



## DEFENDING OUR JOBS



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Fund the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter For America's War Fighters and Workers

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Seventy years ago, America became the "arsenal of democracy," as our industrial workers produced the fighter planes, as well as the ships, tanks, guns and ammo, to win World War II. In so doing, the Greatest Generation lifted the nation from the Great Depression and laid the groundwork for postwar prosperity.

Now, the nation once again confronts daunting challenges, and it's time to take our can-do spirit out of cold storage. As the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on America approaches, we're fighting two wars while facing near-double-digit unemployment.

Fortunately, there's one strong step that Congress can take to show our nation's leaders are serious about protecting our national security and our economic security. By fully funding the military's newest and most advanced fighter jet, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, Congress can give our war fighters the air support they need, while generating the good-paying jobs that can jumpstart our economy.

Yes, our fighter jets are still the best in the world. But the fleet is aging, and its technologies are being superseded by recent discoveries and developments. By utilizing these next-generation technologies and incorporating economies of scale and commonality, the F-35 program will allow three variants of one advanced plane to serve multiple roles and replace several aging aircraft.

With its versatility and cost-effectiveness as well as its impressive roster of prospective customers among our Armed Services and our closest allies, the F-35 makes sense in an era when federal spending is closely scrutinized. The Joint Strike Fighter will serve the US Air Force, Navy and Marines, and eight allied partner countries - the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark, Australia and Turkey - have already committed substantial investments in the program.

Developing any advanced technology isn't easy or error-free. But, at every step along the way, the F-35 program has overcome the obstacles, addressed the challenges, and perfected the product. In fact, the program executive officer for the Jet Strike Fighter, US Navy Admiral David Venter, a former test pilot himself, recently reported that "flight tests are revealing that the F-35 Lightning II will likely hit several performance goals that were once in doubt."



As the testing continues, the plane reaches its next phase of production, and economies of scale kick in, the F-35's costs will decline. And our country will be closer to adding the most advanced fighter plane on the planet as a crucial component of our national security arsenal.

When the F-35 takes wing, working Americans will benefit from tens of thousands of high-skill, high-wage, high-tech, family-supporting jobs. Even now, before full production ramps up, the F-35 program supports a broad industrial base of more than 1,300 suppliers in 47 states and Puerto Rico. Directly and indirectly, the F-35 program contributes at least 127,000 American jobs and creates over \$12 billion in economic activity.

These are the kinds of jobs that are absolutely essential to rebuilding the economy and renewing our global competitiveness. These jobs are at the juncture of the aerospace industry, which is America's export powerhouse; the high-tech sector, which represents our economic future; and the manufacturing base, which sustains our middle class but suffered the loss of some 5,000 jobs in May.

Make no mistake: Congress must continue to support the F-35 program which maintains our global leadership, militarily and economically, while keeping our commitments to our closest allies.

America's allies depend on continuing the F-35. America's war fighters deserve a state-of-the-art fighter jet. America's workers demand more high-wage family-supporting jobs. Now, it's up to Congress to make sure that America remains the world's "arsenal of democracy" and powerhouse of prosperity.

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