

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2019

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Chairman
Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee SD-
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington,
DC

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Ranking Member
Senate Defense Appropriations
Subcommittee SD-122 Dirksen Senate Office
Building Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Durbin:

Thank you for your strong support of U.S.-Israel collaborative missile defense programs, including Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow. As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Defense Appropriations bill, we write to ask that you continue to provide funding for these programs at a level that will meet Israel's national security needs.

Since 1986, Congress and successive Administrations have demonstrated bipartisan support for joint U.S.-Israel missile defense collaboration. This partnership has helped build and maintain a multi-tiered Israeli missile defense system capable of countering a wide range of threats from state and non-state actors. In September 2016, this support was expressed in a Memorandum of Understanding reached with Israel on long-term funding for Israeli military assistance, including missile defense. We ask that you fund U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation at the level requested in the FY 2020 budget.

Beginning with the lower tier of Israel's layered defenses, the Iron Dome system is deployed to thwart short-range rockets as well as mortar and artillery shells fired by non-state actors like Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as Iran's missiles launched from Syria. Israel's middle tier includes David's Sling, which is designed to defend against larger caliber rockets, short-range ballistic missiles, and certain cruise missiles. Finally, the Arrow Weapon System, including Arrow II and Arrow III, which seeks to cover Israel's mid- to upper-tier defenses to counter current and emerging ballistic missile threats.

Our investment in bilateral missile defense cooperation has yielded numerous benefits to the United States. For example, in a recent breakthrough, the U.S. Army announced that it will acquire two Iron Dome batteries. In addition to protecting our strategic ally Israel and U.S. forward deployed troops in the Middle East, this joint effort has generated valuable data and insights to support our own missile defense technology. Our partnership with Israel has also ensured enhanced interoperability between U.S. and Israeli systems and forces. Further, through co-development and co-production agreements, a significant share of this bilateral aid actually supports critical elements of the U.S. industrial base and American jobs here at home.

Amid persistent instability in the Middle East and the increasing size and sophistication of missile and rocket arsenals in the region, this is an important time for our continued investment in both U.S. and U.S.-Israel missile defense programs. We therefore urge you to continue to

provide full funding for development, testing, and production of David's Sling, Arrow II and Arrow III, and Iron Dome, at a level that will meet Israel's national security needs and support U.S. interests at home and abroad.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Deb Fischer
United States Senator



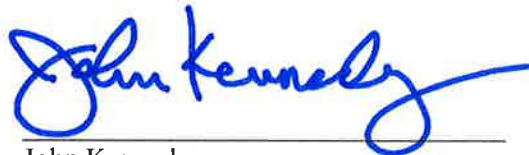
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Martha McSally
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



John Kennedy
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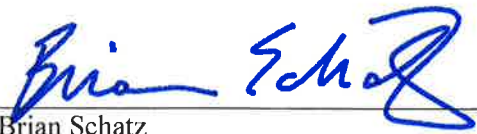
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Debbie Stabenow
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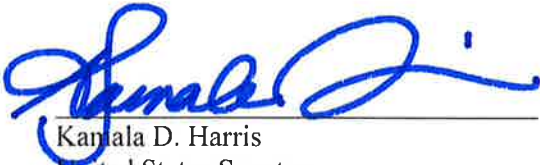
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United States Senator



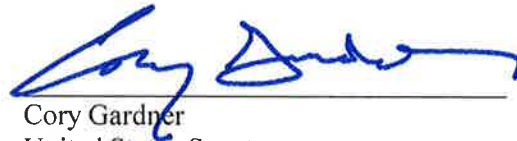
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



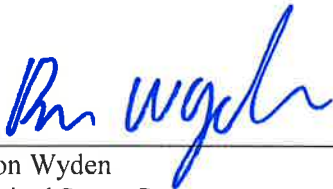
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Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



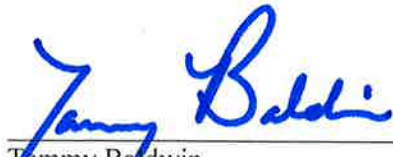
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Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



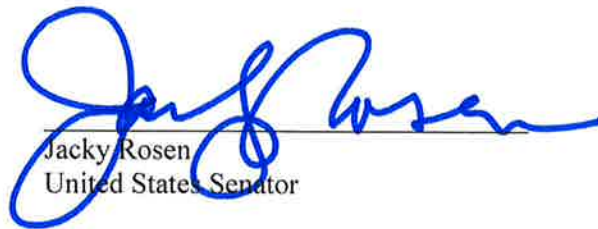
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Richard Blumenthal
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Tina Smith
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Edward J. Markey
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Gary C. Peters
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