

**H.R. 8800—NATIONAL DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR
AND LAND FORCES**

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DIVISION A—DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATIONS

TITLE I—PROCUREMENT

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SUBTITLE B—ARMY PROGRAMS

Sec. 111—Standards for Networked, Autonomous, Kinetic Capabilities to Protect Against Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems

This section would require the Secretary of the Army to establish standards for networked, autonomous, kinetic capabilities that could be used to counter small unmanned aircraft systems.

SUBTITLE E—DEFENSE-WIDE, JOINT, AND MULTISERVICE MATTERS

Sec. 151—Multiyear Procurement Authority for F-15EX Aircraft

This section would authorize the Secretary of Defense to enter into a multi-year procurement contract for the procurement of F-15EX aircraft after certifying to the congressional defense committees that each aircraft will be procured with a full complement of initial spares, alternate mission equipment, and conformal fuel tanks.

Sec. 152—Multiyear Procurement Authority for F-35 Aircraft

This section would authorize the Secretary of Defense to enter into a multi-year procurement contract for the procurement of F-35 aircraft after certifying to the congressional defense committees that each aircraft will be procured with a full complement of initial spares and alternate mission equipment.

Sec. 153—Standards for Common Operating System for Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems

This section would require the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the military departments, to establish standards for a common operating systems for small unmanned aircraft systems.

Sec. 154—Implementation of Comptroller General Recommendations on F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Technical Data Needs for Sustainment

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to submit a plan and implementation report regarding the relevant Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommendations contained in numerous, prior GAO reports regarding F-35 technical data, and the Secretary's plan to procure the necessary technical data to implement the F-35 sustainment strategy.

TITLE II—RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SUBTITLE B—PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, RESTRICTIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Sec. 218—Requirement to Establish Test and Training Corridors for Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Associated Capabilities

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to establish or designate one or more test and training corridors for small unmanned aircraft systems and associated capabilities within the national airspace system.

SUBTITLE C—PLANS, REPORTS, AND OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 232—Review and Implementation of Strategies to Accelerate the Qualification Process for Domestically Produced Advanced Energetic Materials

This section would require the Secretary of Defense, acting through the head of the Joint Energetics Transition Office, to conduct a review on the qualification process for the integration of novel advanced energetic materials into military systems to identify opportunities to accelerate the process. This section would require the Secretary of Defense to implement acceleration measures found in the review.

TITLE III—OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SUBTITLE C—LOGISTICS AND SUSTAINMENT

Sec. 323—Army Expansion of Production of 155mm Artillery Ammunition

This section would require the Secretary of the Army to expand and upgrade facilities of the Army used to produce materials of 155mm ammunition to meet production capacity of 100,000 rounds per month and meet the Out-Year Unconstrained Total Munitions Requirement. This section would require a report from the Secretary of the Army including necessary resources and timelines to reach production capacity and a plan of sustainment for artillery ammunition as requirements fluctuate.

TITLE X—GENERAL PROVISIONS

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SUBTITLE E—STUDIES AND REPORTS

Sec. 1062—Strategy for Sustainment of Certain Unmanned Aircraft Systems

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to develop a strategy for ensuring the proper sustainment of small unmanned aircraft systems.

Sec. 1063—Strategy for Use of Low-cost and Attritable Group 4 and 5 Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Contested Logistics Operations

This section would require the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Research and Engineering and Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment, to submit a strategy on the integration of low-cost and attritable Group 4 and 5 unmanned aerial systems for use in contested logistics operations.

BILL LANGUAGE

1 **Subtitle B—Army Programs**

2 **SEC. 111 [Log 85549]. STANDARDS FOR NETWORKED, AU-** 3 **TONOMOUS, KINETIC CAPABILITIES TO PRO-** 4 **TECT AGAINST SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT** 5 **SYSTEMS.**

6 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the
8 Army shall establish standards to guide the development,
9 procurement, and fielding of covered capabilities to protect
10 ground combat, support, and mobility platforms against
11 small unmanned aircraft systems.

12 (b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The standards established
13 under subsection (a) shall provide for the development,
14 procurement, and fielding of covered capabilities that—

15 (1) are interoperable across brigade combat
16 team elements, including interoperability of capabili-
17 ties for the detection, tracking, and kinetic intercep-
18 tion of small unmanned aircraft systems;

19 (2) ensure seamless networking between a wide
20 variety of sensors and ground platforms; and

21 (3) meet such other requirements as the Sec-
22 retary of the Army determines appropriate.

23 (c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 90 days
24 after the date on which the Secretary of the Army estab-
25 lishes the standards under subsection (a), the Secretary

1 shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the
2 Senate and the House of Representatives a report that
3 includes—

4 (1) an explanation of the standards; and

5 (2) identification of any hardware or software
6 components that—

7 (A) potentially meet such standards; and

8 (B) would be appropriate for incorporation
9 into covered capabilities.

10 (d) COVERED CAPABILITIES DEFINED.—In this sec-
11 tion, the term “covered capabilities” means platforms and
12 other capabilities that—

13 (1) are networked and autonomous;

14 (2) are capable of the detection, tracking, and
15 kinetic interception of small unmanned aircraft sys-
16 tems; and

17 (3) incorporate—

18 (A) passive and active sensors for the per-
19 sistent detection and tracking of threats posed
20 by unmanned aircraft systems;

21 (B) autonomous kinetic effects capable of
22 neutralizing threats with minimal operator
23 intervention; and

1 (C) mesh networking to allow for sensor-
2 to-shooter handoffs between multiple ground
3 platforms.

1 **Subtitle E—Defense-wide, Joint,**
2 **and Multiservice Matters**

3 **SEC. 151 [Log 84954]. MULTIYEAR PROCUREMENT AUTHOR-**
4 **ITY FOR F-15EX AIRCRAFT.**

5 (a) **AUTHORITY FOR MULTIYEAR PROCUREMENT.**—
6 Subject to section 3501 of title 10, United States Code,
7 and except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary
8 of Defense may enter into one or more multiyear con-
9 tracts, beginning with the fiscal year 2027 program year,
10 for the procurement of—

11 (1) F-15EX aircraft; and

12 (2) initial spare parts, alternate mission equip-
13 ment, and conformal fuel tanks for such aircraft.

14 (b) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary of Defense may not
15 enter into a contract for the procurement of an aircraft
16 under subsection (a) until the date on which the Secretary
17 certifies to the congressional defense committees that such
18 contract will provide for the procurement of the full com-
19 plement of initial spare parts, alternate mission equip-
20 ment, and conformal fuel tanks for each aircraft to be pro-
21 cured under the contract.

22 (c) **CONDITION FOR OUT-YEAR CONTRACT PAY-**
23 **MENTS.**—A contract entered into under subsection (a)
24 shall provide that any obligation of the United States to
25 make a payment under the contract for a fiscal year after

1 fiscal year 2027 is subject to the availability of appropria-
2 tions or funds for that purpose for such later fiscal year.

3 (d) **AUTHORITY FOR ADVANCE PROCUREMENT.**—The
4 Secretary of Defense may enter into one or more con-
5 tracts, beginning in fiscal year 2027, for advance procure-
6 ment associated with the aircraft for which authorization
7 to enter into a multiyear procurement contract is provided
8 under subsection (a), which may include procurement of
9 economic order quantities of material and equipment for
10 such aircraft when cost savings are achievable.

