

January 17, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer Majority Leader United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Republican Leader United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 The Honorable Kevin McCarthy Speaker United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries Democratic Leader United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell, and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the Aerospace Industries Association, which represents more than 300 of the nation's most innovative and integral aerospace and defense suppliers and manufacturers and more than 2.1 million employees across the country, I write today with significant concerns related to proposed arbitrary federal budget cuts as the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress begins. While we commend Members of Congress for the desire to act as responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, cutting spending for our national defense and other key agencies like National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) does just the opposite. We urge this Congress to thoughtfully consider all aspects of the federal budget and utilize the budget process wisely to enhance America's security, as well as our global leadership and economic growth.

Congress must continue bipartisan support for strong investments in the Department of Defense (DoD), which received overwhelming bipartisan bicameral support as recently as December and consistently over the last few years. America's national security is an enduring responsibility that requires adequate, stable, and predictable funding. Such certainty is essential to our industrial base, which is a key part of America's asymmetric advantage and our ability to deter war. Our allies and our adversaries are watching; we must meet the moment unified in our shared mission to protect the American people and our values. At a time when the world is more dangerous than ever, we cannot send mixed signals about our commitment to national security.

Likewise, Americans depend on the FAA to maintain and improve the highest levels of aviation safety, and for NASA to help maintain our global lead in space research and exploration. The FAA, for example, is in the middle of a significant reform of its aircraft certification process – directed by Congress in bipartisan fashion – that requires additional resources for staffing, training, and execution. At the same time, our global economic



leadership in aircraft design is being challenged by China and other nations, and NASA's aeronautics research is vital to confronting that challenge.

You, as our national leaders, must produce a budget that addresses fiscal concerns, while also protecting programs vital to our national security, the safety of our citizens, and U.S. global competitiveness. This will require careful analysis each year in the budget and appropriations process, rather than fixed and arbitrary budget caps that caused such turmoil and uncertainty during the years that the Budget Control Act was in place. Moreover, it is important to remember that discretionary spending is only 30 percent of the overall federal budget each year, so serious attempts to address fiscal and debt concerns must be focused more broadly if they are to be effective over the long term. Capping the federal discretionary budget at arbitrary levels, as has been suggested by some, would only return America to the dangerous and paralyzing levels of budget instability from which our military is still recovering.

Beyond providing adequate investment, Congress must avoid a protracted debt ceiling debate and end its reliance on continuing resolutions and government shutdowns as a means of governing. American families and businesses continue to struggle under very real and serious economic conditions like inflation, workforce difficulties, and ongoing supply chain disruptions. Uncertainty emanating from Washington would exacerbate these already serious challenges.

Congress has the responsibility for upholding the commitments they make to the American people, and we urge them find common ground and common cause when it comes to governing.

The aerospace and defense industry looks forward to working with you on responsible investments in the DoD, FAA, and NASA that ensure America continues to innovate and remains competitive on the world stage.

Respectfully,

Eric Fanning President & CEO Aerospace Industries Association