

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2016

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

The Honorable James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
Washington, DC 20511

Dear Secretary Carter and Director Clapper,

We write this letter to call your attention to a briefing requested of you in the Directive Report Language that accompanies H.R. 4909, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, passed by the House of Representatives on May 18, 2016. Specifically, report language directs you to provide “a briefing on national-security related commercial space-based capabilities” to the relevant committees by November 1, 2016. As members of Congress who believe our national security can only be strengthened by the full and effective inclusion of commercial capabilities into our national security space architectures, we believe receiving this briefing in a timely matter is critical to the Congress’ ability to make important decisions as we prepare for a new administration.

To assist in your preparations for an eventual briefing, we wanted to give you an early indication of several focus areas we hope will be included: new small satellite launch providers and their capacity to integrate responsiveness and resiliency in our space architectures; an update on plans for the continued use of commercial satellite communications; opportunities for the private sector to contribute to space situational awareness and space traffic management; export licensing; commercial remote sensing licensing; leveraging small satellite constellations providing new kinds of services for resiliency and responsiveness; emerging commercial, space-based radio frequency (RF) survey, detection and geolocation capabilities; as well as commercial remote sensing in general, highlighting progress in implementing the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency’s Commercial GEOINT Strategy, and how the new joint NRO-NGA Commercial GEOINT Activity will affect its implementation.

This is a critical time for our national security agencies to intelligently leverage the emerging and fast-growing capabilities of the U.S. private sector, and to provide certainty to the private sector that the U.S. government can be a good partner and will follow through on its strategies and policies. International competition continues to grow, even as the American private sector stakes out early leads in the creation of new space markets. Our government must take prudent steps to assure continued leadership during a time of transition. We urge you to

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maintain the schedule of this requested briefing as called for in H.R. 4909, and we thank you for your continued leadership and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Jim Bridenstine
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress