April 3, 2019

The Honorable Peter Visclosky, Chair
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert, Ranking Member
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Calvert:

We are contacting you to express our strong support for the inclusion of language in the FY 2020 defense appropriations bill to provide $5 million for the Secretary of Defense to commemorate the 75th anniversary of World War II, and provide grants to state and local governments, and non-profit organizations for commemoration activities. Please note that this commemoration program and the $5 million requested appropriation was fully authorized by Congress in Public Law 115-433.

Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II only 558,000 remain alive. Sadly, on average, 362 World War II veterans die each day. The 75th anniversary of World War II is the final opportunity for our nation to formally thank the Greatest Generation for their pivotal role in preserving democracy — in America and around the globe.

It is fitting, proper and appropriate for the Department of Defense to take formal action to commemorate the 75th anniversary and provide modest support for commemoration activities around the country over the next three years. The formal commemoration by DoD of the 75th anniversary would mean so much to our nation’s World War II veterans and their families. Again, this commemoration program is authorized by law and should be fully funded by the Congress.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Rotondi     Rabbi Raphael Butler
Executive Director    President and Founder
Friends of the National WWII Memorial  Afikim Foundation

Peter Bunce     John Cudahy
President & CEO     President & CEO
General Aviation Manufacturers Assn  International Council of Air Shows
April 3, 2019

Jack Pelton
CEO
Experimental Aircraft Association

Mark Baker
President & CEO
Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association

Matthew Zuccaro
President & CEO
Helicopter Association International

Hank Coates
President/CEO
Commemorative Air Force

Rhett Ross
President & CEO
American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Walt Fricke
Airboss/Founder/Chairman
Veterans Airlift Command

Ed Bolen
President & CEO
National Business Aviation Association

Mike Lonetto
Chairman-Washington, DC Chapter
82nd Airborne Division Assoc.

Heather L. Ansley, Esq., MSW
Acting Associate Ex. Director
Paralyzed Veterans of America

Paul Rinaldi
President
National Air Traffic Controllers Assn.

Cc: House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense Members