



February 18, 2026

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Democratic Leader Schumer, and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

The hundreds of members of the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) and 2.2 million workers employed by the aerospace and defense industry represent not only the best of U.S. innovation, aviation safety, and national security, but also a close partnership with the Department of Defense (DOD), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and other federal agencies. As you begin the second session of the 119th Congress, we respectfully request that Congress prioritize the following issues in legislation this year:

**Stable, Predictable, and Sufficient Federal Funding**

Our industry's critical contracts with the DOD, FAA, NASA, and other agencies, as well as decisions on private investment and workforce, depend on predictable and consistent demand signals from the annual budget and appropriations process. AIA's member companies look to Congress for clear and stable procurement commitments — over a sustained time horizon and backed by consistent, sufficient investment — to enable them to build manufacturing capacity, expand their workforce, and deliver at speed. AIA appreciates the recent enactment of fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations and continues to urge Congress to eliminate the practice of long-term continuing resolutions and instead pass on-time and adequate appropriations for FY2027.

**Implementing Defense Acquisition Reform**

To strengthen the defense industrial base Congress should advance policies to make it easier for companies across the defense ecosystem, from trusted partners to new entrants to vital suppliers, to do business with the government. The FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) made significant changes to the acquisition processes at DOD. The defense industrial base appreciates that Congress took important actions to reduce burdensome bureaucracy, accelerate the contracting process, and lower the cost of doing business with the government, while turning back proposals that would have created industrial harm. While we work to realize the benefits of these changes, we believe further reforms of defense contracting and acquisition policies would provide even greater benefit, and we look forward to working with the congressional Armed Services Committees to advance additional proposals in the FY2027 NDAA.

**Safety Enhancement and Efficiency in Commercial Aviation**

The U.S. commercial aviation sector has seen rapid and increasingly complex growth driven by rising demand, technological innovation, and the emergence of new aviation markets. To remain safe, resilient, and globally competitive across both traditional and emerging sectors, the United States must ensure that the FAA's authority, capability,



and credibility in aviation safety remain unmatched. Building on the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024, recent air traffic control modernization funding, and strong support for FAA programs in the FY2026 Transportation-Housing-Urban Development funding bill, continued congressional investment and support is essential to advance certification reform, strengthen aviation safety, and support research and development, workforce development, and infrastructure critical to the future of U.S. aviation.

### **Next-Generation Space Capabilities**

The U.S. space industry has seen tremendous growth and increasing importance to our nation's economic and national security success, which will culminate this year in America's return to the Moon. To maintain these schedules, Congress must prioritize appropriations for FY2027 at levels that sustain growing civil space requirements and support a long-term sustainable space environment. U.S. space industry success is also dependent on clear direction from Congress, requiring passage of legislation reauthorizing NASA and commercial space activities. Finally, our national security space enterprise relies on the timely enactment of an FY2027 NDAA that directs the expanded mission requirements of the U.S. Space Force and provides authorities and funding for the Golden Dome defensive system.

### **Modernizing Defense Trade**

Global trade is optimized through clear and consistent policies and regulations that prioritize cooperation with allies and partners while incentivizing domestic producers. Global markets are integral to fostering innovation and accelerating the development of emerging technologies. The recent AUKUS Improvement Act and foreign military sales improvements included in the FY2026 NDAA highlights that strong international partnerships enhance U.S. capabilities, boost domestic industrial base capacity, and support American jobs. Continuing to improve the defense trade process, building more resilient supply chains, and accelerating technology release reviews are essential to U.S. economic and national security. By addressing these key areas, Congress can promote global stability and maintain United States leadership abroad.

### **Reauthorizing Important Agencies and Programs**

In the coming year, Congress will have the opportunity to address several programs and agencies that are vital to the nation's success. To that end, we urge Congress to reauthorize in a timely fashion the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act, and the Defense Production Act. These programs and agencies are fundamental to sustaining American aerospace manufacturing growth and prosperity and creating well-paying jobs, and their reauthorizations are critical to the health of our industry.

We appreciate your attention to these issues and look forward to continuing to work with you to strengthen our national security, enhance aviation safety, and encourage the next generation of space innovation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Fanning', is positioned above the printed name.

Eric Fanning  
President & CEO  
Aerospace Industries Association