

United States Senate

July 9, 2021

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Tester and Ranking Member Shelby,

Thank you for your continued leadership on the Defense Appropriations sub-committee. As you begin drafting the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Defense Appropriations bill, we request you include the following priorities in the initial draft of the Defense Appropriations bill.

The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the “Warthog,” has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm’s way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. Yet, the FY22 President’s Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.

However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses that are necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.

As such, we request you include \$272,000,000 in the Defense Appropriations bill to restore all funding to the A-10 program in FY22 and an additional \$615,000,000 in procurement to complete the ongoing wing replacement program for the remainder of the A-10 fleet.

The A-10 has served our military well through every major conflict since its delivery, from Desert Storm to the War on Terror. And it continues to do so today at just 20 percent of the operational cost of what would be required to operate the Air Force’s proposed alternative for close air support. By increasing support for this cost effective and combat-proven platform in FY22, we can ensure a robust close air support capability remains part of our national defense and that ground troops have the very best protection available. Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this program.

Sincerely,



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Reverend Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator

Defense Group Letter Table
DEF_Kelly_Group_210709-014514[LetterID 9389]

ID	Sub	Request Agency or Account	Request Project Name	Request (\$000)
58322	DEF Group	[Title I]/[AIR FORCE]/[Military Personnel, Air Force]/[Undistributed]/[--]/[--]/[MPF]/[UNDIST]/[UNDIST] [Member Staff] - Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Military Personnel)	\$62,280
58527	DEF Group	[Title II]/[AIR FORCE]/[Operation & Maintenance, Air Force]/[Airlift Operations]/[--]/[--]/[OMAF]/[240]/[021A] [Member Staff] - Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Operation & Maintenance)	\$120,640
58531	DEF Group	[Title V]/[AIR FORCE]/[Working Capital Fund, Air Force]/[Supplies and Materials]/[--]/[--]/[WCFAF]/[020]/[110] [Member Staff] - Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Working Capital Fund)	\$56,360
58533	DEF Group	[Title III]/[AIR FORCE]/[Aircraft Procurement, Air Force]/[A-10]/[Weapon System Cost]/[--]/[APAF]/[28]/[A01000] [Member Staff] - Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Wing Replacement Program)	\$22,960
58535	DEF Group	[Title III]/[AIR FORCE]/[Aircraft Procurement, Air Force]/[A-10]/[Weapon System Cost]/[--]/[APAF]/[28]/[A01000] [Member Staff] - Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535	A-10 Re-Wing Program Funding	\$615,000

Appropriations Request Database

Request ID: 58322			
Agency or Account:	[Title I]/[AIR FORCE]/[Military Personnel, Air Force]/[Undistributed]/[-]/[-]/[MPF]/[UNDIST]/[UNDIST]	Project Name:	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Military Personnel)
Member/s:	Kelly, Mark(D-AZ); Ossoff, Jon(D-GA); Peters, Gary(D-MI); Sinema, Kyrsten(D-AZ); Stabenow, Debbie(D-MI); Warnock, Raphael(D-GA)	Subcommittee:	DEF
Request Type:	Group	Staff Contact:	Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535
Justification:	<p>The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the "Warthog," has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm's way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. In fact, the FY22 President's Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.</p> <p>However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses due to Congress that would be necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.</p>		
Proposed Bill Language:		Proposed Report Language:	We request you include \$62.28M in the Defense Appropriations bill to restore all funding to the A-10 program in FY22 for military personnel.
Member's Request:	\$62,280	Member's Request (text):	
Enacted Level:	\$0	President's Request:	\$0
CBB Line No:	UNDIST	CBB Program Element:	UNDIST
CDS Request:	No	Performing Location:	

Appropriations Request Database

Request ID: 58527			
Agency or Account:	[Title II]/[AIR FORCE]/[Operation & Maintenance, Air Force]/[Airlift Operations]/[--]/[--]/[OMAF]/[240]/[021A]	Project Name:	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Operation & Maintenance)
Member/s:	Kelly, Mark(D-AZ); Ossoff, Jon(D-GA); Peters, Gary(D-MI); Sinema, Kyrsten(D-AZ); Stabenow, Debbie(D-MI); Warnock, Raphael(D-GA)	Subcommittee:	DEF
Request Type:	Group	Staff Contact:	Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535
Justification:	<p>The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the "Warthog," has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm's way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. In fact, the FY22 President's Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.</p> <p>However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses due to Congress that would be necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.</p>		
Proposed Bill Language:		Proposed Report Language:	We request you include \$120,640,000 in the Defense Appropriations bill to restore all funding to the A-10 program within the Operations & Maintenance account, including \$33.86M for civilian manpower, and \$66.82M Flying Hour Program, \$1.32M non FHP, \$18.64M Training and Ranges.
Member's Request:	\$120,640	Member's Request (text):	
Enacted Level:	\$0	President's Request:	\$0
CBBB Line No:	240	CBBB Program Element:	021A
CDS Request:	No	Performing Location:	

