September 22, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
1233 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
233 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Minority Leader  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader McConnell, Leader Pelosi, and Leader Reid:

The Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) and the leaders of our member companies wish to be heard concerning Congressional plans for a continuing resolution (CR) affecting proposed government spending for FY 2017. Together our companies and the defense and aerospace supply chain provide 1.7 million jobs and make up 13% of the nation’s manufacturing employment base. The Aerospace and Defense sector is the manufacturing sector’s leading net exporter and generated a record trade surplus of $81 billion in 2015.

That’s a record of getting things done and contributing substantially not only to our national security but also to economic growth and stability. It’s exactly why we hope you’ll listen and act when we urge Congress to complete action on any viable combination of detailed and final FY 17 appropriations bills. We listened with enthusiasm and approval at the beginning of this year when it was suggested that restoration of regular order would be a top priority of leadership in both chambers. We collectively urge you to finish that work this year.

We understand the need to enact a CR by September 30th to avoid disrupting the government’s work or sending the wrong signal to financial markets. It is an approach that has become the operating practice in recent Congresses. It serves a constructive purpose when it buys time to finalize the detailed decisions made earlier in the year by the committees of oversight and jurisdiction. A CR path that ignores this work and defers decisions into 2017 would be an unwelcome development. Extended CRs are not an effective way to address budget deficits or policy concerns with the executive branch.
A CR that goes beyond the current calendar year will unnecessarily delay new programs and will deny federal agencies the ability to smoothly implement existing ones. Deferring key decisions could be particularly harmful when our military is deployed globally to address the challenges which include a sustained campaign against ISIS, responding to China’s military assertiveness and reassuring allies under the threat of Russian aggression.

Please support our nation’s economic and national security by properly funding national priorities and avoiding an extended CR for FY 17. A record of legislative accomplishments that includes final and stable spending decisions for FY 17 will support our warfighters and their families, allow our industry to plan efficiently, and help both domestic and defense focused federal agencies execute their responsibilities more effectively.

Sincerely,

David F. Melcher
Lieutenant General, USA (Ret.)
President & CEO
Aerospace Industries Association

Anne D. Shubunko
Pres/Owner GSE Dynamics
AIA-SCC Co-Chair
Exec. Committee Member

Clare McFarrey
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Randy D'Amico
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President

Frank Power  
President, Ascent Mfg.  
Anthony, CA.

David Campbell  
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Tom Schmitt  
WSI Industries

Mr. Foster  
CEO  
Precision Gear Inc.

Chad Stecker  
Director, Strategic Sourcing  
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James R. Lorentzen  
Business Dev. Mgr.  
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Christopher N. Walsh  
President - American Products Company

Will Austin  
Will Austin, Director of Government Affairs, Loral Corp.

Tim Cantina  
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