The Honorable Mac Thornberry, Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 201515

The Honorable Adam Smith, Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thornberry and Ranking Member Smith:

Today, the world is in the middle of marking the 75th anniversary of various battles of World War II. These commemorations will culminate in 2020 with the 75th anniversary of the ending of World War II in Europe and the Pacific. This anniversary is an extraordinary opportunity for the United States to demonstrate, via special events and remembrances, across this country the strength of American democracy and the spirit and sacrifice of the American people both at home and abroad.

It will also be perhaps the last chance on a large scale to thank and honor veterans of World War II, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.

For these reasons, we are writing you to support House passage of S. 3661, the 75th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Act. The bill, which unanimously passed the Senate last week, would direct the Secretary of Defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 75th anniversary of World War II. The commemorative program will be focused on honoring World War II veterans, educating the public about the history of World War II, paying tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the U.S. during the war, and recognizing the contributions and sacrifices made by our allies. These type of 75th anniversary activities are already ongoing around the country and congressional action to ensure DOD participation will give considerable weight to these efforts and ensure an anniversary celebration worthy of veterans and our nation.

The educational programs could also highlight our nation’s leadership in aviation, the skills and sacrifices of pilots and mechanics, and the tremendous achievement in aircraft manufacturing during the war, when over 267,000 aircraft were produced in the U.S., building to a planned World War II aircraft flyover of the National Mall in May 2020.

We believe all these activities will seize the public imagination, reflect on our nation’s ability to rally together to preserve our national interest, and be a defining moment in remembering the historic significance of the sacrifices of our veterans.
and nation during World War II. We urge you to support this bill and make every effort to bring this important bill to the House floor for a vote some time over the next two weeks.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Rotondi     Charles Pinck
Executive Director    President
Friends of the National WWII Memorial    The OSS Society

Peter Bunce     Gary Dempsey
President & CEO    President
General Aviation Manufacturers Assn    National Air Transportation Association

John Cudahy     Rabbi Raphael Butler
President & CEO    President and Founder
International Council of Air Shows, Inc.    Afikim Foundation

Jack Pelton     Walt Fricke
CEO    Airboss/Founder/Chairman
Experimental Aircraft Association    Veterans Airlift Command

Mark Baker     Ed Bolen
President & CEO    President & CEO
Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association    National Business Aviation Association

Matthew Zuccaro     Mike Lonetto
President & CEO    Chairman-Washington, DC Chapter
Helicopter Association International    82nd Airborne Division Assoc.
Hank Coates
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Legislative Chair
American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Paul Rinaldi
President
National Air Traffic Controllers Association

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
    The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
    The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
    The Honorable Steve Womack
    The Honorable John Yarmuth
    The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
    The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
    The Honorable Trey Gowdy
    The Honorable Elijah Cummings
    The Honorable Bill Shuster
    The Honorable Peter DeFazio
    The Honorable Kevin Brady
    The Honorable Richard Neal
    The Honorable Michael McCaul
    The Honorable Bennie Thompson
    The Honorable Phil Roe
    The Honorable Timothy Walz
    The Honorable Rob Bishop
    The Honorable Raul Grijalva
    The Honorable Virginia Foxx
    The Honorable Robert Scott
    The Honorable Robert Brady
    The Honorable Sam Graves
    The Honorable Marc Veasey