

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Defense  
H-405 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Defense  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We write to respectfully request your support for \$25 million for the U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) Humanitarian Demining Research and Development (HD R&D) Program, implemented by the U.S. Army. The HD R&D Program develops, tests, and validates technology and equipment used to detect and clear landmines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The program allows for new equipment and technology to undergo in-country field evaluations that provides the DoD with invaluable evaluation report data, which directly translates to improved military countermine and explosive ordnance disposal capabilities, while also benefiting the affected host country through operational humanitarian demining field evaluations. Through DoD's HD R&D Program and its partnerships in over 44 host nations, efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars have achieved demining capability breakthroughs for the U.S. warfighter and recovering, post-conflict nations.

Through prototype testing in real field conditions in partnership with the Department of State's humanitarian demining programs, the DoD's Humanitarian Demining R&D Program aims to improve existing commercial technologies and equipment currently used by the DoD. During field evaluations, operators provide feedback on the functionality and effectiveness of the equipment. This allows HD R&D staff to modify and improve the equipment and increase the United States' technical capacity to respond to explosive threats.

The HD R&D Program generates three specific lines of effort. First, the field evaluation cycle collects enormous amounts of data helping to improve detection technologies used by our soldiers. Second, successfully trialed equipment is used to train and equip explosive disposal units of allied militaries. By equipping partner militaries to handle their own explosive threats, U.S. soldiers are more likely to remain out of harm's way. Third, HD R&D equipment amplifies taxpayer value by increasing the amount of clearance performed on DoS projects without increasing costs.

The HD R&D Program has a track record of success, having performed over 250 operational field evaluations in 44 countries since 1995. The program is responsible for developing advanced technology for the Handheld Standoff Mine Detection System, which combines metal detection with ground penetrating radar, the rotary mine comb, designed to efficiently excavate low metal content anti-vehicle mines, and TRAXX, built to cut through hard-to-see tripwires and lift mines from soil. Overall, HD R&D equipment has been used to clear more

than 26,600 acres of land, and to destroy more than 420,000 mines and UXO. As you know, the HD R&D Program receives funding from **Research, Development, Test & Evaluation, Army / Program Element 0603920A**.

Thanks to strong bipartisan support, Congress provided \$23.068 million for the HD R&D Program in Fiscal Year 2024. While that is essential, funding this program has a long list of unfunded projects, including drone technology in the Solomon Islands and Angola and counter-IED machines in Iraq and Libya. The HD R&D Program also requires resources to address the heavy contamination and varied threat types across Ukraine, where the program is beginning to evaluate advanced attachments to John Deere equipment and U.S.-manufactured remote demining robots.

**We urge the committee to support funding at a level of \$25 million in Fiscal Year 2025 for HD R&D.** This additional funding will improve the ability of U.S. soldiers and our allies to safely detect and clear landmines, UXO, and IEDs, as well as protect civilian lives. This funding is especially important as new conflicts uncover previously unknown threats in Ukraine, Libya, and across the Middle East and Asia.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you throughout the appropriations process to save many military and civilian lives.

Sincerely,



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Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress



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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



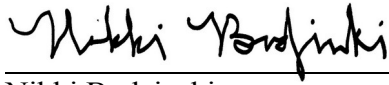
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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



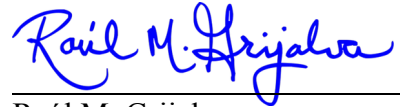
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho  
Sablan  
Member of Congress



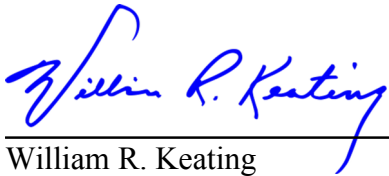
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Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



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Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Chrissy Houlahan  
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Marilyn Strickland  
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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Kevin Mullin  
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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Ilhan Omar  
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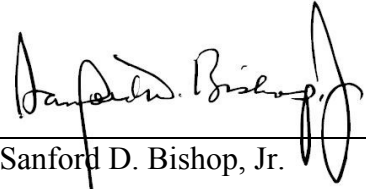
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Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Shontel M. Brown  
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Lucy McBath  
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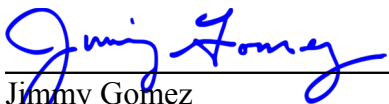
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



