



The looming Sequestration is one of the biggest threats facing our nation today. Without swift action a law that was enacted to serve as a threat to the failed "Supercommittee" will become a horrible reality.

I support a right sizing of our defense budget, and do not believe that the Department of Defense should be immune to cuts as we focus on eliminating our deficit and reducing the national debt. I've supported efforts to end unnecessary defense expenditures and to better spend our defense dollars. However, the automatic cuts scheduled to hit the Department of Defense and eliminate a total of one trillion dollars of defense spending over the next ten years are too much.

The Department of Defense has already been tasked with reducing spending by \$486 billion under the Budget Control Act. These cuts would reduce our military to an extraordinarily small size in an increasingly dangerous world. It would reduce the size of our forces by an additional 100,000 personnel: down to the smallest ground force since 1940. It would take our Navy to a size we haven't seen since 1915. If our stated strategy is one of a pivot toward the Pacific, a region defined and dominated by naval forces, this is simply unacceptable.

Chairman of the Joint Staff General Martin Dempsey was recently told by the president's Office of Management and Budget that Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds would not be exempted from the across the board cuts. OCO money is used to equip and support the forces we have deployed forward in Afghanistan. This would mean that we would be taking away resources from the men and women who are actively engaged in fighting in defense of our country -- the ultimate insult to those brave men and women, and a break of faith with those individuals who have sworn to protect our country.

Beyond the serious threats to our national security, recent reports released by Aerospace Industries Association and the National Association of Manufacturers reveal that these cuts would devastate our already fragile national economy. Even before sequestration takes place companies are cutting investments, laying off workers, and shutting down operations that are a vital part of our defense industrial base. It is estimated that when sequestration takes place the country will lose over one million private sector jobs, with the bulk of that loss occurring by 2014. At a time when our unemployment rate has been over 8% for the last forty months, eliminating

this many positions and flooding the already stressed job market with more unemployed laborers would be devastating. My state of Colorado alone stands to lose over 20,000 jobs with the combined effects of the recent budget cuts and sequestration.

The good news is that we know that this problem exists and we know how to fix it. House Armed Services Committee Chairman McKeon has introduced legislation (HR 3662, Down Payment to Protect National Security Act) to fend off this devastating military budget hollowing. What is needed is consensus among the rest of Congress to address this issue now, and not assume that it will be solved at later date. Large contractors and small business alike have already begun to prepare for the implementation of this policy by scaling down their operations and laying-off workers. Every day that we fail to act threatens our national security, Americans' jobs, and our industrial base their existence.

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