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December 7, 2023

The Honorable Robert J. Wittman  
Vice Chairman, HASC  
2055 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20515-4601

Subj: Your Comments on “software at the forefront”

Dear Vice Chairman Wittman:

I agree with your comments in *Defense News*, dated December 6, especially:”

- “In today’s world ... software needs to be at the forefront, then hardware needs to follow that.”
- “...the things that we design the hardware around are only enabled if you have the software. We kind of have gotten things backwards.”

I addressed your issues in previous letters, dated November 24 and December 5. I also request that you read the letter to Lt. Gen. Schmidt, dated August 14, 2023, especially the following excerpts:

*... recommending DOD-wide acquisition reforms and increased oversight regarding the integration of systems engineering with program management and performance-based/outcome-based metrics... include digital engineering and Agile methods. The recommendations focus heavily on software-intensive systems and are applicable to the F-35. Please consider applying my recommended changes to DFARS and DOD policy and guidance to your program.*

*...no effective progress towards defining and institutionalizing technical performance/outcome-based metrics or on providing accurate status and situational awareness of program execution for proactive resolution of issues impacting cost, schedule, and technical achievement of program objectives. Your program still does not provide “expected costs... in its annual Block 4 reports to Congress.”*

Additional recommendations are in my article in *Defense Acquisition Magazine*, “Better Program Management Through Digital Engineering, May/June 2022.

Please address the issues and recommendations herein during your upcoming F-35 hearing or in other oversight actions, including acquisition reform legislation.

This letter and other citations may be downloaded from [www.pb-ev.com](http://www.pb-ev.com).

Yours truly,



Paul J. Solomon

CC:

Hon. Donald Norcross, HASC  
Hon. Adam Smith, HASC  
Hon. Tammy Duckworth, SASC  
Hon. William La Plante USD(A&S)  
Hon. Heidi Shyu, (USD(R&E))  
Hon. Andrew Hunter, AF Asst. Sec. for AT&L  
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