1 **SEC. 152 [Log 84953]. MULTIYEAR PROCUREMENT AUTHOR-**
2 **ITY FOR F-35 AIRCRAFT.**

3 (a) **AUTHORITY FOR MULTIYEAR PROCUREMENT.**—
4 Subject to section 3501 of title 10, United States Code,
5 and except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary
6 of Defense may enter into one or more multiyear con-
7 tracts, beginning with the fiscal year 2027 program year,
8 for the procurement of—

9 (1) F-35 aircraft; and

10 (2) initial spare parts and alternate mission
11 equipment for such aircraft.

12 (b) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary of Defense may not
13 enter into a contract for the procurement of an aircraft
14 under subsection (a) until the date on which the Secretary
15 certifies to the congressional defense committees that such
16 contract will provide for the procurement of the full com-
17 plement of initial spare parts and alternate mission equip-
18 ment for each aircraft to be procured under the contract.

19 (c) **CONDITION FOR OUT-YEAR CONTRACT PAY-**
20 **MENTS.**—A contract entered into under subsection (a)
21 shall provide that any obligation of the United States to
22 make a payment under the contract for a fiscal year after
23 fiscal year 2027 is subject to the availability of appropria-
24 tions or funds for that purpose for such later fiscal year.

25 (d) **AUTHORITY FOR ADVANCE PROCUREMENT.**—The
26 Secretary of Defense may enter into one or more con-

1 tracts, beginning in fiscal year 2027, for advance procure-
2 ment associated with the aircraft for which authorization
3 to enter into a multiyear procurement contract is provided
4 under subsection (a), which may include procurement of
5 economic order quantities of material and equipment for
6 such aircraft when cost savings are achievable.

1 **SEC. 153 [Log 84947]. STANDARDS FOR COMMON OPER-**
2 **ATING SYSTEM FOR SMALL UNMANNED AIR-**
3 **CRAFT SYSTEMS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
5 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of De-
6 fense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the military
7 departments, shall establish standards for a common oper-
8 ating system for small unmanned aircraft systems.

9 (b) ELEMENTS.—The standards established under
10 subsection (a) shall provide for a common operating sys-
11 tem for small unmanned aircraft systems that—

12 (1) enables interoperability between small un-
13 manned aircraft system platforms from different
14 vendors and classes across the joint force;

15 (2) enables modular integration of mission ap-
16 plications, including by enabling the use of applica-
17 tions and features from multiple different vendors
18 on the same platform;

19 (3) facilitates rapid deployment of autonomy
20 and command and control functions;

21 (4) integrates operating software that can func-
22 tion on multiple hardware platforms from different
23 vendors;

24 (5) supports secure software updates and cyber-
25 security improvements;

1 (6) avoids vendor lock by enabling multiple ven-
2 dors of hardware and software to develop and field
3 applications and capabilities; and

4 (7) establishes baseline standards for aided tar-
5 get recognition capabilities.

6 (c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
8 the date on which the Secretary of Defense finalizes
9 the standards under subsection (a), the Secretary, in
10 coordination with the Secretaries of the military de-
11 partments, shall develop and commence implementa-
12 tion of a plan for equipping small unmanned aircraft
13 systems of the Department of Defense with a com-
14 mon operating system that meets such standards.

15 (2) USE OF COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE SOLU-
16 TIONS.—In implementing the plan under paragraph
17 (1), the Secretary of Defense shall make use of com-
18 mercially available solutions to the maximum extent
19 practicable.

1 **SEC. 154 [Log 85659]. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPTROLLER**
2 **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON F-35**
3 **JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER TECHNICAL DATA**
4 **NEEDS FOR SUSTAINMENT.**

5 (a) PLAN REQUIRED.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
7 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
8 retary of Defense shall submit to the congressional
9 defense committees and to the Comptroller General
10 of the United States a plan to address the following
11 recommendations made by the Government Account-
12 ability Office:

13 (A) Recommendation 5 in the report titled
14 “F-35 Sustainment: Need for Affordable Strat-
15 egy, Greater Attention to Risks, and Improved
16 Cost Estimates” (GA-14-778).

17 (B) Recommendations 1 through 7 in the
18 report titled “F-35 Aircraft: DOD and the
19 Military Services Need to Reassess the Future
20 Sustainment Strategy” (GAO-23-105341).

21 (C) Recommendations 1 and 2 in the re-
22 port titled “F-35 Aircraft: Actions Needed to
23 Address Long-Standing Risks to Operational
24 Effectiveness” (GAO-25-107101C).

25 (2) ELEMENTS.—The plan under paragraph (1)
26 shall include the following:

1 (A) With respect to each recommendation
2 specified in paragraph (1) that the Secretary
3 has implemented or intends to implement—

4 (i) a summary of actions that have
5 been taken or will be taken to implement
6 the recommendation; and

7 (ii) a schedule, with specific mile-
8 stones, for completing implementation of
9 the recommendation.

10 (B) Identification of any recommendations
11 specified in paragraph (1) that the Secretary
12 does not intend to implement, together with a
13 discussion of the reasons for not implementing
14 the recommendations and any alternative ac-
15 tions taken or intended to be taken to address
16 the matters identified by the Government Ac-
17 countability Office in connection with such rec-
18 ommendations.

19 (b) PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.—Not later
20 than one year after the date on which the Secretary of
21 Defense submits the implementation plan under sub-
22 section (a), the Secretary shall carry out activities to im-
23 plement the plan and submit to the congressional defense
24 committees and the Comptroller General of the United
25 States a report on the following:

- 1 (1) All critical technical data rights require-
- 2 ments for F-35 Joint Strike Fighter sustainment,
- 3 including for both organizational-level and depot-
- 4 level sustainment and repair.
- 5 (2) Estimated costs for acquiring identified crit-
- 6 ical technical data rights for sustainment.
- 7 (3) The status of efforts for acquiring identified
- 8 critical technical data rights for sustainment.
- 9 (4) Any known challenges for acquiring identi-
- 10 fied critical technical data rights for sustainment.

1 **SEC. 218 [Log 84950]. REQUIREMENT TO ESTABLISH TEST**
2 **AND TRAINING CORRIDORS FOR SMALL UN-**
3 **MANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AND ASSOCI-**
4 **ATED CAPABILITIES.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall es-
6 tablish or designate, and operate, one or more test and
7 training corridors for small unmanned aircraft systems
8 and associated capabilities within the national airspace
9 system.

10 (b) FACILITIES.—The Secretary of Defense may con-
11 struct new facilities, or use existing facilities available to
12 the Department of Defense, to support a test and training
13 corridor established or designated under subsection (a).

14 (c) FUNCTIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall en-
15 sure that any test and training corridor established or des-
16 ignated under subsection (a) enables the research, develop-
17 ment, testing, and evaluation of, and training for members
18 of the Armed Forces on—

19 (1) small unmanned aircraft systems and asso-
20 ciated autonomy software, kinetic and nonkinetic
21 payloads, sensors, communications, and navigation
22 technology; and

23 (2) kinetic and nonkinetic counter small-un-
24 manned aircraft system capabilities, including high
25 power microwave, high energy laser, and electronic
26 warfare capabilities, and any requisite autonomy

1 software, sensors, and command and control capa-
2 bilities.

