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VETERANS' AFFAIRS

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 7, 2012

The Honorable John McHugh  
Secretary of the Army  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1400

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your May 11, 2012 response on behalf of the Secretary of Defense to my April 17, 2012, letter concerning the Army's plans for continued production of M1 Abrams series main battle tanks.

I appreciate your acknowledgment of the problem regarding the U.S. tank industrial base and the Joint Services Manufacturing Center as well as your assurance that the Army is not shutting down tank production.

Notwithstanding your assurances, I remain concerned that we as a nation are depending on foreign military sales (FMS) to sustain domestic tank production. It is my judgment and experience that this leaves too much to chance. It is my understanding that none of the pending FMS cases you refer to in your letter are under contract as of today and it is indeed a rare occurrence for a FMS case to be awarded on its original schedule.

Further, each FMS case is different in terms of tank configuration and thus some international sales do not support the totality of the U.S. tank industrial base. Given the lead time for U.S. production of the M1A2 tank, additional procurement funding is required in the U.S. defense budget near term to ensure continued production.

We cannot afford to leave the fate of a uniquely skilled U.S. industrial base to the whims and economies of other nations. I ask for your continued support for additional U.S. funding to ensure the viability of the U.S. tank industrial base. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown