

Congressman Wally Herger (CA-02)

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Thank you for inviting me to be here this morning. I want to thank each of you for being an important part of the Global Hawk team, and developing America's state-of-the-art, high altitude reconnaissance aircraft. It is because of the work of people like you that Americans live in the nation with the finest military the world has ever seen. So I want to thank you for everything you do to strengthen our national defense.

As you may know, I have the privilege of representing Beale Air Force Base in Northern California. Beale has a long history as the home to our nation's most exceptional reconnaissance aircraft, including the SR-71 and the U-2. Now, Beale has been the home of the first operational Global Hawks, and will operate numerous Block 20 and Block 30 Global Hawks in the near future. Beale will also train all Global Hawk pilots and sensor operators. The remarkable aircraft you have created will allow Beale to uphold its motto: In God We Trust, All Others We Monitor!

Let me also say that I know the people of Northern California are very proud of Beale's leading role in supporting Global Hawk missions. The placement of Global Hawk at the base creates the opportunity of having a UAV technology corridor in Northern California. Firms and organizations supportive of the Global Hawk mission could grow, invest, and develop new technology to expand and improve upon the existing intelligence capabilities of the Global Hawk. I believe the people of Northern California would strongly support an expansion of this important industry in their communities. I would certainly share their sentiment.

Four years ago I spoke at this conference and talked about Global Hawk's significant contributions in the global war on terror. At the time, the Global Hawk prototype and Global Hawk Block 10 were already providing our commanders with near real time surveillance that had helped end the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's brutal regime in Iraq. The Global Hawk makes it very difficult for the enemy to hide, while enabling our troops to gain valuable information without endangering the lives of an American pilot. Since its early days, it has been a tremendous asset to the U.S. military and has transformed our nation's aerial intelligence capability.

But Global Hawk was just getting started then. When I spoke later that year at the roll out of the Block 20 in Palmdale, Global Hawks had flown 11,000 flight hours since 2001. Now, Global Hawks have flown over 37,000 flight hours, nearly 78% of which are combat hours in support of ongoing operations. In 2009 alone, Global Hawks flew 694 missions and over

9,300 flight hours, and I understand that number will increase to an incredible 64,000 hours by 2015. I'm sure our enemies would like to see Global Hawk take a break!

They're also probably wishing they were battling American forces from a previous generation. Of course, they would have still been fighting the most capable armed forces in the world, but at least then they would have benefited from a few shortfalls in the collection, transmission, and sharing of aerial intelligence. But gone are the days of having to fly film back to headquarters for development and analysis. Gone are the days of having difficulty identifying the areas that have been photographed. Gone are the days of frustrating inactivity caused by clouds in the sky and darkness at night. Gone are the days of communication barriers making it difficult to get intelligence into the hands of ground commanders. Today, the pictures taken by the Global Hawk are transmitted by satellite and appear almost immediately on the computer screens at Ground Stations at Beale Air Force Base and elsewhere. This information is quickly processed and relayed to commanders on the ground. Simply put, gone are the days of processing and transmission delays. And with that, gone is the enemy's opportunity to flee and hide.

But a new era presents new challenges. We live in a digital world, with expanded potential but also increased vulnerabilities. As such, virtually every discussion about our national defense today includes remarks about a new, man-made domain, the cyber domain. Each week, it seems like we read a new set of newspaper articles that discuss the latest cyber attacks on computers in our nation. We read in startling terms that no computer is completely safe, including computers at the White House and Pentagon. We have learned that cyber threats range from shutting down our transportation and communications systems, to bringing banking transactions to a screeching halt, to paralyzing our electric grids. We have learned that our cyber experts may have a fairly good idea where hackers originate, but are usually unable to determine whether they are acting alone, or whether state actors have ordered the cyber invasion or have otherwise turned a blind eye. We have learned that Russia almost certainly unleashed major attacks against Estonia and Georgia in previous conflicts. Worst of all, we have learned that the United States is currently not prepared for a large scale cyber attack on our homeland. Indeed, former Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell said just this week, "If we were in a cyber war today, we would lose."

The cyber domain extends beyond protecting our homeland. It also impacts the ability of the United States military to achieve victory in current and future wars. Like all Americans, I was alarmed by recent news stories of how insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan were able to use \$26, off-the-shelf software to intercept live video feeds from Predator drones, potentially threatening the safety of American troops and undermining our ability to defeat our enemies. Needless to say, we must encrypt the intelligence we collect and protect all of our military assets from cyber attacks.

Of course, Global Hawk is also dependent on computer networks. Its ability to collect intelligence, to transfer that intelligence to headquarters, to have that intelligence redirected promptly to commanders on the ground -- its very ability to fly -- all of these critical

capabilities depend on a functioning and uncorrupted computer system. The good news is that Global Hawk has security features that protect it from cyber exploitation. But it is essential that all future weapon systems have similar protections.

