

Rep. Ellen Tauscher Urges Air Force Chief of Staff to Modernize all C-5 Aircraft

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Stresses Need for a Blended Air Lift Portfolio Based on Strategic Needs, Not Financial Games

Washington, DC – Today, in a House Armed Services Committee Hearing regarding the National Defense Budget request from the Department of the Air Force, Rep. Ellen Tauscher continued her fight to keep a blended and well-balanced airlift portfolio that includes both the C-5 and C-17 aircrafts.

During questioning of Air Force Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley, Rep. Tauscher expressed her concern about the Air Force's proposal for early retirement of the C-5a and not funding any additional C-17 purchases.

Rep. Tauscher noted that over the past three years, the U.S. has had to lease Russian AN-124 aircraft to carry oversized cargo because C-5s were unavailable, saying "the fact that the Pentagon is outsourcing missions to Russia is ridiculous. It says very clearly that we need both the C-5 and the C-17 to meet all of our requirements."

Rep. Tauscher continued to press the General by encouraging the Air Force leadership to show its commitment to meeting strategic airlift shortfalls by fully funding the modernization of C-5's. "We need to put our strategic needs front and center, not cut funds for modernizing the C-5As or outsource critical missions because we can't get our budget priorities straight," said Rep. Tauscher.

The C-5 is the largest operational aircraft in the United States fleet. The C-5 offers unique capabilities that the C-17 can't match. In a time when airlift requirements are increasing, a premature retirement would drastically limit the Air Force's capabilities. The cost of modernization through the AMP (Avionics Modernization Program) and RERP (Reliability Enhancement & Re-Engine Program) is one-third of a new C-17, and a C-5 will carry twice the payload.

Both the C-5 and the C-17 operate out of Travis Air Force Base, in California's Tenth District.

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