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Members of the CT House Delegation Welcome GAO Decision Upholding Boeing Protest of Air Force Tanker Contract Award

Washington, D.C. - Members of the Connecticut House Delegation issued the following comments, following the Government Accountability Office's decision to sustain the Boeing protest of the Air Force acquisition process for the \$35 billion award to replace the aging KC-135 air refueling tankers.

In the GAO's review of the record, they concluded "that the Air Force made a number of significant errors that could have affected the outcome of what was a close competition between Boeing and Northrop Grumman. We therefore sustained Boeing's protest." The decision to sustain the protest was based on seven points, including that the Air Force failed to assess the relative merits of the proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria identified in the solicitation; the Air Force conducted misleading and unequal discussions with Boeing; and the Air Force's evaluation of military construction costs in calculating the offerors' most probable life cycle costs for their proposed aircraft was unreasonable. Please click [here](#) to view the GAO report sustaining Boeing's protest.

“Given the Air Force's mistakes in the acquisition process, it is clear that GAO could only make one decision: this contract needs to be revisited. Had the Air Force actually evaluated the proposals with the criteria it outlined, the contract award would have gone to the Boeing and Pratt and Whitney team. This was the best-value solution, which has unrivaled capability and operational flexibility,” said Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-3). “As our economy continues to shed jobs - 325,000 since the beginning of the year - it should be noted that the Boeing proposal would support at least twice as many jobs in the U.S. We should not be sending more jobs overseas or outsourcing our defense technological base. We should be creating jobs at home, supporting local innovation, and investing in our economy.”

“The GAO's announcement reaffirms our position that the Air Force made a deeply flawed decision in its choice of the next generation of mid-air refueling tankers. This is a great victory for the American workforce and the people of Pratt and Whitney. The Air Force failed to take into account important lifecycle costs and the overall cost to American industry of outsourcing this vital contract. What Boeing offered the Air Force was the best plane with the best value to the military and the country. The Air Force's initial decision was based on faulty information and bad analysis. At a time when unemployment numbers are skyrocketing and Americans are struggling to make ends meet, they paid no attention to the impact their decision would have on our economy. I hope and trust that as we move forward with a fairer more open process in reassessing this bid, that the Air Force will bring in all of these important factors in its decision-making process. The eyes of the entire country are on them,” said Congressman John Larson (CT-1).

“It's a do-over for the Air Force. After months of debate over why the Air Force determined that it would be best to outsource our defense work to foreign nations while our skilled workforce in Connecticut sits idly by, we finally will have a chance to compete fairly. This decision is what's best for the economy and security of not only Connecticut, but the nation,” said Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5).

“This was exactly the right call,” said Rep. Courtney. “The GAO confirmed what Connecticut knew all along: that significant errors made by the Air Force throughout the process led them to choose the wrong plane. The Air Force needs to adopt all of the GAO's recommendations as we move forward in a new and fair selection process. We cannot allow a deeply flawed process to jeopardize our national security and economy.”

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