

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0309

November 2, 2022

The Honorable Heidi Shyu
Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Under Secretary Shyu:

We write to voice our strong support and intent regarding the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee recommended Fiscal Year 2023 (FY2023) funding level of \$50 million in the Defense Appropriations bill toward Mission Acceleration Centers (MAC) to develop a national network of geographically disperse and strategically located innovation defense ecosystems within the National Security Innovation Network (NSIN).

We strongly agree with your testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, in which you stated that “the Department must harness our Nation’s incredible innovation to stay ahead of our adversaries” and that “when collaborating with the commercial sector in particular, DoD should leverage the commercial sector’s tremendous investments in research and development and accelerate DoD’s ability to incorporate innovative, commercial technologies.” You have been instrumental in leading the Department of Defense (DoD) toward a focus on innovation across all the Armed Services and we believe the MAC construct will support you in this endeavor to enhance engagement with and acquisition from a robust pool of innovative, non-traditional vendors, such as startups, entrepreneurs, and other small and medium sized businesses to meet defense challenges.

The anticipated \$50 million in FY2023 for Mission Acceleration Centers to grow across the country will give the DoD the opportunity to co-locate and collaborate with non-profits, academia, and a broad spectrum of private industry that includes entrepreneurs and venture capitalists that will accelerate the pace of innovation regarding the challenges facing the DoD. By continuing the Pacific Northwest MAC and expanding to key defense ecosystems to include but not limited to Arizona, Hawaii, Kansas and Ohio, the DoD will be able to leverage regional expertise through embedded industry experts to deliver timely and innovative solutions to national security problems.

Please consider us your allies when you proceed to obligate and execute FY2023 funding to the sustainment and expansion of Mission Acceleration Centers. We believe in your desired outcomes to expedite innovation to support warfighters and strongly support the implementation of a national MAC network to fulfill that goal. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your leadership in the Department and for all those who serve.

Sincerely,



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Cc: Hon. Patrick Leahy, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Richard Shelby, Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Rosa L. DeLauro, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Jack Reed, Chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services
Hon. James Inhofe, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Armed Services
Hon. Adam Smith, Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services
Hon. Mike Rogers, Ranking Member, House Committee on Armed Services