

Note from AFA President -- F-22

AFA members, Congressional staffers, Civic leaders, and DOCA members, there is a fight going on in Washington about the F-22. In short, the Obama Administration thinks 187 aircraft are enough, while many in Congress think we need more.

AFA sides with Congress on this issue. We point out that the 187 number is already 186 since one has crashed. And we say that 186 means only about 100 operational -- given those in training, depot, test, etc. Can we really believe that in the next 30 years, we will not be faced with a situation where our ground forces will not depend on air dominance; where we would not want the skies clear so our A-10s and UAVs can operate freely; and where the US military won't be called upon to strike a highly defended target? We believe 100 operational aircraft presents a higher risk than is necessary for the nation. Others agree with our assessment.

As in any political fight, there are those who write and say things which are not factually accurate. That happened last Friday AM when the Washington Post published, on the front page, an article <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/09/AR2009070903020.html?hpid%3Dtopnews&sub=AR> which claimed the F-22 had maintenance and other major problems. Both the Air Force and AFA have responded ... noting the many inaccuracies of the piece. We put on our web site a short paper which lays out the actual facts. You can find it here: [http://www.afa.org/edop/2009/edop\\_7-13-09.asp](http://www.afa.org/edop/2009/edop_7-13-09.asp)

On Monday, the President signed a letter to the Senate, threatening a veto if funds for the F-22 were included in the Authorization bill. An additional letter was signed by Sec Gates and ADM Mullen. You can find both letters at: [http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day13/ObamaF-22Ltr\\_SASC\\_071309.pdf](http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day13/ObamaF-22Ltr_SASC_071309.pdf) and [http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day13/Gates-MullenF-22Ltr\\_SASC\\_071309.pdf](http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day13/Gates-MullenF-22Ltr_SASC_071309.pdf)

Last week, the office of Sen Chamblis [R-GA) asked AFA for our views. I responded with a letter to Senator Carl Levin, (D-MI), that can be found here: [AFA Letter to Senator Levin](#). Also, I penned an op-ed ... which has yet to be published. It can be found on our website at: [http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2009/edop\\_7-14b-09.asp](http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2009/edop_7-14b-09.asp).

Another viewpoint is from an op-ed written by Senators Hatch and Inhofe can be found here at [http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2009/edop\\_7-14-09.asp](http://www.afa.org/EdOp/2009/edop_7-14-09.asp)

Additional viewpoints from the commander of Air Combat Command can be found here at [http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/June%202009/Day17/CorleyResponse\\_060909.pdf](http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/June%202009/Day17/CorleyResponse_060909.pdf) and the Air National Guard can be found here [http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day09/Wyatt\\_to\\_Chambliss.pdf](http://www.airforce-magazine.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Reports/2009/July%202009/Day09/Wyatt_to_Chambliss.pdf)

The state of play is as follows: The Senate votes today or tomorrow on the issue. Next the Appropriations committees of both the House and Senate take up the question. [The House has already added funds for the F-22 in its Authorization bill.] We will keep you informed of the status daily with postings on the AIR FORCE Magazine's Daily Report.

For your consideration.

Mike

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