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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4602

March 2, 2010

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE
READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE
SEAPOW AND EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
SUBCOMMITTEE
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE
HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
HOUSE SMALL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CONTRACTING AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX AND FINANCE

The Honorable Charles J. Colgan
Chairman
Senate of Virginia Finance Committee
General Assembly Building Room 626
P.O. Box 396
Richmond, Virginia 23218

The Honorable Lacey E. Putney
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
General Assembly Building Room 947
P.O. Box 406
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Chairmen Colgan and Putney:

We write to strongly urge you to continue funding the land acquisition program for Accident Potential Zones surrounding Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana. We understand that the Virginia Senate budget proposal cuts all funding in both years of the upcoming biennium and that the Virginia House of Delegates proposal only funds the program at \$7.5 million during the first year of the upcoming FY2011-12 biennium.

For nearly 70 years, NAS Oceana has had a far-reaching positive impact on the economy of the Commonwealth. NAS Oceana employs more than 10,000 personnel and provides in excess of \$1 billion in economic benefit to the Commonwealth. With continued strategic land acquisition, Oceana will continue to be an excellent investment. The partnership between Virginia Beach and the Commonwealth has thus far been successful in reducing and reversing encroachment around NAS Oceana. In fact, the Department of Defense civilian in charge of the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) program was quoted in October, 2009 as saying, "Oceana is like the phoenix that rose from the ashes and the city and state's program is a model for the entire nation."

The Navy is in the nascent stages of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) basing process and will identify specific criteria for the JSF in the near future. NAS Oceana is a strong contender for this mission, a mission that would produce thousands of additional jobs in Hampton Roads. However, as was noted during the public debate during the 2005 BRAC round, the future of Oceana's mission is largely dependent on aggressively addressing the issue of Accident Potential Zone encroachment. Not funding this critical program will send a discouraging message to the U.S. Navy.

In these tough economic times, we applaud your efforts to close the budget gap and improve fiscal responsibility. However, we strongly urge you to include a minimum of \$7.5 million for this critical program in the upcoming biennium - the level of last year's appropriation - as proposed by the House of Delegates.

Again we realize these are very difficult fiscal times for the Commonwealth but the loss of NAS Oceana would have far greater damaging effects on employment and economic growth in Virginia.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

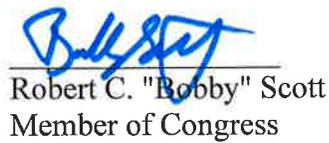
Sincerely,



Glenn Nye
Member of Congress



J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Robert McDonnell, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia