# Congress of the United States
## Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2012

Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert
Chief of Naval Operations
2000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20350-2000

Dear Admiral Greenert:

We appreciate your renewed emphasis on the principle of "Warfighting First" for our Naval forces. As part of this focus, you have discussed the importance of the U.S. Navy being prepared for the maturing anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) threat environment, and specifically the "challenges posed by emerging threats to access like ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced submarines and fighters, electronic warfare and mines." One of the places where we know these challenges exist is in the western Pacific Ocean, where the Department of the Navy is attempting to provide the military resources to support the Administration's "rebalancing" initiative. Given these developments, we believe that the growing A2/AD capabilities in this region, combined with other immutable characteristics like the geographic "tyranny of distance," demand a careful review of our future capabilities.

As you know, our eleven nuclear-power aircraft carriers (CVN) give us the ability to surge combat power to a regional crisis at the time and place of our choosing, making them a critical component of our focus on the Indian and Pacific Oceans. However, the long distances in the region combined with A2/AD challenges raise questions about the future strike power of the Carrier Air Wing (CVW). As we posture our forces, is the planned CVW of the 2020s structured to meet the range, persistence, stealth, ISR, and payload demands that will be required to operate in this theater? We would appreciate your help in understanding the cost and capability trade-offs that you are considering as you plan the Carrier Air Wing of the future.

As always, thank you for your service to the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, and the Nation.

Sincerely,

J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress

TODD AKIN
Member of Congress