



# International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

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## ***DEFENSE SPENDING: NATIONAL SECURITY AND JOB CREATION***

Robust U.S. defense spending is not only necessary to ensure the sovereignty and safety of our nation, but also creates hundreds of thousands of jobs and is the very backbone of the United States manufacturing sector.

Record levels of defense spending in recent years have certainly helped improve our military readiness and capability while at the same time creating high quality, union jobs in the defense industry. However, additional defense spending is needed to combat the accumulated effects of the threat of across the board budget sequestration in the recent past under the Budget Control Act. While the discretionary spending caps under the Budget Control Act expired at the end of FY21, we must be careful not to repeat these mistaken policies. It is the IAM's firm position that lawmakers must work past arbitrary budget caps, eliminate the threat of budget sequestration, and spend appropriately on national defense to ensure that our military men and women have the tools need to do their job safely and effectively.

### ***Buy American Requirements***

In order to fully harness the economic benefits of U.S. defense spending and provide the highest quality products to our nation's warfighters, the Machinists Union strongly advocates for strengthening Buy American requirements for federal defense procurement. The Machinists Union strongly supports an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) offered by Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Congressman Donald Norcross (D-NJ) entitled, Enhanced Domestic Content Requirement for Major Defense Acquisition Programs. This language would increase Buy American domestic content requirements to 75% for all Department of Defense major defense procurement programs moving forward. The Machinists Union also strongly supports Congressman Norcross's Military Industrial National Defense Supply Act, or MINDS Act, which would dramatically strengthen domestic content requirements and bolster our defense supply chain. The Machinists Union also supports the reduction and elimination of loopholes that reduce the effectiveness of domestic content requirements.

### **As the largest defense and aerospace union in North America, we strongly support the following defense programs:**

#### ***F-35 Joint Strike Fighter***

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is our nation's only 5th Generation stealth aircraft currently in production and is the key to future U.S. air superiority. In order to restore planned production rates, maintain cost savings, and ensure future air dominance the F-35 program requires robust and consistent funding from Congress. As global threats continue to rise, it is critical that the United States continue to invest in F-35 modernization, sustainment and ramp up to full production rate. While significant progress has been made in reducing unit costs, the production line must ramp up to continue this positive trend. For these reasons, **the Machinists Union urges Congress to support funding for at least an additional six aircraft above the FY 2024 DoD budget request of 83 for a total of at least 89 F-35s in FY 24.**

### ***C-130 Strategic Airlift***

The U.S. must maintain its strategic airlift capability through continued production of the C-130J Hercules. The C-130J is the most modern military tactical transport in service today. **There are only two US Marine Corps KC-130Js in the DoD budget request for Fiscal Year 2024. The Machinists Union strongly supports funding for two additional KC-130Js per the USMC's unfunded request and eight additional C-130Js for Air National Guard fleet recapitalization for a total of 12 C-130Js in FY 2024.**

### ***F-15EX Eagle***

The Administration's FY 2024 budget requests 24 F-15EX aircraft to provide an immediate opportunity for the Air Force to address capacity and readiness issues in its current fighter fleet. The Air Force has extended the current F-15C/D fleet well beyond its expected service life. The Air Force has now determined that purchasing new F-15EX aircraft is a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars than executing life extension and modernization programs of the aging F-15C/D fleet. The Machinists Union supports the Administration's request for procurement of 24 F-15EX in FY 2024.

### ***Aerial Refueling***

The Administration's FY 2024 Budget request includes \$3.01 Billion for 15 KC-46 Pegasus refueling tankers that will be critical to finally replacing the aging Eisenhower era KC-135 tankers currently in use. For continued cost reduction and sustainment of this vital Air Force program the Machinists Union supports the Administration's request of funding for 15 KC-46 tankers in FY 2024.

### ***Support U.S. Ship Building***

The U.S. Navy released a 30-year shipbuilding plan in April 2022 that contained three scenarios for the Navy fleet level goals ranging from 321 to 404 manned ships. Even the most modest of these three scenarios will not be achieved without significant funding increases and consistent support for future ship procurement. Although progress has been made in recent years, more needs to be done to ramp up shipbuilding efforts. In Fiscal Year 2024, the IAM supports funding of an additional Virginia-class submarine in FY 2024 moving to 3 Virginia-class subs this year and continued ramp up of the Columbia-class submarine program. The Machinists Union also strongly supports full funding for 3 DDG-51 destroyers, funding for continued construction of 3 aircraft carriers (CVN 79, 80 and 81) and continued investment in the John Lewis class Fleet Oiler. Additionally, more can be done to sustain U.S. shipbuilding by strengthening the Jones Act, funding the Title XI Ship Loan Guarantee Program, and by limiting leases of foreign-built ships by the Department of Defense.

### ***Fully Fund NASA***

NASA has long been one of our nation's largest generators of new technologies, products, and manufacturing jobs. We strongly support the Air Force's investment in National Security Space Launch Program's Phase 3 as it builds off of the extraordinary success of Phase 2. Additionally, we continue to support the Launch Services Program, the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, and further investment in space operations and scientific discovery.