

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 7, 2013

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Senate Appropriations Committee
Senate Dirksen Office Building, Room 122
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin:

As the Senate Appropriations Committee's Defense Subcommittee prepares to mark up the FY14 Department of Defense Appropriations bill, we write today on behalf of our constituents who build the U.S. Army's M1A2 Abrams tank to ask that you provide \$181 million to the U.S. Army's budget request to upgrade 24 M1A2 Abrams main battle tank.

Continued production of the Abrams tank is necessary to maintain the critical industrial base required for current and future platforms that meet our national security needs. We applaud the Army's recognition of the critical role played by the specialized workforce that builds the Abrams at the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio and Scranton, PA. In fact, we want to call your attention to the following statement by LTG William Phillips, the service's top weapons procurement officer: "The industrial base is very important to our Army. The JSMC Lima, Ohio facility is also critically important. And it's not the Army's intent to shut down the Lima [facility], because it is critical to the industrial base."

It is the Army's position, however, that the U.S. tank industrial base – the highly-skilled, high-wage workforce that builds the Abrams in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Alabama and Ohio and at over 800 large and small critical suppliers across the Nation -- can be sustained by foreign military sales only. Unfortunately, expected overseas sales have not closed in the time frame necessary to maintain Abrams tank production.

Therefore, we urge you to ensure that funding is provided to upgrade 24 M1A2 Abrams tanks in you mark up of the FY14 Department of Defense Appropriations bill. Only sustained low-rate Abrams modernization for the U.S. Army can ensure the tank industrial base can be maintained.

Thank you for your leadership on these important matters.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown



Robert P. Casey Jr.