

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 30, 2019

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate on Armed Services
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

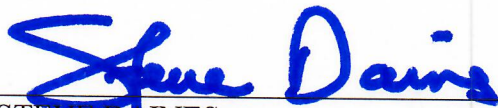
Thank you for your dedicated efforts to put together a strong, bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for the defense of our nation. As you work to finalize a conference agreement, we write you in strong support of provisions included in the Senate bill to authorize the administration's FY20 nuclear modernization request, including the funding levels for the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD), the W87-1 warhead, and plutonium pit production.

The effectiveness of our nuclear deterrent is rooted in the flexibility of the nuclear triad, its reliability, and its ability to stay ahead of the capabilities of our adversaries. Russia and China's aggressive nuclear modernization efforts and continued North Korea missile tests serve as a stark reminder that our adversaries are as determined as ever to advance their nuclear capabilities. To reaffirm the U.S. nuclear deterrent and our extended deterrence commitments in today's complex security environment, we must prioritize the effective and efficient modernization of all three legs of the nuclear triad. The Senate NDAA provides \$590 million for GBSD, \$112 million for the W87-1 warhead and fully supports the National Nuclear Security Administration requirement to produce 80 plutonium pits per year by 2030. The House bill underfunds these programs, jeopardizing the timely fielding of the GBSD – a situation we must avoid.

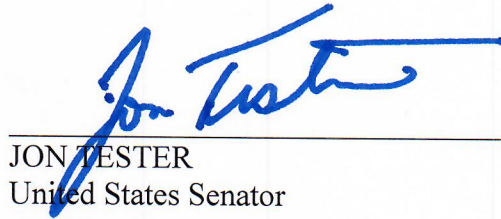
We will continue to call upon the Department of Defense (DoD) to advance existing modernization programs as expeditiously as possible, including approving critical milestones for the GBSD program, the W87-1 warhead, and plutonium pit production. We urge DoD to preserve a robust program of nuclear modernization across the next five-year defense plan, and to continue articulating the value of strategic deterrence and the need for nuclear modernization in light of a wide array of strategic challenges facing the United States and our allies.

However, it is also critical for Congress to do its part. We appreciate your ongoing work to ensure our nation retains a safe, reliable and effective deterrent for decades to come and again express our strong support for the Senate bill's position on nuclear modernization within the FY20 NDAA as conference negotiations move forward.

Sincerely,



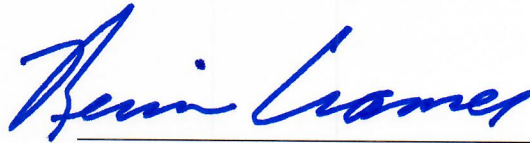
STEVE DAINES
United States Senator



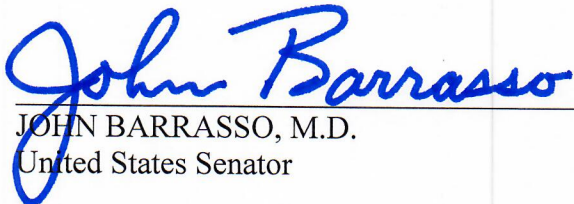
JON TESTER
United States Senator



JOHN HOEVEN
United States Senator



KEVIN CRAMER
United States Senator



JOHN BARRASSO, M.D.
United States Senator



MICHAEL B. ENZI
United States Senator