

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 5, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Vice Chair Collins:

As the House and Senate work towards passing the Fiscal Year 2024 defense appropriations bills, we urge you to fund the following defense priorities that are important to Michigan's military installations and our country.

We strongly urge you to increase funding for the advanced procurement of additional fighter aircraft such as the F-15EX for Fiscal Year 2024. Bases around the country, including Selfridge Air National Guard Base, are set to see their aging fighter aircraft divested in the coming years. We must take action now to recapitalize bases like Selfridge, which is uniquely positioned to host a new, long-term fighter mission. Michigan's unique physical environment and industrial capabilities are an asset to any fighter mission based at Selfridge, and in turn, an asset for the Air National Guard and the Air Force. Procuring additional aircraft and basing them at Selfridge would further fill an operational gap along the northern border as we look to threats over the polar arctic corridor.

Additionally, we strongly support and thank you for including \$23 million for Exercise Northern Strike in FY 2024. Bringing together participants from roughly half of our states and territories and several of our international partners, Northern Strike is a joint exercise focusing on expeditionary skills, command and control, sustainment, and joint integrated fires. We are proud that Michigan has hosted Northern Strike since 2012, and servicemembers from across the country and the world have the opportunity to utilize Michigan's National All-Domain Warfighting Center (NADWC). As one of the Department of Defense's largest reserve component readiness exercises, Northern Strike is an asset to our national security posture and readiness.

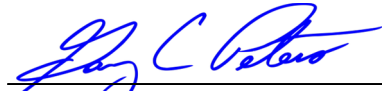
Finally, we strongly support robust funding for the modernization of Army National Guard facilities and armories to ensure equity and readiness for female servicemembers. Thanks to funding in Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations bills, the Michigan Army National Guard has already begun several projects to modernize its facilities across the state. Many facilities are still in need of urgent upgrades. Our female servicemembers are crucial to the Total Force, and our investments must match that commitment.

We realize the difficult budgetary constraints facing this year's defense funding bills, particularly due to demands from the House majority. We strongly urge your consideration of these critical items for Michigan as you finalize funding for Fiscal Year 2024 defense appropriations.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator