

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 20, 2018

The Honorable James Mattis
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Mattis,

Thank you for your service and your leadership. We write regarding the Administration's plan to channel Department space resources into a Space Force. Our understanding is that efforts are already underway to reorganize the Department's space acquisition management and space operations. As you work to ensure continued U.S. superiority and innovation in space, we urge you to leverage the existing organizations with a proven track record and avoid unnecessary, harmful redundancy or relocation.

As you know, the August 2018 report to Congress on the "Organizational and Management Structure for the National Security Space Components of the Department of Defense" detailed several planned changes. The plan included the establishment of a Space Development Agency, the development of a Space Operations Force, and the re-creation of U.S. Space Command.

We support DoD's renewed focus on space and effort to conduct a thoughtful, strategic reorganization. Given our nation's dependence on space-based technology for everything from communications to navigation and the rapid gains by our adversaries to threaten those assets, it is critical that we have the best structure in place to ensure continued U.S. superiority. As we design that structure, however, we must avoid inadvertent setbacks by dismantling what is already working.

As Co-Chairs of the California Aerospace Caucus, we are immensely proud of our state's space-focused organizations, innovators, researchers and workforce. It is no coincidence that the Air Force's Space and Missile System Center (SMC), which executes 85 percent of the Department's military space procurement budget, calls California home. SMC is part of a unique, symbiotic aerospace hub in California that includes the two federally-funded research and development centers (FFRDC) most dedicated to space, Aerospace Corporation and NASA's Jet-Propulsion Laboratory; installations with important space-related missions at Vandenberg AFB, Edwards AFB, and Ames Research Center; top university programs in aerospace engineering; leading space companies like United Launch Alliance, SpaceX, and Aerojet Rocketdyne; the nation's only aerospace startup accelerator, Starburst; and the highly-educated, specialized workforce that makes it all possible. California's aerospace industry makes up 10 percent of the global market and includes 25 percent of all U.S. jobs in space vehicles and guided missiles.

An aerospace hub like California's takes decades to develop and cannot be easily replicated. Aerospace Corporation, for example, has been the FFRDC for military space going back to the earliest days of military space activities and its workforce is a unique and major asset to our national security. We strongly believe that whatever final form the national security space structure takes, it would be wise to leverage our existing assets in California, including the critical role of SMC in space acquisition and the rich aerospace ecosystem that supports it. Standing up new, redundant organizations risks disrupting current space acquisition efforts at an immense cost to the taxpayer and, potentially, national security.

We look forward to working with you and the entire Department of Defense during this reorganization process to maintain U.S. space superiority for years to come.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker-designate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader

The Honorable Adam Smith, Ranking Member, House Armed Service Committee

The Honorable Mac Thornberry, Chairman, House Armed Service Committee

The Honorable Heather Wilson, Secretary, U.S. Air Force