Of course, where there is vulnerability, there is also opportunity. The National Journal recently chronicled how offensive cyber operations played a vital role in turning the tide in Iraq a few years ago. When at war, the United States must weigh the ramifications of using this capability just as we currently do before using conventional weapons, but it would be deeply irresponsible to take cyber operations off the table altogether. Importantly, mastering our cyber capabilities could discourage bad actors from engaging in hostile cyber activities against our nation, creating a deterrence posture that will strengthen our security and promote peace and stability.

It is clear that the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, our nation's intelligence community, and the defense industry have a major challenge ahead of them. We must use the bright minds in this room and around the nation to protect our most sensitive networks. I commend all of our nation's cyber security leaders for taking this issue seriously and moving rapidly to establish the U.S. Cyber Command, which will provide a coordinated cyber capability to protect America from cyber attacks while keeping us ready to use this domain for deterrence and for military advantage if necessary. In doing so, I'm confident that the United States will achieve dominance in this domain just as we have in the air, on land, and at sea. Our ability to function as a free, prosperous, and secure society depends on it.

Our freedom also depends on maintaining our military superiority. To that end, I'm pleased that this year promises to be another year of progress for Global Hawk. I understand Global Hawk Block 20 and Block 30 will continue its evaluation at Beale and Edwards Air Force Base, move towards deployment, and draw closer to becoming fully operational. I know our commanders look forward to the additional payload and capability of these advanced models. Placing listening ears on Global Hawk, in particular, will greatly expand our military's signals intelligence capability. Meanwhile, seventy miles south of our nation's capital, the Navy is operating its own version of Global Hawk that is providing state-of-the-art maritime surveillance, and I understand that program will continue to grow this year.

The Global Hawk has also proven enormously valuable for disaster relief and homeland security missions. As you know, it provided detailed pictures after the tragic earthquake in Haiti last month. General Bob Otto, commander of the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale, commented afterwards, "Thanks to Global Hawk's highly advanced sensors, which are capable of taking hundreds of images in a single mission, we've provided disaster assessments for various agencies to make real-time decisions." The images also helped determine the usability of infrastructure such as airports, and prepare U.S. troops as they embarked on their humanitarian mission. Global Hawk had a similar function here at home in 2007 and 2008 when it monitored the damage of wildfires in southern and northern

California, as well as the major hurricanes that battered our nation. I'm pleased that Global Hawk will continue to play an important role during disaster relief missions in the future.

Unfortunately, a new year also means new challenges to secure Global Hawk funding in Congress. While President Obama's fiscal year 2011 budget proposal for the Global Hawk demonstrates the Administration's support for the program, we can expect some in Congress to fight against it as they've done in previous years. It has been a battle to secure sufficient support for the program, with critics pointing to long-surpassed challenges and claiming that it's not a worthwhile investment. Although we have been largely successful in years past, there is no guarantee that Congress will fully fund Global Hawk this year or into the future.

That is why I greatly appreciate your efforts to educate members of Congress regarding the Global Hawk. As the true experts of its capability, you can walk the halls of Capitol Hill and talk about the importance of this vehicle, how it has overcome challenges the skeptics tend to mention, and why it has unique intelligence-gathering capabilities that cannot be matched by any other system. You can talk about its incredible value to U.S. troops and the significant role it plays in defeating our enemies in war. I believe your efforts have and will continue to make a difference as Congress considers funding for the Global Hawk, and you can count on me to continue to work hard to urge House and Senate defense leaders to support the Global Hawk.

In closing, the need for Global Hawk has never been greater. The mission in Afghanistan requires high quality intelligence about insurgent hideouts. Terrorists are seeking safe haven in third world countries, and we need to know about their locations and activities. We also continue to face a nuclear threat in the Korean Peninsula. Perhaps most disturbing of all, Iran continues to ignore the international community and push aggressively toward building a nuclear weapon. Reports indicate that they likely have many secret nuclear facilities, are enriching uranium at alarming levels, and are working on a nuclear warhead. Employing the most advanced Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance assets is therefore vital to defending U.S. security interests around the world.

So now is not the time to scale back on the very best military equipment that companies like yours provide. Instead, we must continue to develop and utilize superior technology that gives our troops in combat an edge over the enemy. The Global Hawk certainly provides our nation's military a significant advantage. As the more advanced models are deployed, I am confident that it will become an even stronger asset to our troops. It has my full support.

Again, thank you for all that you do to defend our nation. Your innovative thinking and tireless devotion to our national defense help keep the United States free and secure.