Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

May 18, 2022

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2116 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2116 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Rogers,

The United States faces an unprecedented range of national security challenges, including a variety of novel threats related to climate change. In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress acknowledged on a bipartisan basis that climate change "is a direct threat to the national security of the United States." The Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition's (SEEC) National Security Task Force believes we must take a holistic approach to these challenges. As you work to develop the FY23 NDAA, we encourage investments in programs and guidance to the Department of Defense (DoD) that will promote energy security and ensure mission resilience.

As you are aware, Section 2801 of the FY20 NDAA directs the Department of Defense to update military installation master plans to incorporate resilience, particularly as it relates to installation and mission vulnerabilities. Further, this section directed the Department to propose specific projects that would address the vulnerabilities identified in the updated master plans. The identification of vulnerabilities and the proposal of projects to address them would aid the Department and Congress in bolstering installation resilience, enabling DoD to continue fulfilling its mission in a world threatened by a changing climate. Unfortunately, the Department has yet to fulfill the requirements of Section 2801. Therefore, we urge you **conduct oversight measures through the FY23 NDAA to require DoD to complete the requirements of Section 2801 of the FY20 NDAA**.

According to DoD's FY20 Operational Energy Annual Report, 44.5 percent of all Department operational energy use in FY20 consisted of commercial aviation fuel, which, along with additives, can be used to power DoD aircraft. The interoperability of commercial-grade jet fuel allows the Department to purchase aviation fuel from a wide range of commercial sources, encouraging greater market competition and facilitating the global availability of fuel for military aircraft. Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) produces less carbon emissions than traditional petroleum-based fuels, and in order to continue enjoying the benefits of market competition and global availability of fuel for military aircraft, DoD should seek to keep aircraft compatible with commercial aviation fuel, partnering with the private sector to ensure commercial fuel remains adaptable for military uses. In so doing, DoD will also significantly reduce its carbon emissions. Therefore, we urge the Committee to authorize robust funding for the **Direct Air Capture and Blue Carbon Removal Technology Program,** which is actively developing technologies to

capture carbon from the air and ocean and convert it into sustainable fuels, complementing additional efforts already underway at the Department of Energy, Federal Aviation Administration, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Presently, DoD operates several well-established programs that advance our national security through their work on mission resilience, energy assurance, and envirophysical risk management. Supporting these offices will better enable them to fulfill their mission and promote readiness across the Department. Therefore, as you craft the FY23 NDAA, we support robust authorizations for the following programs:

- **The Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP)**, which focuses on cross-Service requirements and pursues solutions to the Department's most-pressing environmental challenges.
- **The Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP)**, which identifies and demonstrates the most promising innovative and cost-effective technologies and methods that address DoD's high-priority environmental requirements.
- **The Operational Energy Capability Improvement Fund (OECIF),** which improves operational effectiveness via targeted investments aligned with DoD's Operational Energy Strategy
- **The Operational Energy Prototyping Fund (OEPF),** which validates more mature operational energy technologies in order to transition them to widespread use.
- **The Army Office of Energy Initiatives**, which develops, implements, and oversees the Army's large-scale energy projects focused on enhancing energy resilience on Army installations.
- **The Air Force Office of Energy Assurance**, which serves as the aggregator for installation energy and water resilience initiatives.

Furthermore, the Department of the Navy established the Navy Renewable Energy Program Office (REPO) within the Office of Energy, Installations, and Environment (EIE) in 2014 to bolster the Navy's energy resilience through the integration of renewable energy on Navy installations. During the previous administration, the Navy moved REPO from EIE to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and split its responsibilities between NAVFAC's Real Estate office and NAVFAC's Utility group. Therefore, as you craft the FY23 NDAA**,** we urge you to authorize robust funding increases for **NAVFAC's Real Estate office** and **NAVFAC's Utility group.** However, the SEEC National Security Task Force believes that the division of REPO's responsibilities has resulted in a decentralized and less effective effort to incorporate renewable energy into Navy installations. Therefore, we request that the Committee reestablish REPO in its initial form within EIE.

DoD must also do more to integrate climate security into security cooperation programs, which is why we respectfully request an authorization of **$3 million for the Defense Environmental International Cooperation (DEIC) program.** For years, DoD has recognized the value of security cooperation "to provide stability, help mitigate drivers of conflict, and assure key partners and allies."[1] These priorities are increasingly linked with climate threats, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, where rising sea levels pose an existential threat to some countries, and the People's Republic of China has offered some a blank check for environmental projects.[2] DEIC supports climate security modules within security cooperation programs that improve mission resilience, build partner capacity, and strengthen relationships. Supporting DEIC would enable it to expand training and, for the first time, support liaison billets within each of the Combatant Commands to better integrate DEIC programs into partnerships and inform strategic planning.

We must also continue to build capacity in our own defense institutions, which is why we respectfully request report language and the authorization of associated **funding for continuing education for DoD personnel related to sustaining mission resilience and envirophysical risk management.** The private sector maintains a wealth of knowledge and best practices for how to best evaluate and plan for the threats posed by extreme weather, resource scarcity, and other risks related to climate change. DoD acquisitions and installations personnel, in particular, could benefit from further training, professional development, and continuing education on how these challenges may shape business decisions. We urge DoD to study how best to leverage public-private partnerships and existing curriculum to promote private-sector best practices within the acquisitions and installations work forces, and to authorize funding for such efforts.

Finally, we note the ongoing transition to electric non-tactical vehicles in the federal government, and the implications this will have for DoD facilities in the near future. The General Services Administration leases nontactical military vehicles from commercial automotive companies, enabling agencies including DoD to rotate new passenger cars, vans, or light-duty trucks every few years. The majority of these auto companies are phasing out petroleum-powered cars and switching to electric vehicles in the next ten to 15 years. DoD must be prepared for this industry shift and ensure that military installations have the power and charging infrastructure to support electric vehicles. Therefore, we request authorized funding **for charging stations and other electric vehicle infrastructure on military installations.**

Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry has said, "In my judgement, climate change is the biggest non-state-actor threat there is, and we have a lot of planning to do."[3] The sensible priorities outlined in this letter will greatly contribute to the readiness of the warfighter, the

[1] https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_20_20172305.pdf

[2] https://apnews.com/article/china-new-zealand-environment-pacific-ocean-marshall-islands-ec40aeea0cd5da4a17d6f3012e5874ff

[3] https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/04/john-kerry-discusses-relationship-between-climate-change-and-security/

resilience of our installations, and the strength of our relationships with partners and allies. For these reasons, we strongly urge you to include the SEEC National Security Task Force's requests in the FY23 NDAA. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Porter
Member of Congress
SEEC National Security Task Force Co-Chair

James R. Langevin
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A. Donald McEachin
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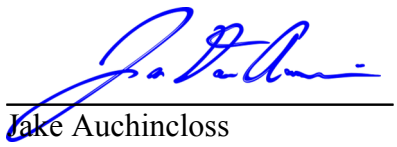

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress