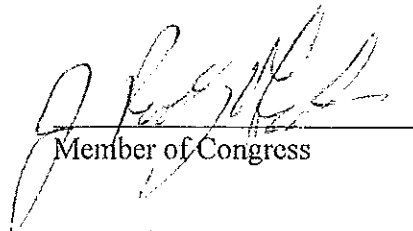
Mike Rogers
Chairman
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces



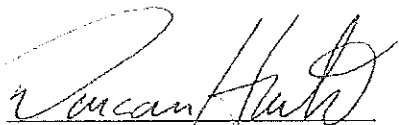
Michael R. Turner
Chairman
Committee on Tactical Air and Land Forces



Member of Congress



Member of Congress



Member of Congress



Member of Congress

J. Roy N33
Member of Congress

Jim Mil FL-01
Member of Congress

Robert L. Wittman
Member of Congress
VA-01

Long Lamham
Member of Congress
CO-5

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress
SD-01

Mo Brooks, AL-5
Member of Congress

Bob Latta
Member of Congress

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

John Dingell
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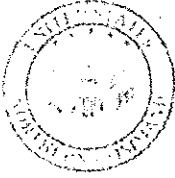
John Kline
Member of Congress
MN-2

Paul Ryan FL-11
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

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UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND

AUG 02 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

FROM: Commander, USNORTHCOM
250 Vandenberg St., Ste B016
Peterson AFB CO 80914-3801

(U) SUBJECT: Request for USNORTHCOM Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI) Study

1. (U) Per your request, attached is the USNORTHCOM GBI Study.
2. (U) USNORTHCOM conducted a GBI Study in 2007-2008 to examine potential enhancements to homeland defense against long-range intercontinental ballistic missile threats, while complementing the Missile Defense Agency's baseline architecture. This study was performed in three phases: Phase I considered adding GBIs at Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB), California. Phase II analyzed a mix of two- and three-stage GBIs at Fort Greely, Alaska and VAFB. Finally, Phase III focused on adding an East Coast GBI site. The study examined a number of GBI force structure changes to defend the homeland utilizing GBIs based in the United States. The study did not examine contributions to homeland defense from proposed European missile defense forces, nor did it analyze emerging missile defense system technologies. Meanwhile, much has changed—including our approach to global missile defense architecture, our understanding of the threat, and our own maturing missile defense technology. These changes have rendered the study obsolete in several important aspects, which should be considered by anyone reviewing it. While the study was a very useful effort for its intended purpose, I do not see it as a basis for making future GBI force structure decisions.
3. (U) The GBI study was singularly focused on homeland defense, which is USNORTHCOM's mission. It did not take into account the global nature of ballistic missile defense. The President's decision to pursue the Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense in Europe and the Department's follow-on Ballistic Missile Defense Review strategy considered a more global, flexible and adaptable approach to our Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). This new focus on regional defense and partners abroad is consistent with protecting the homeland. The United States now possess a capacity to counter the projected threats from North Korea and Iran for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, an essential element of our homeland BMD strategy is to be prepared with other options if the threat assessment changes. For example, we will maintain and further develop existing operational GMD capabilities, complete the second field of 14 silos at Fort Greely so that extra silos are ready should we need to add additional GBIs, and invest in new advances in missile defense capabilities and promising future technologies such as the SM3 Block IIB. For these reasons, we believe the GBI study commissioned by USNORTHCOM, which was narrowly focused on the homeland defense challenge, has been superseded by a more robust global approach.

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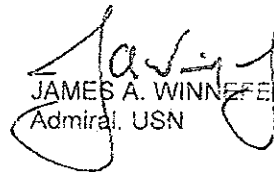
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4. (U) The Phased Adaptive Approach provides a global, flexible, regionally-focused, and agile missile defense capability, based on proven technologies. I support the current strategy and believe sufficient flexibility is embedded therein for us to reevaluate our priorities and capabilities as the threat and our own technology continue to evolve and change.

5. (U) Our point of contact is Brigadier General Jeff Lofgren, USNORTHCOM Deputy Director of Operations, 719-554-4998


JAMES A. WINNEFELD, JR.
Admiral, USN

cc.
CJCS

Attachment:
USNORTHCOM GBI Study

(UNCLASSIFIED upon removal of Attachment)