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June 15, 2025

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman, Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
2205 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subj: Testimonies at Subcommittee Hearings Last Week

Dear Hon. Subcommittee Chairman Calvert:

This is a follow-up to my letter of May 14, Subj: Yet Another Program Management Failure and Flawed Earned Value Metrics. It includes pertinent elements of statements presented at hearings last week, including your hearing:

1. Secretary of Defense Hegseth's commitments to eliminate non-essential and redundant roles in the workforce and to eliminate unnecessary vestiges of the past.
2. GAO Director Oakley's Statement, DEFENSE ACQUISITION REFORM Persistent Challenges Require New Iterative Approaches to Delivering Capability with Speed.

Their statements and my recommendations address your concerns and those of Chairman Cole:

1. Need for modernization and the ability to respond quickly to emerging threats.
2. Troubling delays and cost overruns.
3. Challenge the status quo.
4. Bring disruption and competition into the Department which can yield better and faster results.
5. Remain realistic about development timelines and avoid overcommitting to a single approach at the expense of adaptability.
6. Maximizing efficiency and eliminating wasteful spending.
7. Hold DoD accountable for its spending and performance.
8. Collaboration with the Department to inform and produce a product that will meet that goal.

Hegsmeth

Secretary Hegsmeth's statement at your hearing on June 10 included:
  Workforce Acceleration and Recapitalization

"We are re-evaluating every position to make sure that each focuses on our core mission of supporting our warfighters. Reorganization plans will strip away bureaucracy, accelerate decision-making, and deliver maximum value to the warfighters. We will eliminate non-essential and redundant roles, consolidate functions, flatten hierarchies, and eliminate unnecessary vestiges of the past." (Note: the Earned Value Management System (EVMS) guidelines cited below are substantially unchanged since 1967.)

Reviving the Defense Industrial Base (DIB)

"New entrants encounter numerous barriers to entry, including heavy regulations and scrutiny – I look forward to working with Congress to roll back unnecessary red tape to reinvigorate our DIB."

Oakley

GAO Director Shelby Oakley presented Testimony Before the Subcommittee on Military and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives on June 11.

Excerpts include:

The iterative process that companies employ involves continuous cycles to rapidly develop and deploy products. Key practices of leading companies common to these iterative cycles:

• Seek and obtain continuous user feedback— feedback from the actual operators of the product—throughout the iterative cycles.

• Capture this feedback to determine if the design is meeting user needs and reflects a minimum viable product—a product with the minimum capabilities needed for customers to recognize value.

• Continually feed this product design information into a real-time digital thread—a common source of information connecting stakeholders with real-time data across the product life cycle to inform product decisions.

• Establish a minimum viable product (MVP) (an initial set of capabilities that can be iterated upon), use digital twinning (a virtual representation of a physical product), or use digital threads (real-time data to inform decision-making).

DOD weapon systems are increasingly complex cyber-physical systems that require new, iterative development approaches to achieve speed in delivery. Achieving the positive outcomes associated with leading practices requires an overarching acquisition system that enables programs to plan for iterative approaches from their inception. This can include refining a MVP based on continuous user feedback, adopting modern digital engineering (DE) tools that facilitate rapid iterations of design, development, and delivery, and inserting new disruptive technologies.

My Assessments and Recommendations

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The assessments and recommendations in my previous letters, the attached letter to Sen. Wicker, Subj: Amend FoRGED Act to Rescind DFARS EVMS Clause dated May 22, 2025, and my white papers address the concerns of Chairman Cole, GAO Director Oakley, and yourself. They also address Secretary Hegsmeth's commitments and those of the Secretaries of the Army, Air Force, and Navy.

Please amend current bills during markups of the NDAA for FY 2026 to eliminate the DFARS clause. Failure to do so will jeopardize the success of programs and the deliverance of capabilities with speed. Failure will subvert effective utilize of the iterative approach and a DE ecosystem. Failure will enable traditional contractors to continue to submit false cost and schedule status reports that are based on manipulated, botched metrics and to avoid awareness of Nunn-McCurdy breaches. Failure will also enable the NDIA to maintain its barrier to entry for competitors that can yield better and faster results.

So, please collaborate with the Department, the HASC, and the SASC to produce amendments that will meet your goals. Eliminate the DFARS EVMS clause and oversee the Department's implementation of the iterative process and the DE ecosystem, including DE tools and outcome-based metrics.

Yours truly,

Paul J. Solomon
CC:
 Hon. Pete Hegseth, Sec. Def.   Hon. Dep. Sec. Def. Stephen Feinberg
Hon. Glen Grothman, HOAC   Hon. Adam Smith, HASC
Hon. Mike Rogers, HASC   Hon. Tom Cole, HAC
HASC Hon. Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Michael Duffey
Hon. Robert J. Wittman, HASC   Hon. Donald Norcross, HASC
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Hon. Roger Wicker, SASC   Hon. Joni Ernst, SASC
Hon. Elizabeth Warren, SASC   Hon. Pat Harrigan, HASC
Hon. Troy Meink, Sec. of the Air Force
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DOGE   Hon. Emil Michael, USD(R&E)
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Jon Sindreu, WSJ   Anthony Capaccio, Bloomberg News