Washington, D.C. – U.S. Reps. Tom Rooney (FL-16) today sent a Dear Colleague letter to members of the House to rebut claims made against his amendment to strike the wasteful extra engine program.

Text of the letter is below:

Dear Colleague:

Today you will consider my Amendment to strike funding for the alternate engine for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. I wanted to provide you with recent arguments made by Secretary Gates that adamantly dispute the claims made by supporters of the extra engine.

CLAIM: *"Congress must fund the production of two engines so they can compete for future government contracts to supply the engine once the jet is in production. This 'competition' will save money in the long run."*

REBUTTAL: By this argument, if two engine sources are better than one, then three or four or even ten would be better than two. Just like we cannot afford ten engines, we cannot afford two. Competition does not mean buying two of everything. If that were the case, every aircraft would have multiple source engines.

Secretary Gates has said, "Even after factoring in this unneeded finding, DoD's cost Analysis and Program Evaluation (CAPE) estimates that the engine still requires a further investment of $2.9 billion to make this program truly competitive by FY17.

"The $2.9 billion cost is real and certain but the benefits of a second engine are not. CAPE has

concluded that a second engine might provide savings if both engine vendors respond to competitive pressure and drive prices lower and the second engine supplier matches the F135's vendor prices for the duration of the competition. The navy has stated they will only buy one engine to avoid having to maintain two different engines aboard a ship. While DoD favors competition where possible, in this case there would not be true competition between the engine vendors. Therefore, it is DoD's strong judgment that these real costs outweigh the theoretical benefit."

CLAIM: *"The safety of our military will be put at risk without a dual source engine"*

REBUTTAL: Out of 28 Department of Defense Aircraft Programs, only one, the F-16, utilizes a dual source engine. Do the supporters of the extra engine for the F-35 believe we should introduce extra engines for the other 27 planes? Multiple engine sources do not improve safety. On the contrary, it complicates missions by requiring the armed forces to have two sets of parts, two sets of mechanics, etc.

Secretary Gates stated that "…a single engine strategy for a program like the JSF is not new and does not create unacceptable levels of risk. Contrary to some assertions, the use of a single engine manufacturer has been a successful strategy for critical tactical fighter programs such as the F-22 and F/A-18E/F."

Support our nation's war fighters, support the Secretary of Defense, support the Rooney Amendment.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress

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