3 (d) SITE SELECTION.—In establishing or designating
4 a test and training corridor under subsection (a), the Sec-
5 retary of Defense, in coordination with the Director of the
6 Test Resource Management Center and the Secretaries of
7 the military departments, shall—

8 (1) identify potential locations within the na-
9 tional airspace system that would be conducive to
10 conducting testing, evaluation, and training activities
11 with respect to small unmanned aircraft systems and
12 counter-small unmanned aircraft capabilities;

13 (2) assess whether existing test and evaluation
14 facilities, including Government-owned and non-Gov-
15 ernment owned facilities, could be used to meet cur-
16 rent and future requirements with respect to such
17 testing, evaluation and training;

18 (3) identify any additional resources required to
19 establish or designate, and operate the corridor, in-
20 cluding military construction costs and personnel
21 and manning costs;

22 (4) identify any sensors and capabilities needed
23 to adequately simulate operationally realistic envi-
24 ronments in the corridor, including environments
25 with denied or degraded—

1 (A) communications;

2 (B) electromagnetic spectrum; and

3 (C) global positioning system;

4 (5) identify any interagency, legal, regulatory,
5 or policy impediments to carrying out testing, eval-
6 uation, and training activities with respect to small
7 unmanned aircraft systems and counter-small un-
8 manned aircraft capabilities within the national air-
9 space system, including any impediments to the use
10 of—

11 (A) electronic warfare;

12 (B) directed energy (such as high-powered
13 microwave and high energy lasers);

14 (C) GPS jamming and spoofing;

15 (D) spectrum enabled and cellular-network
16 enabled systems and capabilities; and

17 (E) other relevant capabilities;

18 (6) consult with interagency partners to develop
19 recommendations for—

20 (A) addressing any impediments identified
21 under paragraph (4); and

22 (B) ensuring the safety of testing and
23 training activities conducted in the national air-
24 space system; and

1 (7) consider diverse geographic regions across
2 the United States.

3 (e) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90
4 days after establishing or designating a test and training
5 corridor under subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense
6 shall submit to the congressional defense committees a
7 written notification that describes—

8 (1) the location of the corridor;

9 (2) any funding, personnel, or other resources
10 required to support the corridor; and

11 (3) any agreements with other Federal agencies
12 that may be required to safely operate the corridor
13 in the national airspace system.

1 **SEC. 232 [Log 84982]. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF**
2 **STRATEGIES TO ACCELERATE THE QUALI-**
3 **FICATION PROCESS FOR DOMESTICALLY**
4 **PRODUCED ADVANCED ENERGETIC MATE-**
5 **RIALS.**

6 (a) ACCELERATION OF FORMULATION-TO-SYSTEM
7 QUALIFICATION FOR ADVANCED ENERGETIC MATE-
8 RIALS.—

9 (1) REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION.—The Sec-
10 retary of Defense, acting through the head of the
11 Joint Energetics Transition Office shall—

12 (A) conduct a review to identify opportuni-
13 ties to accelerate the qualification process for
14 the integration of novel advanced energetic ma-
15 terials into military systems; and

16 (B) based on the results of such review,
17 implement measures to accelerate such quali-
18 fication process.

19 (2) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the review re-
20 quired under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary of De-
21 fense shall—

22 (A) conduct a detailed analysis of the fea-
23 sibility of—

24 (i) expediting the qualification of new
25 formulations derived from advanced ener-
26 getic materials, including developmental

1 classification, insensitive munitions testing,
2 and hazard classification activities;

3 (ii) streamlining nonstatutory admin-
4 istrative requirements for warhead-level
5 and system-level qualification of advanced
6 energetic materials in cases in which mod-
7 eling, simulation, and surrogate testing of
8 such materials provide sufficient evidence
9 of equivalent or superior performance and
10 safety compared to legacy energetic mate-
11 rials, without compromising statutorily
12 prescribed safety or environmental stand-
13 ards;

14 (iii) implementing integrated test
15 campaigns that enable concurrent or over-
16 lapping evaluations of the formulation,
17 warhead, and system performance of ad-
18 vanced energetic materials to reduce total
19 time to fielding, aiming for full system
20 qualification within 18 months to the ex-
21 tent feasible, while ensuring no com-
22 promise to safety or operational reliability;
23 and

24 (iv) prioritizing advanced energetic
25 materials for inclusion in mission-aligned

1 prototyping, live-fire demonstrations, and
2 portfolio-level experimentation under rapid
3 acquisition authorities;

4 (B) identify any barriers to the integration
5 of novel advanced energetic materials into mili-
6 tary systems;

7 (C) develop a set of prioritized measures
8 that may be implemented to address such bar-
9 riers, including potential near-term measures
10 achievable under existing authorities; and

11 (D) determine—

12 (i) estimated timelines for imple-
13 menting such measures;

14 (ii) the organizations and elements of
15 the Department of Defense that could
16 carry out such measures; and

17 (iii) any statutory, regulatory, or ad-
18 ministrative barriers inhibiting the imple-
19 mentation of such measures.

20 (b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
21 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense
22 shall submit to the congressional defense committees a re-
23 port on the findings of the review conducted under sub-
24 section (a)(1)(A) and the measures implemented under
25 subsection (a)(1)(B). The report shall include—

1 (1) a list of advanced energetic materials for
2 which the Secretary accelerated the formulation-to-
3 system qualification process as a result of the review
4 under subsection (a)(1)(A) and a list of advanced
5 energetic materials that were identified as can-
6 didates for acceleration;

7 (2) a comparison of the timelines to qualifica-
8 tion milestones for materials identified under para-
9 graph (1) compared to such timelines if the formula-
10 tion-to-system qualification process had not been ac-
11 celerated for such materials, including quantitative
12 estimates of time savings and measurable milestones
13 to the extent practicable;

14 (3) a description of any other actions taken to
15 accelerate the qualification process for such mate-
16 rials, with justifications; and

17 (4) recommendations for further legislative or
18 administrative actions to enhance domestic
19 energetics production and qualification.

20 (c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this sec-
21 tion shall be construed to authorize the waiver of any stat-
22 utory requirement, including any statutory requirement
23 related to safety, environmental protection, or national se-
24 curity.

1 (d) ADVANCED ENERGETIC MATERIAL DEFINED.—
2 The term “advanced energetic material” means a domesti-
3 cally produced substance or mixture, such as explosives,
4 propellants, or pyrotechnics, that releases energy rapidly
5 and demonstrates performance improvements over legacy
6 energetic materials in areas such as energy density, as de-
7 termined by the Secretary of Defense in accordance with
8 established Department of Defense standards.

1 **SEC. 323.[Log 84980] ARMY EXPANSION OF PRODUCTION OF**
2 **155MM ARTILLERY AMMUNITION.**

3 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
4 gress that—

5 (1) the production of 155mm artillery ammuni-
6 tion at a minimum rate to reach total munition re-
7 quirements is a national priority; and

8 (2) the production rate of such ammunition
9 should be sustained or increased over the next five
10 years in order to—

11 (A) fully meet all Army and Marine Corps
12 annual training requirements;

13 (B) rebuild war reserve inventories for
14 both the Army and the Marine Corps to fully
15 comply with the planning guidance of the Sec-
16 retary of Defense and ensure that associated in-
17 ventory and war reserve levels are met;

18 (C) modernize the stockpile with the best
19 performing weapons; and

20 (D) continue foreign military sales of am-
21 munition manufactured in the United States to
22 generate the domestic workforce and assures
23 wartime interoperability with United States al-
24 lies.

