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Address

SUBJECT: Congressional Reporting Requirement Army Initial Entry Rotary Wing Training Helicopter

The Honorable

Dear Senator,

This correspondence is a request for a Congressional Reporting Requirement (CRR) that tasks the Army to assess current and projected helicopter costs and aviator training strategies.

Consultation with experienced professionals and retired Army Aviation officers indicates that a prudent approach to gathering information from the Army is through a CRR. Background information (enclosure 1) supports the need for the CRR. A “draft” CRR, (enclosure 2) should be entered into the upcoming National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The CRR is best served if the response is addressed to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The CRR would ultimately address two mutually inclusive and important issues:

1. The cost of operating a complex twin engine helicopter versus a simpler less expensive single engine helicopter, as well as a replacement strategy, and,
2. The efficacy of developing fundamental airmanship skills in a complex multi-engine helicopter.

The aborted NASA moon mission and the “Disaster on the Hudson” ended miraculously when the aircrews defaulted to fundamental airmanship.

Currently, Army IERW students learn to fly in a complex aircraft with a computer augmented control system that adjusts the fight controls without student input, thereby limiting development of critical airmanship skills. Students do not “solo” in the aircraft without the instructor precluding critical confidence-building experience.

The goal is to provide both Armed Services Committees a comprehensive report focusing on current and future helicopter fleet costs and savings as well as the efficacy of undergraduate pilot training in complex multi-engine rotary wing aircraft. Moreover, reassignment of aircraft to the Army National Guard may result. Such information could lead to a cost-effective use of appropriations and improved undergraduate pilot training.

The opportunity to provide greater detail and engage in forward looking dialogue is an important step. Please contact me to discuss this request at _____ or email _____.

Respectfully,

Signature Block

Enclosures:

1 - Background Briefing

2 - Draft CRR