

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 2, 2011

The Honorable Robert Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Gates,

We write in strong support of your continued effort to end the F136 Alternate Engine program for the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). As you have said throughout your tenure with the Department of Defense, this program represents “an unnecessary and extravagant expense” that must be eliminated if we are to properly fund our nation’s warfighters. We couldn’t agree more, and it is with this sentiment that we respectfully request that you to take the necessary action to end this program at the conclusion of the current continuing resolution.

As you know, in 2009 during debate on the FY10 National Defense Authorization Act, the Senate voted 59-38 in opposition to adding funding for the JSF Alternate Engine program. Subsequent to this vote, the Senate has not included funds for the extra engine in either the defense authorization or appropriations bills. In fact, on February 18, 2011, Senator Carl Levin, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee stated in reference to funding the Alternate Engine program, that he, “doubt[s] very much [the Senate] will do it this year.”

The comments by Chairman Levin came just days after action by the House of Representatives to terminate the Alternate Engine program. On February 16, 2011, the House approved by a vote of 233-198 an amendment offered by Representative Tom Rooney that struck all funding for the Alternate Engine program from the proposed Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2011. This action puts the House on the record as opposing all funding for the Alternate Engine program through the remainder of fiscal year 2011, and should provide you with the flexibility to terminate funding for the program at the end of the current continuing resolution.

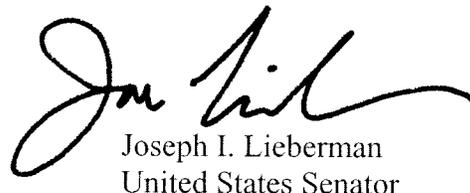
With the release of the fiscal year 2012 Defense budget you stated, “I will look at all available legal options to close down [the Alternate Engine program].” We appreciate your strong position on this matter and hope that later this week you will be allowed to follow through on your commitment to end the program. The House and Senate have both spoken on this matter. It is time that we stop wasting nearly \$1 million per day to continue a program that will surely be terminated.

Thank you again for the continued leadership you provide our nation’s Armed Forces. We look forward to your prompt response on this matter.

Sincerely,



John B. Larson  
United States Representative



Joseph I. Lieberman  
United States Senator