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June 15, 2017

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
404 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cruz:

I am writing today about a matter of urgent economic and national security importance as you work in the coming weeks to make decisions relating to the Fiscal Year 2018 budget. U.S. Navy leadership has named ten additional F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter jets as their number one unfunded priority for 2018, and on behalf of our members I urge you to support this request.

The Super Hornet is the workhorse of naval aviation and the only mission-ready strike fighter available for the Navy today. A June 2017 report regarding ongoing combat operations against ISIS since August 2014 found that the Navy's F/A-18 Super Hornets have actually flown the most combat missions of any platform in this effort.

The heavy use of these aircraft in the Middle East has strained carrier air wings, and the Navy is now facing a strike fighter shortfall that impacts America's frontline response capability to address emerging threats around the world. Failure by Congress to fund these 10 additional Super Hornets, and provide a total of 24 jets in 2018, will deepen the Navy's shortfall and needlessly handicap our national security.

In addition to our national defense, the F/A-18 program is an economic driver that generates more than \$4 Billion in estimated annual economic impact, supporting more than 75,000 total jobs and more than 800 suppliers in 44 states. Our member companies are proud to make a small contribution to the national defense by supporting the F/A-18 program, and we hope you'll join us in backing this critical platform.

Please support our military, and our economy, by meeting the Navy's demonstrated need for 24 F/A-18 Super Hornets in 2018.

Sincerely,

Carl A. Joiner  
Chairman of the Board

Cindy Harreld DeWease  
President & CEO