25 (b) PRODUCTION EXPANSION.—The Secretary of the
26 Army shall—

1 (1) expand and upgrade facilities of the Army
2 that are used to produce propellant, metal parts, ex-
3 plosive fill, load assemble pack, and components of
4 155mm artillery; and

5 (2) increase the production of propellant, metal
6 parts, explosive fill, load assemble pack, and compo-
7 nents of 155mm artillery to ensure that—

8 (A) the total production capacity of all
9 such facilities reaches 100,000 rounds each
10 month; and

11 (B) the Out-Year Unconstrained Total
12 Munitions Requirement for 155mm artillery
13 ammunition in effect for the Army pursuant to
14 section 222c of title 10, United States Code, is
15 met.

16 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
17 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army
18 shall submit to the congressional defense committees a re-
19 port on the steps taken by the Secretary to carry out the
20 requirements of this section. Such report shall include—

21 (1) an identification of the amount of funds re-
22 quired to reach the production capacity under sub-
23 section (b)(2)(A);

24 (2) a plan for—

1 (A) expanding and upgrading facilities of
2 the Army used to produce 15mm artillery am-
3 munition; and

4 (B) increasing the rate of production of
5 such munitions;

6 (3) an estimated time frame for when the pro-
7 duction capacity under subsection (b)(2)(A) will be
8 reached;

9 (4) an estimated time frame for the production
10 of sufficient munitions to replenish stocks to reach
11 total munition requirements under the Out-Year Un-
12 constrained Total Munitions Requirement for
13 155mm artillery in effect for the Army pursuant to
14 section 222c of title 10, United States Code; and

15 (5) a long-term plan to sustain munitions pro-
16 duction facilities as demand for artillery ammunition
17 may increase or decrease.

1 **SEC. 1062.[Log 84948] STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINMENT OF**
2 **CERTAIN UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.**

3 (a) STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of De-
5 fense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the military
6 departments, shall develop a strategy for the sustainment
7 of covered unmanned aircraft systems. Such strategy shall
8 address, and differentiate between, stockpiled covered un-
9 manned aircraft systems and covered unmanned aircraft
10 systems in use on a more frequent basis.

11 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy under subsection (a)
12 shall include the following:

13 (1) A plan to ensure continuous software up-
14 dates for fielded covered unmanned aircraft systems
15 across the military departments, including any such
16 updates relating to—

17 (A) operating systems;

18 (B) autonomy and other capabilities en-
19 abled by artificial intelligence and machine
20 learning; or

21 (C) automatic target recognition.

22 (2) A plan to ensure the batteries of fielded
23 covered unmanned aircraft systems are fully func-
24 tional and charged, including a strategy for charging
25 such batteries in extreme and austere environments.

1 (3) Metrics to assess the readiness of fielded
2 covered unmanned aircraft systems and associated
3 components.

4 (4) An identification of the command level, unit
5 level, or other organizational level responsible for en-
6 suring such readiness.

7 (5) A plan to ensure standardized training for
8 the use of covered unmanned aircraft systems and
9 the sustainment of such systems across the military
10 departments.

11 (6) A strategy for the repair of fielded covered
12 unmanned aircraft systems, including for field-level
13 maintenance, as appropriate.

14 (c) UPDATES.—On a basis that is not less frequent
15 than once every two years, the Secretary of Defense shall
16 update the strategy under subsection (a).

17 (d) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30
18 days after the date on which the Secretary of Defense
19 completes the strategy under subsection (a), the Secretary
20 shall submit to the congressional defense committees such
21 strategy.

22 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 (1) The term “covered unmanned aircraft”
24 means any unmanned aircraft categorized as Group
25 1, Group 2, or Group 3 pursuant to the Joint Publi-

1 cation 3–30 of the Department of Defense, titled
2 “Joint Air Operations” and dated July 25, 2019, or
3 such successor publication.

4 (2) The terms “unmanned aircraft” and “un-
5 manned aircraft system” have the meanings given
6 such terms in section 130i of title 10, United States
7 Code.

1 **SEC. 1063.[Log 85296] STRATEGY FOR USE OF LOW-COST**
2 **AND ATTRITABLE GROUP 4 AND 5 UNMANNED**
3 **AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS IN CONTESTED LOGIS-**
4 **TICS OPERATIONS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of De-
7 fense, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense
8 for Research and Engineering and the Under Secretary
9 of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, shall develop
10 a strategy for the use of low-cost and attritable Group 4
11 and 5 unmanned aircraft systems in contested logistics op-
12 erations.

13 (b) REQUIREMENTS FOR STRATEGY.—The strategy
14 under subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

15 (1) An assessment of current and projected lift
16 capabilities required for contested logistics oper-
17 ations, specifically focusing on identifying—

18 (A) the limitations of existing platforms;

19 and

20 (B) mission sets for which the use of
21 Group 4 and 5 unmanned aircraft systems
22 would reduce risk.

23 (2) An assessment of the challenges presented
24 by communications degradation in contested logistics
25 operations and how unmanned aircraft systems

1 could be integrated into mission sets identified under
2 paragraph (1)(B) to solve capability gaps.

3 (3) A review of performance specifications, in-
4 cluding payload capacity and range, that are re-
5 quired to complete the mission sets identified under
6 paragraph (1)(B).

7 (4) An evaluation of acceptable loss rates, re-
8 placement speed, scale of employment, and integra-
9 tion timelines for unmanned aircraft systems.

10 (5) A plan for coordinating among, and draft-
11 ing requirements for, each of the military depart-
12 ments and combatant commands with respect to the
13 use of low-cost and attritable unmanned aircraft sys-
14 tems for contested logistics, as appropriate.

15 (6) A plan to synchronize research, develop-
16 ment, prototyping, and acquisition activities related
17 to such systems.

18 (7) A transition plan for the operational field-
19 ing by the joint force of Group 4 and 5 unmanned
20 aircraft systems for contested logistics operations.

21 (8) An evaluation of commercially available in-
22 novative solutions that could be used to enhance the
23 effectiveness of the Armed Forces and the response
24 of the Department of Defense to emerging threats.

1 (c) PREFERENCE FOR COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS.—In
2 developing the strategy under subsection (a), the Sec-
3 retary shall leverage commercially available solutions to
4 the maximum extent practicable.

5 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days
6 after the development of the strategy required by sub-
7 section (a), the Secretary shall submit to the congressional
8 defense committees a report on the strategy.

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DIVISION A—DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATIONS

TITLE I—PROCUREMENT

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, ARMY

Items of Special Interest

Accelerated Fielding of Mobile Counter-UAS Capabilities for Soldier Protection

The committee notes the current and emerging threat small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) pose to military formations, exposing a critical vulnerability for ground forces that lack adequate counter-UAS (c-UAS) protection. The committee is aware of capabilities being fielded to support both fixed sites and maneuvering forces but remains concerned that capability gaps remain at the squad and tactical level.

In the committee report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (H. Rept. 118-125), the committee noted the need for the Army to ensure small-unit tactical-level formations have combat vehicles with kinetic and non-kinetic defeat capabilities to protect them from Groups 1 - 3 sUAS. The committee encouraged the Army to field a single vehicle c-UAS capability with urgency.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services, not later than December 1, 2026, on the plan to address c-UAS capability gaps for tactical-level forces. The report shall include:

- (1) the Army's plan for c-UAS protection of dismounted units greater than 1 kilometer outside of air and missile defense assets;
- (2) the Army's plan for c-UAS protection of infantry and armored maneuver vehicles outside of air and missile defense assets;
- (3) the Army's plan for accelerating procurement of platforms like the Mobile, Low, Slow Integrated Defeat System (M-LIDS) Stryker variant; and
- (4) the Army's plan for integrating the M320 grenade launcher into future c-UAS capabilities.