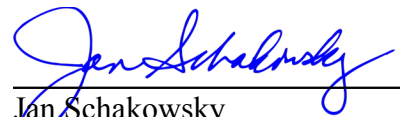
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Aumua Amata Coleman  
Radewagen  
Member of Congress



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Earl Blumenauer  
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



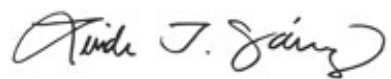
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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



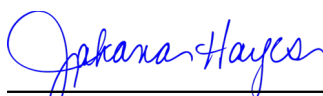
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Linda T. Sánchez  
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Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
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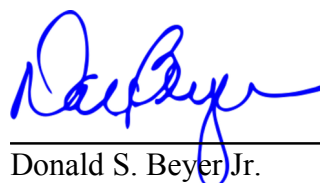
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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



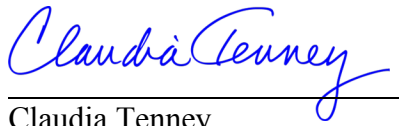
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Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress

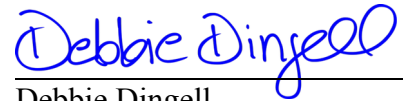


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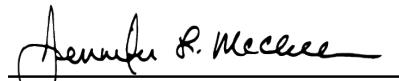
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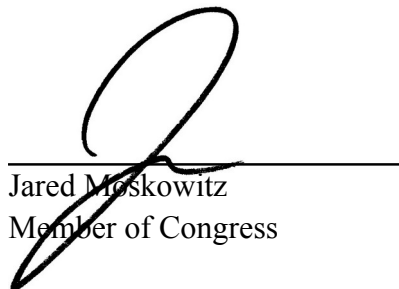
Madeleine Dean  
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Jason Crow  
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Bradley Scott Schneider  
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Jared Moskowitz  
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Robert Garcia  
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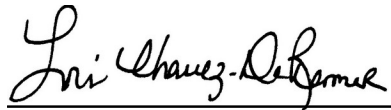
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Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



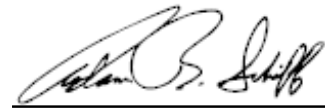
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Mark DeSaulnier  
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Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



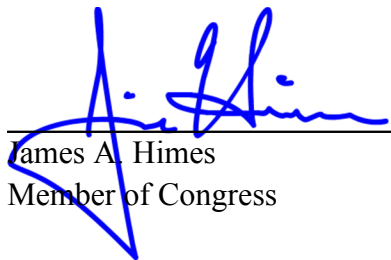
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Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



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James A. Himes  
Member of Congress



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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



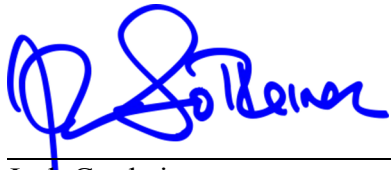
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Daniel T. Kildee  
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Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



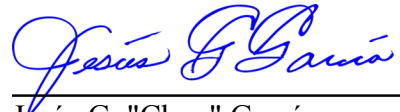
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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
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Michael R. Turner  
Member of Congress



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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



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Marie Gluesenkamp Perez  
Member of Congress



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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



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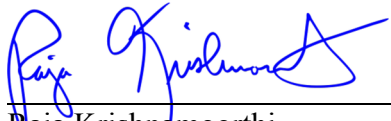
Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress





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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



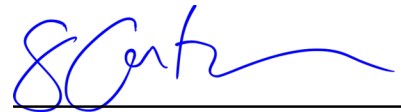
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Rich McCormick, MD, MBA  
Member of Congress



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Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



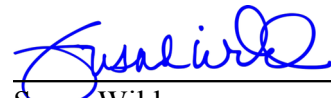
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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



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Dean Phillips  
Member of Congress



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Susan Wild  
Member of Congress