

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chair
Subcommittee on Defense
Senate Appropriations Committee
SD-122, Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Senate Appropriations Committee
SD-122, Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Durbin:

We write to share our strong support for the continuation of funding that was included in the FY 2015, FY 2017 and FY 2018 Omnibus spending bills to support security and infrastructure upgrades for non-federal spaceports that launch Defense Department missions, including the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) on the Eastern Shore as well as the Pacific Spaceport Complex in Alaska. These non-federal spaceports play an important role in providing additional launch capability and resiliency for national security missions.

We were very pleased that the committee provided \$10 million in the final FY 2018 Omnibus and we urge you to maintain this funding level under the Rocket Systems Launch Program (SPACE) account in your FY 2019 Defense Appropriations bill to support defense launch needs at state spaceports, which are key assets in the U.S. national launch infrastructure. These two state spaceports -- which are largely maintained and operated at no expense to the federal government -- have provided alternate launch sites on both the East and West Coasts of the United States which help ensure the resiliency of the national launch infrastructure.

As you may know, funding for this program, Space Launch Range Services and Capability account, was originally included in the FY 2015 Omnibus to support security and infrastructure upgrades to two state spaceports that support defense launch, the MARS at Wallops Flight Facility and the Pacific Spaceport Complex – Alaska (PSCA) at Kodiak Island, Alaska. Recognizing the progress made with the FY15 funds, Congress again funded this account in the final FY 2017 and FY 2018 appropriations laws.

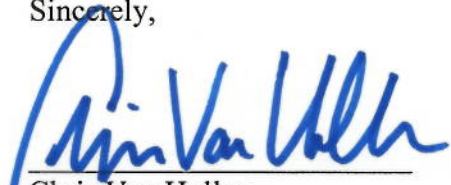
We respectfully request that the Committee maintain the \$10 million funding level that was provided in the FY 2018 Omnibus and include the following report language for the Space Launch Range Services and Capability account:


“Space Launch Range Services and Capability -- The committee recognizes the importance of State-owned spaceports and launch and range complexes that support defense space priorities. The Committee believes increasing the capability and number of launch facilities helps to ensure our Nation’s ability to launch priority space assets. Therefore, to promote national security launch capabilities, \$10,000,000 is provided to State-owned spaceports or launch and range complexes that are commercially licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration. These funds shall be used to enhance the

capability of these spaceports to provide mid-to-low inclination orbits or polar-to-high inclination orbits in support of the defense space program."

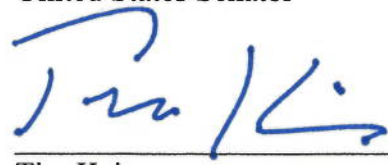
We believe this small investment from the Committee will help ensure a robust launch infrastructure that will strengthen our security and ensure that the Department of Defense benefits from increased launch options and resiliency in case of catastrophe or need for rapid re-constitution. We urge you to include this funding and report language in your FY 2019 Defense Appropriations bill.

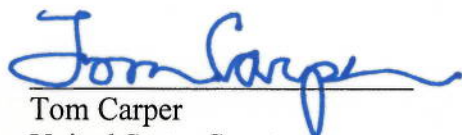
Sincerely,

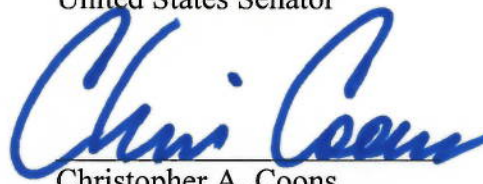

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United States Senator


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