



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 28th, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Hagel:

Thank you for your service as a soldier, Senator, and now as Secretary of Defense of the United States. We write to express our concern regarding the optimal expenditure of taxpayer dollars in light of the continuing budget deficit. While our ongoing ability to defend ourselves and effectively project military power anywhere in the world is of unquestioned importance, we simultaneously must deal with the realities of constrained budgets and a growing national debt.

As a former business person, you may agree that the first solution to this dilemma is to find and eliminate inefficiencies. To this end, we would like to learn more about the Department's strategy with respect to cost optimization. Specifically, what has the Department done to examine commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) cost optimization tools versus planning, developing, testing, operationalizing, and maintaining its own set of tools? Our understanding is that such COTS tools are used widely by U.S. and foreign companies, as well as allied ministries of defense—including the United Kingdom, Australia, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners, South Korea, and Singapore—to effect substantial savings. These COTS tools appear to present an efficient avenue to reduce spending while maximizing readiness.

We look forward to your response on the Department's cost optimization strategies with respect to currently available COTS tools, and thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Murphy
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Alcee L. Hastings
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Mike Coffman
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Bobby L. Rush
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Charles B. Rangel
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James P. McGovern
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