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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY
548 Cannon House Office Building
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November 19, 2023

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

As members of the Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party ("CCP"), we write to you today to urge you to increase funding for the Indo-Pacific, our stated priority theater, above the levels set in the Biden Administration's supplemental appropriations request to more appropriately address the urgency of the threat in the region. The administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy argues that we are entering a "decisive decade" for the region, while the President has warned that we are "facing an inflection point in history—one of those moments where the decisions we make today are going to determine the future for decades to come."[1] We strongly agree. However, this is precisely why the resources dedicated to the Indo-Pacific in the Administration's proposed supplemental are wholly inadequate.

Today, the world is witnessing the horrific consequences of conflict in Europe and the Middle East. Ensuring that Israel and Ukraine have the resources they need to defeat authoritarian aggression today is in our direct national security interests. Yet if we fail to provide the resources necessary to deter CCP aggression tomorrow, history will not forgive our inaction nor will it spare us the consequences. Future generations of Americans that live in a world that is less secure, less

[1]https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/U.S.-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/10/20/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-unites-states-response-to-hamass-terrorist-attacks-against-israel-and-russias-ongoing-brutal-war-against-ukraine/

prosperous, and less free will look back at this moment and ask why we failed to act with urgency when Xi Jinping's hostile intent and robust military capabilities were so clear.

In the last few months alone, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has orchestrated near-collisions and unsafe intercepts of U.S. maritime and aviation assets, harassed Philippine re-supply ships operating legally in the South China Sea, and continued its pressure and intimidation campaign against Taiwan. Xi is building a coalition of subservient authoritarian states while attempting to coerce those who resist, establishing a "no-limits" partnership with Vladimir Putin, supporting Iran through illicit petrochemical purchases, and exporting the CCP's totalitarian system across the globe. All the while, its military buildup—the largest peacetime military expansion since the Second World War—continues at warp speed. America is a Pacific nation, and it is our longstanding and direct interest to ensure a stable and secure Indo-Pacific.

To be clear, the dedicated resources for Indo-Pacific priorities in the supplemental request are vital. The $2 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for the Indo-Pacific, and Taiwan in particular, will strengthen the region's military preparedness. With FMF grants, we could both increase and accelerate the delivery of critical defensive capabilities, including Harpoon coastal defense cruise missile systems, mine-laying systems, air defense weapons, anti-armor systems, drone systems, and multiple launch rocket systems.[2] We could also use a portion of the $2 billion in FMF to provide key allies and partners, like the Philippines, with enhanced capabilities to defend their sovereignty over disputed features like the Second Thomas Shoal. Also critical is the $3.4 billion in requested funding for AUKUS-related domestic submarine industrial base investments, which need to be complemented with related and overdue reforms to International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) to deliver upon the promise of AUKUS and expand technology sharing with our closest allies.

But to appropriately meet the urgency of the CCP threat, we need to go further than the supplemental request. This starts with adding $2 billion to backfill Presidential Drawdown Authority (PDA) to rapidly provide Taiwan with key U.S. military equipment, including the reauthorization of $650 million in Taiwan drawdown authority that the Administration let expire in FY 2023. Under PDA, existing U.S. stocks of air defense systems, command-and-control equipment, gear for Taiwan's reserve forces, land- and sea-based mines, and multiple launch rocket system vehicles could bolster Taiwan's forces tomorrow.[3]

Furthermore, additional investments on the order of $10 billion are required to urgently enhance our own ability to respond in the event of a conflict. We must translate the rhetoric on restoring America's defense industrial base into action. This starts by maxing out current production lines for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's (INDOPACOM) critical munitions while pouring concrete for new facilities to increase production capacity moving forward. Just a few of these critical munitions include Long-Range Anti-Ship Missiles, Naval Strike Missiles, Patriot batteries, ATACMS, PrSMs, Harpoons, and Joint Strike Missiles. We must also backfill INDOPACOM's multibillion-dollar unmet requirements hole and accelerate billions of dollars worth of MILCON projects in the region or directly tied to contingency response, like the Guam Defense System, which is essential for homeland defense and enabling and dispersing our forces. In particular,

[2] https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/2023/10/23/heres-how-to-fix-the-supplementals-shortcomings-on-taiwan/
[3] https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/2023/10/23/heres-how-to-fix-the-supplementals-shortcomings-on-taiwan/

regional logistics and sustainment require immediate attention to ensure U.S. forces have the supporting infrastructure necessary to facilitate a crisis response.

Finally, we must ensure that previously allocated DoD resources are directly contributing to combat readiness and deterrence. Each year, DoD is required by law to return billions of dollars in expired, canceling balances to the Treasury. These are resources that DoD could be leveraging to rebuild America's arsenal of deterrence, including critical munitions and Navy shipbuilding. H.R. 5753 would establish a Funding Indo-Pacific Readiness and Enhancing Stockpiles (FIRES) Fund to use these unobligated balances to enhance combat lethality. Had this fund been in place prior to the end of the fiscal year, DoD would have been allowed to retain $11 billion in now-canceled funds to support the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, build towards Congress's 355-ship statutory requirement, and enhance operational infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific. If this fund had existed ten years prior, the Pentagon would have been able to maximize $125 billion in already appropriated funds to deter the PRC. With the most complex and challenging threat picture our nation has faced in decades, we are in no position to allow defense dollars to disappear.

The Indo-Pacific, our priority theater, must not be an afterthought. In order to safeguard peace in Asia and deter conflict on a scale we have not seen in generations, we must act before it is too late. For while deterrence may be hard, war is hell. We must enhance the Indo-Pacific supplemental request and treat the CCP threat with the gravity it deserves. Our men and women in uniform, whom we may one day soon ask to step into harm's way, deserve no less.

Sincerely,

Mike Gallagher
CHAIRMAN

Darin LaHood
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Ashley Hinson
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Rob Wittman
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