



News From:
U.S. Congressman John B. Larson
serving Connecticut's First District
805 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
221 Main Street, 3rd Floor
Hartford, CT 06106

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 9, 2003

LARSON OPPOSES CUTS TO F/A-22 FIGHTER PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) today voted against legislation in the House Armed Services Committee's Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee that would cut \$161 million from the F/A-22 Raptor fighter program. Larson supported an amendment offered by Rep. Phil Gingrey (GA-11) that would have restored the funding to the program. However, the amendment was ruled out of order by the subcommittee chairman.

Larson stated: "Although the base bill preserves the request of 22 aircraft, I voted against this measure because I am deeply concerned about the effect that even a perceived reduction to the program would have on the aviation industrial base, especially the smaller second and third tier subcontractors, given the significant downturn facing the commercial aviation market at this time. If critical programs are cut, such as the F/A-22, the ability to sustain the workforce that currently exists becomes increasingly difficult and we will face a continued erosion of these highly skilled and value-added jobs from the American economy.

"I am disappointed that the subcommittee did not have an opportunity to vote on the amendment that would have restored this funding to the program. The F/A-22 is vital to our national security interests in the 21st Century. It is the only aircraft that will be capable of countering anti-access threats of advanced SAMs, cruise missiles, fighter aircraft, and other similar threats from day one. I look forward to the opportunity to take up this amendment in the full committee next week," said Larson.

Larson was the only member of the subcommittee to vote against the legislation that would cut funding from the F/A-22 program.

###