Appropriations Request Database

Request ID: 58531			
Agency or Account:	[Title V]/[AIR FORCE]/[Working Capital Fund, Air Force]/[Supplies and Materials]/[--]/[--]/[WCFAF]/[020]/[110]	Project Name:	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Working Capital Fund)
Member/s:	Kelly, Mark(D-AZ); Ossoff, Jon(D-GA); Peters, Gary(D-MI); Sinema, Kyrsten(D-AZ); Stabenow, Debbie(D-MI); Warnock, Raphael(D-GA)	Subcommittee:	DEF
Request Type:	Group	Staff Contact:	Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535
Justification:	<p>The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the "Warthog," has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm's way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. In fact, the FY22 President's Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.</p> <p>However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses due to Congress that would be necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.</p>		
Proposed Bill Language:		Proposed Report Language:	We request you include \$56.36M for weapons system sustainment, within the Air Force Working Capital Fund for the A-10 program in FY22.
Member's Request:	\$56,360	Member's Request (text):	
Enacted Level:	\$0	President's Request:	\$0
CBB Line No:	020	CBB Program Element:	110
CDS Request:	No	Performing Location:	

Appropriations Request Database

Request ID: 58533			
Agency or Account:	[Title III]/[AIR FORCE]/[Aircraft Procurement, Air Force]/[A-10]/[Weapon System Cost]/[-]/[APAF]/[28]/[A01000]	Project Name:	Restore A-10 Program Cuts (Wing Replacement Program)
Member/s:	Kelly, Mark(D-AZ); Ossoff, Jon(D-GA); Peters, Gary(D-MI); Sinema, Kyrsten(D-AZ); Stabenow, Debbie(D-MI); Warnock, Raphael(D-GA)	Subcommittee:	DEF
Request Type:	Group	Staff Contact:	Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535
Justification:	<p>The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the "Warthog," has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm's way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. In fact, the FY22 President's Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.</p> <p>However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses due to Congress that would be necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.</p>		
Proposed Bill Language:		Proposed Report Language:	We request you include \$22.96M for the Wing Replacement Program within Air Force Procurement for the A-10 program in FY22.
Member's Request:	\$22,960	Member's Request (text):	
Enacted Level:	\$0	President's Request:	\$0
CBBJ Line No:	28	CBBJ Program Element:	A01000
CDS Request:	No	Performing Location:	

Appropriations Request Database

Request ID: 58535	
Agency or Account:	[Title III]/[AIR FORCE]/[Aircraft Procurement, Air Force]/[A-10]/[Weapon System Cost]/[-]/[APAF]/[28]/[A01000]
Member/s:	Kelly, Mark(D-AZ); Ossoff, Jon(D-GA); Peters, Gary(D-MI); Sinema, Kyrsten(D-AZ); Stabenow, Debbie(D-MI); Warnock, Raphael(D-GA)
Request Type:	Group
Justification:	<p>The A-10 Thunderbolt II, also known as the "Warthog," has for years served as the backbone of the Air Force close air support capability that protects troops in harm's way. There can be no debate about the effectiveness of the aircraft in carrying out this lifesaving mission. In fact, the FY22 President's Budget contemplates retirement of a portion of the A-10 fleet as a means of finding savings to support other programs within the constraints of a moderate growth topline.</p> <p>However, the A-10 is the only aircraft that can currently provide adequate and reliable close air support. Alternate platforms the Air Force has suggested to take up this mission have continued to demonstrate lower than expected mission capable rates, and remain the subject of comparative analyses due to Congress that would be necessary to provide confidence in their ability to take up the mission. As such, retirement of such a significant portion of the A-10 fleet in FY22, when no proven replacement is available for this mission, is premature.</p>
Proposed Bill Language:	
Member's Request:	\$615,000
Enacted Level:	\$0
CBB Line No:	28
CDS Request:	No
Project Name:	A-10 Re-Wing Program Funding
Subcommittee:	DEF
Staff Contact:	Joe Russell joe_russell@kelly.senate.gov 202-224-4535
Proposed Report Language:	We request you include \$615M for the re-wing of the A-10 program in FY22.
Member's Request (text):	
President's Request:	\$0
CBB Program Element:	A01000
Performing Location:	