Non-Kinetic Solutions for Countering Drone Swarms

The committee recognizes the Department of Defense's efforts in developing low-cost solutions to meet warfighter counter unmanned aircraft systems (c-UAS) requirements, particularly for countering drone swarms at military installations. The committee encourages additional investment and fielding of non-kinetic effectors, including, but not limited to, high power microwave (HPM), high energy laser, Coyote Block III HPM variant, and radio frequency systems. Defending people, critical infrastructure, and military installations from drone incursions requires cost-effective, non-kinetic technology with multi-target capability and enhanced lethality against Groups 1-3 UAS for base defense.

Therefore, the committee directs the Director of the Joint Interagency Task Force 401, in coordination with the Service Acquisition Executives, to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 1, 2026, on the Department's plan to complete development and begin procurement of low-collateral, non-kinetic solutions for c-UAS. The report shall include:

- (1) an overview of the capabilities and limitations of kinetic vs. non-kinetic effectors against Groups 1-3 UAS, UAS swarms, and tethered UAS for base defense;
- (2) a comparison of available low-collateral non-kinetic solutions that meet near-term requirements with effective range and provide cost-per-kill savings; and
- (3) recommendations on funding and schedule required to field tactically meaningful quantities of systems identified in (2) to augment global forces and defend the homeland.

PROCUREMENT OF WEAPONS AND TRACKED COMBAT VEHICLES, ARMY

Items of Special Interest

Precision Grenadier System Program

The committee recognizes the importance of the Army's Precision Grenadier System (PGS) as a critical component of infantry lethality and close-combat

overmatch. PGS is intended to provide grenadiers with advanced fire control capabilities that improve accuracy and reduce time to engagement. The committee is concerned, however, by limited transparency regarding the current status of PGS, including development progress, performance against operational requirements, software maturity, and the timeline for fielding across the force.

Given the increasing development of digital fire control, modular open systems architectures, and network enabled soldier systems, the program should remain aligned with operational needs, acquisition best practices, and cost-effective sustainment. The committee is concerned regarding the developmental requirement that a solution must include the weapon system, potentially novel ammunition and fusing, and optics as a single package, rather than a solution that allows for the inclusion of the most capable subsystems.

Therefore, the committee directs the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, in coordination with Portfolio Acquisition Executive Ground, to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than December 1, 2026, on the status of PGS, including:

- (1) the current development, testing, and fielding status of PGS and associated fire control optics;
- (2) an assessment of ammunition performance relative to validated operational requirements and soldier feedback;
- (3) identified technical, software, integration, or sustainment risks and mitigation plans;
- (4) the planned schedule and resources required to achieve full-rate fielding; and
- (5) justification of a holistic weapons system approach.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, ARMY

Items of Special Interest

Army Mobile Tactical Cannon Modernization and Soldier Lethality

The committee believes that the Mobile Tactical Cannon (MTC) program represents a critical opportunity to transition the Field Artillery to a more survivable, "shoot-and-scoot" capable force through the use of automation.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 11, 2027, on the MTC acquisition strategy. The briefing shall include:

- (1) workload analysis: a comparison of the estimated soldier physical workload (measured in weight-moved-per-hour) between current M109A7/M777 systems and the automated solutions proposed for the MTC;
- (2) vendor evaluation criteria: an explanation of how the Army is weighing automation in the "Self-Propelled Howitzer Modernization" competitive evaluations; and

(3) resupply automation: a plan to integrate automated ammunition resupply vehicles with the MTC to ensure the entire "logistics-to-lethality" chain is modernized.

Assessment of the Army's Body-Worn Mission-Command Platform Acquisition Pathways

The committee notes the critical role that battlefield awareness and integrated systems play in soldiers' decision-making. As the Army works to deliver a single platform to improve sensing and situational awareness, the committee remains supportive of an integrated soldier-borne solution for the tactical community. The committee remains committed, however, to oversight of the new acquisition pathway being pursued by the Army to deliver on the Soldier Borne Mission Command (SBMC) initiative given the history of the program's cost, schedule, and user acceptance challenges.

The committee seeks to better understand how the Army's acquisition approach will support iterative development of a solution that will out-perform current equipment, be accepted by soldiers, and accept modular upgrades to keep pace with a changing battlefield. Accordingly, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to review:

(1) the extent to which the Army is using iterative development informed by user feedback;

(2) how the Army is addressing challenges with previous prototypes such as wearability and low-light performance;

(3) how the Army plans to ensure the SBMC system meets user needs in operationally realistic environments before proceeding with production;

(4) the extent to which SBMC is being developed using a modular open systems approach to enable future upgrades;

(5) whether the Army's cost, scope, and schedule estimates of the SBMC program are reliable and consistent with Government Accountability Office leading practices; and

(6) whether the Army's contracting approach and risk reduction steps include the acquisition of data rights needed to maintain and sustain key capabilities.

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than April 16, 2027, on the question of a single integrated system, with additional work to address the question of alternative options to follow, and present final results in a format and timeframe agreed to at the time of the briefing.

Digital Night Vision Helmet Mounted Display for Rotary Wing Pilots

The committee recognizes the need to improve situational awareness for Army rotary wing pilots and the potential for enhanced situational awareness provided by digital night vision technology. The committee understands that the

Army has initiated the validation of digital night vision performance in a helmet mounted display system for all pilots through a flying prototype demonstration. Such a capability offers performance at, or better than, current night vision goggles, while also improving pilot situational awareness.

The committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than February 1, 2027, on the incorporation of digital night vision technology into a helmet mounted display to improve holistic situational awareness in degraded visual environment for rotary wing pilots. The report should include:

- (1) an overview of current digital night vision technologies;
- (2) a description of how digital night vision technologies impact mission readiness;
- (3) an assessment of improved situational awareness by the integration of additional sensors and flight data on the aircraft; and
- (4) an assessment of how the Army will integrate Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast technologies into its rotary-wing fleet of aircraft, including through the use of helmet-integrated digital night vision technologies.

Ground Autonomy Procurement Strategy

The committee directs the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 15, 2027, on the Army's strategy to procure commercially available unmanned ground autonomy solutions using existing rapid acquisition authorities and nontraditional funding mechanisms. The briefing shall include the following:

- (1) an overview of the Army's current and planned procurement approach for unmanned ground autonomy software and systems capable of operating in complex, off-road, contested, and communications-degraded environments;
- (2) a description of how the Army intends to leverage all available funding and acquisition pathways, including but not limited to, the Accelerate the Procurement and Fielding of Innovative Technologies fund, Other Transaction Authority, Middle Tier of Acquisition authorities, and other rapid or non-traditional procurement mechanisms;
- (3) an assessment of the feasibility of near-term procurement and fielding of commercially developed autonomy capabilities in fiscal years 2027 and 2028, to include a description of any prerequisites, benchmarks, or milestones for technology transition from experimentation to production;
- (4) identification of the Army organizations responsible for executing procurement decisions for autonomous ground systems, including relevant portfolio acquisition executives, capability program executives, or innovation organizations;
- (5) a description of any policy, administrative, legislative, regulatory contracting, budgeting, or organizational barriers that may delay procurement,

along with specific recommendations to enable a faster transition from technology demonstrations to fielded capability in the ground autonomy sector; and

(6) an explanation of how validated autonomous ground capabilities will be integrated into operational units, including an overview of the Army's proposed sustainment, training, and software update models.

