February 1, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to you today in regards to your Presidential Memorandum on the hiring freeze of federal civilian employees. We applaud your intention to reduce the size of the federal government and lessen the bureaucratic burden that has accumulated over the last eight years.

However, the implementation of this memorandum, though only nine days in effect, has already negatively affected the Department of Defense (DOD). DOD acquisition personnel negotiate contracts critical to our national security, from commercial off-the-shelf products to major defense acquisition programs. They bear the distinguished responsibility of obligating taxpayer dollars to procure essential defense equipment and services, and their defense industry counterparts often outnumber them while doing so.

In an effort to secure a fair and reasonable price, these federal civilian professionals are gradually contributing to the force restoration our military so desperately needs. Each Service currently confronts a readiness crisis – museum aircraft cannibalized for spare parts, a Naval fleet unable to meet even half of Combatant Commander requirements, two-thirds of our Armored Brigade Combat Teams unfit for deployment, and a 50% increase in Marine Corps aviation Class-A mishaps over the past two years. Our military needs its acquisition personnel fully staffed and fulfilling their public service. Yet the military departments are now interpreting the Hiring Freeze memorandum to include these federal civilians essential to national security and military readiness.

For that reason, we strongly urge you to clarify your Presidential Memorandum as quickly as possible, and support the complete resourcing for DOD contracting offices. Their work directly impacts our military’s ability to modernize its equipment and keep its technological edge against a broad range of threats.

Sincerely,

Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress

Rob Bishop
Member of Congress
Mike Turner  
Member of Congress

Rob Wittman  
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress

Mo Brooks  
Member of Congress

Bradley Byrne  
Member of Congress

Walter Jones  
Member of Congress

Steve Knight  
Member of Congress

Elise Stefanik  
Member of Congress

Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

Mike Gallagher  
Member of Congress

Scott Taylor  
Member of Congress

Scott DesJarlais  
Member of Congress
Dr. Neal Dunn
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Ralph Abraham M.D.
Member of Congress

Paul Cook
Member of Congress

Tom Cole
Member of Congress