

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 3, 2019

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan
Acting Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Shanahan,

We write to express our concern with respect to the abrupt decision to not renew the long-standing JASON contract. We believe that cancelling the JASON contract could damage our national security by depriving not only the Pentagon, but also other national security agencies, of sober and sound advice in confronting some of the Nation's most complex threats.

For more than half a century, the Nation's elite scientists and technologists, through JASON studies, have provided the executive branch and Congress with independent expert advice on the most important and consequential technical issues facing our nation. Members of Congress have long counted on their nonpartisan, independent, science-based advice to inform our decisions on a range of national security issues facing our nation, such as nuclear weapons, space, and emerging technologies.

We commend the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) for stepping forward to assume responsibility for the JASON contract through January 2020, thereby allowing this year's studies to be completed as planned. However, given the national security interests involved in cancellation of the JASON contract, a permanent solution must be found. We encourage you to work with NNSA and the other agencies that utilize JASON to find an appropriate long-term home for JASON, whether it be Research and Engineering, another office, such as Acquisition and Sustainment, or NNSA.

We also would ask that you provide our offices with responses to the following questions:

- What was the reason for cancellation of the JASON contract?
- Please provide evidence that the single contract model will be more fiscally responsible, will result in improved work products, and will be more efficient than the current ID/IQ agreement.
- Please describe how you will minimize any disruptions to work planned for this year because of the transfer of the contract from Research and Engineering to NNSA.

- Will the Congressionally-mandated independent assessments of electronic warfare plans and programs, and plutonium aging and the lifetime of plutonium pits in nuclear weapons still be delivered on time?

We look forward to hearing your responses to the above questions and working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



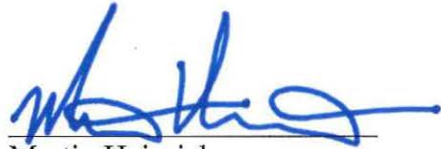
Bill Foster
United States Representative



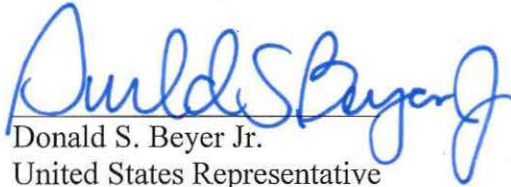
Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
United States Representative



Anthony G. Brown
United States Representative



Sean Casten
United States Representative



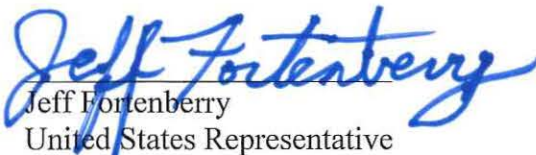
Jim Cooper
United States Representative



Danny K. Davis
United States Representative



Chuck Fleischmann
United States Representative



Jeff Fortenberry
United States Representative




John Garamendi
United States Representative



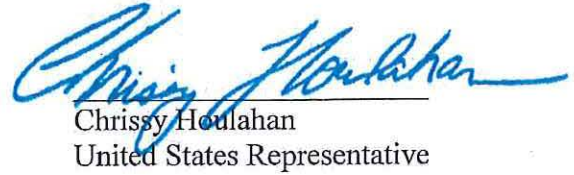
Deb Haaland
United States Representative



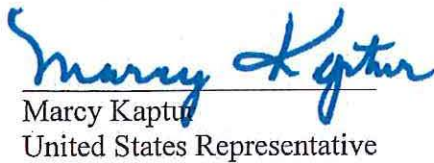
Katie Hill
United States Representative



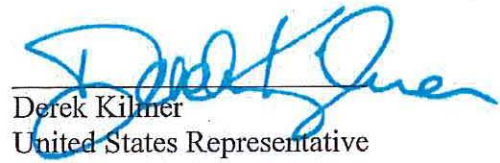
Jim Himes
United States Representative



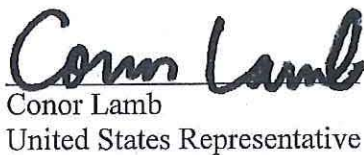
Chrissy Houlahan
United States Representative



Marcy Kaptur
United States Representative



Derek Kilmer
United States Representative



Conor Lamb
United States Representative



James R. Langevin
United States Representative



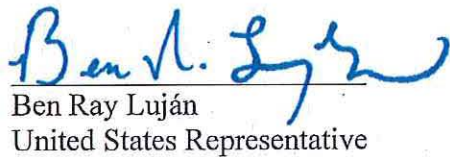
Rick Larsen
United States Representative



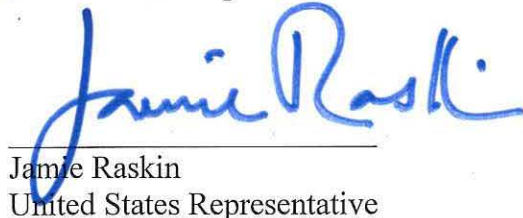
Daniel W. Lipinski
United States Representative



Zoe Lofgren
United States Representative



Ben Ray Luján
United States Representative



Jamie Raskin
United States Representative



Bobby L. Rush
United States Representative



Tim Ryan
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