Hybrid Soldier Protection Solutions

The committee understands that current soldier protection solutions address blast debris, fragmentation, and thermal protection independently, which results in layered systems with high weight, bulk, heat burdens, and numerous failure points. When coupled with three-dimensional knitting, Kevlar EXO, a para-aramid fiber considerably stronger than Kevlar, can integrate multiple protective functions, such as fire and blast debris fragment protection, into a single hybrid protection system with a reduced weight, bulk, and heat burden for the wearer compared to layered protective assemblies. Being inherently flame-resistant, this fiber does not melt or drip under fire conditions and, by eliminating seams, is highly durable against blast and thermal stress. To maximize the return on investment in domestic manufacturing of this fiber, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 15, 2026, describing the Army's plans for evaluating and incorporating Kevlar EXO into its current and future soldier protection systems.

Integrated Solution for Soldier Borne Mission Command

The committee recognizes the significant progress made towards delivery of Army Soldier Borne Mission Command (SBMC) augmented reality, in addition to day and night vision capabilities. The committee supports the Army's efforts to ensure body-worn mission command and situational awareness systems leverage advances in commercial augmented reality, digital displays, lightweight computing, and "smart helmet" ballistic protection technologies with fully integrated subsystems and a modular open system architecture. Further, the committee notes that achieving a next-generation solution will require the Army to coordinate and aggregate disparate requirements into a single integrated solution, rather than the legacy acquisition approach that leverages a common combat helmet with external attachments. The committee believes that such efforts should prioritize integrated and modular augmented reality solutions that maximize warfighter situational awareness and decision-making while maintaining ballistic protection and emphasizing an ergonomic, warfighter-centered design.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 1, 2027, on the status of integrating smart helmets for body-worn mission-command platforms. The briefing shall include:

- (1) an overview of how the Army is integrating commercially available digital displays, augmented reality, lightweight computing, modular sensors, and modular open system architecture into a unified smart helmet design;
- (2) a description of how such integration optimizes existing soldier system requirements, including protection, ergonomics, and operational effectiveness; and
- (3) an assessment of programmatic, acquisition, and resourcing considerations associated with fielding an integrated SBMC smart helmet solution.

Sustainment of the Army Long-Range Persistent Surveillance System

The committee is aware that the Army began fielding the long-range persistent surveillance (ALPS) system for use in several combatant commands in response to a joint urgent operational need. These sensors enable forces to passively track cruise missiles, fixed and rotary wing aircraft, and unmanned aircraft while avoiding radio frequency emissions and detection by adversary electronic warfare assets. The Army has continued delivery of ALPS systems to additional military facilities based on emerging threat requirements, but the original systems deployed to combatant commands lack a defined software upgrade and sustainment schedule.

The committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 1, 2027, on plans and associated funding in place to ensure the ALPS systems are sustained for continued operation until their capabilities are no longer required. The briefing should include the following:

- (1) the current operational status and deployment locations of ALPS systems, including the number of systems fielded to each combatant command;
- (2) a description of any software or hardware upgrades planned for currently fielded ALPS systems, including timelines and funding profiles;
- (3) the Army's long-term sustainment strategy for ALPS, including whether a program-of-record acquisition is planned; and
- (4) estimated resources required to sustain capability through the end of service life.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, NAVY

Items of Special Interest

Scaling Production and Proliferating Capability of the Collaborative Combat Aircraft

The committee commends the effective collaboration between the Air Force and industry on Increment 1 of the Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) program. The committee recognizes the rapid evolution of the program, in which both CCA variants progressed from initial contract award to successful flight demonstrations in 18 months, faster than any other major tactical fighter-like aircraft program in recent history, while continuing rigorous testing to mature the collaborative

manned-unmanned teaming concepts defining this capability. To sustain this accelerated pace and deliver CCA's innovative capabilities to the warfighter, the committee supports the Air Force's event-driven, rapid transition of CCA Increment 1 to production.

The committee further recognizes the Air Force's active engagement with allies and partners for CCA international expansion and fully supports the exploration of exporting this capability whenever possible via foreign military or direct commercial sales programs to enhance interoperability, share financial burdens, fund development of unique capabilities, and strengthen deterrence. The committee encourages the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, in partnership with the Secretary of the Air Force, to facilitate exploration of providing these capabilities to allies and partners as expeditiously as possible.

The committee is also encouraged by the Navy and Marine Corps' efforts to establish their own CCA programs with expanded mission capabilities throughout the Joint Force. The Navy and Marine Corps should leverage the mature and innovative technologies and processes developed through USAF Increment 1 and the model of collaboration between the Air Force and industry to accelerate development, improve capability delivered, and reduce risks in both cost and schedule.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 15, 2026, on the acquisition strategy for the Navy and Marine Corps CCA programs. The briefing should include at a minimum:

- (1) development strategies and technology leveraged and incorporated from the Air Force CCA program;
- (2) opportunities to update the tri-service agreement to align capabilities and resources; and
- (3) the potential to field CCA as complementary to, or in place of, existing capabilities.

WEAPONS PROCUREMENT, NAVY

Items of Special Interest

Anti-Ship Missile Portfolio Review

The committee remains supportive of the Navy's efforts to expand its strike capabilities in anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) environments, such as the Offensive Anti-Surface Warfare Increment II (OASuW Inc II)/Hypersonic Air Launched OASuW (HALO) program. HALO is intended to be an aircraft carrier-suitable, high-speed, long-range air-launched weapon that will increase the Navy's ability to provide long-range munitions in A2/AD environments.

The committee understands the Navy intended to accelerate fielding of HALO to support an early operational fielding capability in fiscal year 2029.

However, in early fiscal year 2025, the Navy notified the committee of its intent to cancel the solicitation for the HALO engineering, manufacturing, and development (EMD) effort, citing insufficient funding. Subsequently, the Navy discontinued work on the HALO transition to EMD effort and proceeded with a restructuring of the program to emphasize technology maturation. Although the requirement for a HALO-like capability remains valid, the committee is concerned that development is languishing.

Additionally, the committee is also aware of promising opportunities associated with the Multi-mission Affordable Capacity Effector. This weapon is intended to complement the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM), which the committee notes that the Department plans to increase production rates of LRASM over the upcoming years. Aircraft carrier aviation forces are expected to generate, for the combatant commander, numerous sorties at long-range with its onboard stores of munitions. These expectations make optimizing the Navy's air-launched anti-ship weapons portfolio critical to ensuring mission effectiveness.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 1, 2026, on the planned portfolio of air-launched anti-ship weapons in development and procurement over the next 10 years. This briefing should include, but is not limited to the:

- (1) recommended weapon mix and loadouts for missions, considering cost per engagement;
- (2) current threshold and objective range requirements for the anti-ship missile portfolio, highlighting any recent changes to these requirements; and
- (3) intended acquisition strategy for each weapon program.

PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

Items of Special Interest

Affordable Expeditionary Long-Range Precision Fires

The committee notes that the Marine Corps faces a persistent gap in expeditionary long-range precision fires for forces operating from forward and distributed locations in contested maritime environments.

Additionally, the committee notes that the termination of the Marine Corps Tomahawk program has created an immediate shortfall in long-range strike capability for Marine forces operating beyond the range of existing ground-based systems. The committee strongly supports Department of the Navy and Marine Corps efforts to integrate and demonstrate an affordable long-range cruise missile capability suitable for employment from manned and unmanned aircraft systems, including the Marine Corps MQ-9.

The committee directs the Department to prioritize mature technologies that can be rapidly integrated, produced at scale, and manufactured domestically to expand the industrial base and improve surge capacity.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy, in coordination with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than April 1, 2027, on progress toward aircraft integration and operational demonstration of such capability, including cost, schedule, risk, and industrial base impacts.

PROCUREMENT, MARINE CORPS

Items of Special Interest

Common End User Device Plan for the Marine Corps

The proliferation of small unmanned systems across the Marine Corps has transformed how small units conduct intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and strike operations, delivering capabilities once reserved for higher echelons of command. The committee understands that the Marine Corps lacks a common end user device (EUD) capable of utilizing tools and tactical software that integrate, visualize, and transmit data across formations and echelons. As a result, individual units are using discretionary funds to procure various devices and applications, creating fragmentation and limiting interoperability across the force.

Therefore, the committee directs the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, in coordination with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 15, 2026, on the Marine Corps' plan to field standardized EUDs and supporting software to its formations. The briefing shall include:

- (1) a summary of ongoing efforts to adopt a common controller for unmanned systems across Marine Corps formations;
- (2) a description of plans to establish or adopt a centralized program to field EUDs and other tactical software across the Marine Corps; and
- (3) the Marine Corps' funding profile for procurement and fielding of EUDs.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

Items of Special Interest

MH-139A Mission Set at Joint Base Andrews

The committee notes that the MH-139A Grey Wolf was competitively selected to replace the UH-1N for intercontinental ballistic missile security and National Capital Region missions, including continuity of government and transport of United States government officials and security forces. The committee remains concerned regarding the justification for transitioning these missions to an alternate rotary-wing platform and seeks additional details on cost and operational implications.

The committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than December 1, 2026, assessing operational, cost, infrastructure, and readiness impacts of assigning any non-MH-139A rotary-wing aircraft to continuity of government and transport of United States government officials and security forces in the National Capital Region. The report shall include the following:

- (1) a comparison of procurement cost, cost per flight hour, infrastructure and aircraft modification requirements, and training and manpower impacts; and
- (2) an assessment of the cost, schedule, and operational disruption associated with required upgrades to Joint Base Andrews facilities for each aircraft type.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

Items of Special Interest

Air Base Air Defense

The committee understands that the U.S. Air Force Europe-Air Force Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) Air Base Air Defense (ABAD) program has demonstrated significant maturity in the development and operational employment of the Ramstein Air Defense System Integration Laboratory (RADSIL) and Early Warning Capability, creating the foundation of a revolutionary Common Operating Picture for situational awareness of air threats in Europe.

The committee recommends leveraging the proven successes and lessons learned from the USAFE-AFAFRICA ABAD program to enhance air domain awareness and early warning capabilities in U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than January 15, 2027, on the feasibility of operationalizing ABAD capabilities for NORTHCOM, to include:

- (1) a stable, sufficient funding profile for USAFE-AFARICA ABAD through 2028, to enable continued defensive upgrades to protect U.S. warfighters currently stationed abroad;
- (2) a detailed, well-funded plan to transition operationally proven hardware, software, and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) from ABAD into NORTHCOM;
- (3) a detailed, well-funded plan to use EUCOM ABAD as a “trial by fire” operational testbed for advanced Air and Missile Defense capabilities;
- (4) an establishment of a Homeland Air Defense Systems Integration Laboratory, modeled after RADSIL, to coordinate efforts across the U.S. Air Force, Missile Defense Agency, and U.S. Army Portfolio Acquisition Executive Fires; and
- (5) creating and accelerating an operational pilot program with Air Combat Command, at one or more NORTHCOM air bases, in support of National Defense Strategy priorities, such as Langley Air Force Base or Whiteman Air Force Base, to

validate hardware, software, and TTPs from USAFE ABAD into North American Aerospace Defense Command/NORTHCOM.

PROCUREMENT, DEFENSE-WIDE

Items of Special Interest

Affordable, Long-Endurance Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Platforms

The committee recognizes the increasing operational demand for affordable, long-endurance unmanned intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms capable of providing persistent sensing, targeting support, and situational awareness in contested and austere environments. The committee supports affordable solutions that can deliver operational flexibility and effects at significantly lower cost than traditional manned and unmanned systems, while also mitigating risk to personnel and enhancing endurance of forward-deployed units and distributed operations. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 1, 2027, on efforts related to affordable, long-endurance unmanned ISR platforms. The briefing shall include:

(1) a description of low-cost, long-endurance unmanned ISR capabilities currently awaiting transition to a service sponsor following maturation through a Department of Defense experimentation program;

(2) a summary of proposed operational use cases, lessons learned from exercises or deployments, and feedback from operational units;

(3) an overview of the acquisition pathways being utilized to field these capabilities; and

(4) the Department's strategy and timeline for transitioning successful low-cost, long-endurance unmanned ISR capabilities into formal programs of record, including potential program sponsors and associated funding requirements.

Ground and Maritime Tactical Network Resilience

The committee supports the Department of Defense's rapid procurement and integration of commercial information technology solutions to bring enhanced connectivity to ground and maritime formations. The committee is encouraged by the Department's adaptation of commercially available high, medium, and low-earth orbit satellite constellations, terrestrial radio waveforms, 5G, and Wi-Fi capabilities. Proper integration of these capabilities will provide formations with options for transportation of data across operational formations. Due to the ever-evolving threat environment, the committee remains concerned that efforts must meet resiliency requirements specified in Section 168 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (Public Law 116-92), and Section 114 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026 (Public Law 119-60).

To ensure proper network resiliency standards are being implemented and tested across ground and maritime forces, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the congressional defense committees not later than December 1, 2026, on the testing and fielding plans for any new procurements for such network, including:

- (1) how any new efforts meet the resiliency requirements specified in Section 168 of Public Law 116–92 and Section 114 of Public Law 119-60;
- (2) how any new programs will utilize National Security Agency-mandated high assurance certified encryption or obfuscation techniques;
- (3) how new efforts will utilize multi-band or multi-orbit satellite terminal technology; and
- (4) plans to complete threat-informed developmental and operational test and evaluation prior to fielding new capabilities to the operational Navy and Army forces for use other than for experimentation.

Scale Production-Ready Low-Cost Munitions

The committee supports the Department of Defense’s efforts to increase production capacity for critical munitions. However, the committee is concerned that the Department’s proposals largely focus on expanding output along existing, traditional production lines and do not sufficiently broaden the industrial base or diversify the inventory with new, low-cost munitions. The committee recognizes the need for additional low-cost munitions to complement exquisite capabilities and mitigate risks associated with insufficient capacity to effectively sustain long-range fires in a protracted conflict.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the service secretaries, to submit a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 1, 2026, on scaling low-cost munitions. The briefing should including the following information:

- (1) the total munitions requirement (TMR) over the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) for all munitions, including the quantities needed to meet urgent, high-volume surge capacity in the event of conflict;
- (2) the planned total inventory over the fiscal year 2027 budget request and FYDP for all programmed munitions and subsequent capacity shortfalls;
- (3) a listing of production-ready, low-cost munitions capabilities having been evaluated for affordability, utilization of modern manufacturing approaches, capability of scaling production quantities, and projected outputs over the FYDP, and identified by the Department as capable of fulfilling identified inventory gaps between demand and anticipated inventory;
- (4) a detailed strategy for implementing a mixture of exquisite and affordable munitions capabilities;
- (5) an assessment of how low-cost munitions are being factored into the traditional TMR process;

- (6) identification of any changes required to the TMR process to more accurately account for novel threat targets as well as low-cost munitions; and
- (7) an assessment of cost per kill as a factor in TMR analysis.

