

April 26, 2018

The Honorable Dr. Mark T. Esper  
Secretary of the Army  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0101

Mr. Secretary:

It has come to my attention that the Army may be proceeding to develop and procure a foreign-made transmission to replace the existing transmission in the Bradley Family of Vehicles. Given that the Bradley Family of Vehicles represents a large majority of the Army's armored brigade combat team tracked vehicle fleet, this program could be worth billions over the next 10-15 years. I write to express concerns and request more information on this contract award and the Army's associated plans.

I note that President Trump stated unambiguously in his July 21, 2017, Executive Order that "A healthy manufacturing and defense industrial base and resilient supply chains are essential to the economic strength and national security of the United States... the United States must maintain a manufacturing and defense industrial base and supply chains capable of manufacturing or supplying those items." Building on this clear Presidential guidance, I note that the December 2017 National Security Strategy also expresses concern regarding the health of our nation's defense industrial base, the "erosion of American manufacturing," and reliance on "foreign supply chains."

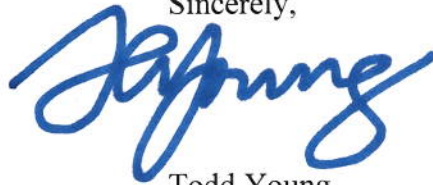
Based on this, I am concerned that the Army's plans may run counter to the clear guidance contained in the President's July 21, 2017, Executive Order, as well as the President's National Security Strategy. The Army's apparent plans seem particularly concerning given the fact that the U.S. combat vehicle transmission industrial base now consists of only two major manufacturers. The fact that these U.S. manufacturers and their American-based suppliers can produce world-class transmissions, capable of competing with any foreign supplier, only increases my concern with the Army's actions.

I share your goal of procuring the best possible equipment for our soldiers. At the same time, I believe the President's clear guidance, the important national security implications, the interests of the American taxpayers, and the availability of high quality American-made alternatives place the clear burden of proof on the Army if you plan to award such a large and important contract to a foreign supplier.

I want to learn more about the contracting process for this award. I am interested in ensuring that American manufacturers have at least a fair opportunity to compete. I understand that the Army is working on an Advanced Combat Transmission program awarded to SAPA for the Next Generation Combat Vehicle. I would like to better understand how that contract may be related to the Bradley Transmission Replacement program. Based on these concerns, I ask that the Army provide a briefing within the next two weeks.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Young", written in a cursive style.

Todd Young  
United States Senator