TITLE II—RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION, NAVY

Items of Special Interest

Airborne Augmented Reality Capability for Department of the Navy

The committee is aware of United States Navy pilot training challenges and notes that airborne augmented reality systems can increase fleet readiness by improving advanced aerial combat training against realistic threats. The committee expects the Secretary of the Navy to take a more aggressive approach developing a plan for fielding an airborne augmented reality capability to augment fleet readiness training.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than October 1, 2026, describing the plan for fielding an airborne augmented reality capability to augment fleet readiness training in the Department of the Navy.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

Items of Special Interest

Collaborative Combat Aircraft Cost and Capability Assessment

The committee is familiar with Air Force and Navy programs for Collaborative Combat Aircraft that plan for the fielding of large quantities of aircraft at the lowest possible unit cost. While the committee supports minimization of cost through effective use of existing technologies, efficient acquisition processes, and rapid testing, it remains supportive of ensuring critical capabilities are still effectively fielded. As the Air Force proceeds into Collaborative Combat Aircraft Increment 2 and the Navy develops its initial concepts, the committee anticipates a possible need for aircraft with sufficient range, speed, and electrical power to potentially self-deploy from the continental United States and conduct varied missions for geographic combatant commanders. This is particularly valid given the risks of operating from the Pacific theater's "first island chain," which is held at risk by Chinese long-range weapons. Sufficiently bolstering forward deployed combat airpower, while keeping fleet life-cycle costs low, will require aircraft capable of reliably carrying out an array of missions over extended ranges, all while minimizing attrition.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary of the Navy to each provide a report to the congressional defense committees not later than January 15, 2027, about the impact of cost while determining requirements for Collaborative Combat Aircraft programs. The report should determine the impact of unit cost minimization on aircraft attributes and overall fleet-wide operational costs. The report should also identify specific technology integration, including any proposed commercial off-the-shelf and modified off-the-shelf options, that could minimize fleet-wide costs while reducing attrition and expanding operational flexibility.

F-35 Power Thermal Management System Modernization

The committee understands that as part of the F-35 modernization program, an engineering analysis is underway by the F-35 Joint Program Office (JPO) and the F-35 original equipment manufacturer to define the F-35's Block 4 and future Block "X" power generation, cooling, and thermal management architectures and systems to support a required minimum and maximum capacity of 62kW and 80kW, respectively, provided by the Power Thermal Management System (PTMS). The committee notes that the analysis is estimated to be completed by the end of calendar year 2026. In September 2025, the Government Accountability Office noted in its report titled "F-35 Joint Strike Fighter: More Actions Needed to Address Late Deliveries and Improve Future Development", that the F-35 program "plans to begin production of the [Power Thermal Management Unit] PTMU in 2033, the same year that post-Block 4 capabilities will require the increased power and cooling, providing limited, if any, time for schedule delays should they occur."

To date, the Block 4 aircraft modernization program has been underfunded and has delayed timely completion of the aforementioned analysis and implementation of its recommendations. The committee is concerned that any further delays could interfere with modernizing the architecture of the aircraft to meet installation and usage of more advanced and effective combat mission systems. The F-35 JPO must appropriately manage its responsibilities to develop and field Block 4 capabilities, inclusive of the critical supporting subsystems for which both Block 4, and future capabilities beyond Block 4, are dependent. The Department expects the F-35 to have a service-life into the 2070s, therefore, maximizing capability growth margin for future cooling demands is critical.

Therefore, the committee directs the Program Executive Officer, F-35 JPO, in coordination with the Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary of the Navy, to provide a report to the Senate Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 15, 2026, on the status of the PTMS modernization program. The report should be unclassified but may include a classified annex, and at a minimum, include the following information:

- (1) the current status of the PTMS trade study, including total cooling requirements, an assessment of the defense industrial base to support PTMS

design, development, and fielding timelines, and the expected schedule for choosing a PTMS solution following completion of the trade study analysis;

(2) how the F-35 JPO plans to ensure sufficient growth margin is designed into the upgraded PTMS to support any future combat capabilities through the planned service-life of the F-35;

(3) key performance parameters for each subsystem of the PTMS to support Block 4 and beyond Block 4 mission systems and weapons capabilities;

(4) the acquisition strategy and schedule of significant events and milestones for the PTMS major acquisition subprogram established by section 226(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (P.L. 118-31); and

(5) the fiscal resources required, by military service and fiscal year, to ensure successful aircraft integration of an upgraded PTMS to meet the timelines required for each military service.

Fiber-Optic Drone Production

The committee believes fiber optic drones could provide great value to warfighters on current and future battlefields. These drones are more resilient to jamming, spoofing, and electronic attack; provide higher throughput data processing; and provide secure communication between operators and the platform they are operating. The committee is concerned, however, that given the predominantly military use cases for these systems, there might not be a robust commercial market for fiber-optic drone production in the United States.

Accordingly, the committee directs the Director of the Drone Dominance Program to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 15, 2027, assessing the commercial market for fiber optic drones. The report shall include:

(1) an assessment of the commercial market for fiber optic drones, in the United States and elsewhere;

(2) a determination on whether a viable fiber-optic drone market exists;

(3) a plan for how the Department of Defense plans to remediate the lack of production capacity for fiber optic drones if the determination is made that a viable commercial market does not exist; and

(4) a plan for integrating fiber optic drones across the joint force.

Integrating Lethality Metrics and Industrial Base Agility for Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems

The committee notes the important role that small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) will play on current and future battlefields. The committee commends the Department of Defense's Drone Dominance Program for its efforts to drive demand for sUAS and help spur a domestic sUAS industrial base. The committee believes the Drone Dominance effort could incorporate artificial intelligence and other tools to measure the lethality and system performance of

sUAS in a standard, data driven, and consistent manner. Therefore, the committee directs the Director of the Defense Innovation Unit to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than March 1, 2027, outlining how the Drone Dominance Program is objectively measuring sUAS lethality and market performance in a data driven way and how these measurements will inform requirements, budget prioritization, and force design.

TITLE X—GENERAL PROVISIONS

ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Department of Defense Counter Unmanned Aircraft Systems Coordination

The committee remains concerned about the growing threat that unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) pose to the U.S. homeland, military installations, critical infrastructure, and general public. The Department of Defense must move quickly to develop capabilities that can sufficiently counter this threat while maintaining safety in the National Air Space. To do so, the Department of Defense must collaborate closely with interagency partners to ensure streamlined coordination and prevent additional safety and security incidents in National Air Space.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Director of the Joint Interagency Task Force 401, to submit a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than December 1, 2026, examining interagency coordination and authority gaps between the Department of Defense and relevant agencies on the testing and deployment of counter UAS technology to protect Department installations in the United States.