

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR

February 26, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As we work together, federal and state, to weather this global recession, governors are doing what we can to position states to access high paying, high-skilled jobs. In Mississippi, we recognize the important role that advanced manufacturing plays in our state economy, and we have worked with our neighbors to create a national asset: the Aerospace Alliance.

Mississippi is a founding member of the Aerospace Alliance, a regional marketing partnership whose purpose is to communicate the aviation and aerospace experience and capabilities of the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Northwest Florida. The Gulf Coast and surrounding region is home not only home to Northrop Grumman but also to some of the world's most advanced manufacturing operations, aerospace installations, key NASA facilities, and numerous military installations critical to Department of Defense flight missions and training.

Despite our progress, more good jobs are needed. With an average unemployment rate of 9.5 percent, the Aerospace Alliance states have workers trained and ready to go to work. Because Mississippi is poised and ready to contribute to building another national asset, I request your support for a dual source procurement process- not a sole source process- in the Air Force's \$35 billion dollar tanker contract, the largest contract the Department of Defense has ever awarded.

Dual procurement could create up to 100,000 high-paying, long-term jobs in states across the country, including some of the most economically challenged areas. Dual procurement would create more jobs than a single company buy and also would speed up the replacement of the aging tanker fleet, cutting replacement time in half. Estimates show that for each tanker retired, the Air Force's operating costs will be cut by \$7 million a year, resulting in a total potential savings for the program of \$29 billion.

With 21,000 people in Mississippi employed in defense related manufacturing jobs, we have a strong history of playing role in defending our great nation. We understand the challenges around the world keep a steady demand on older aircraft. We are committed to building a newer, more efficient, and more capable aircraft which can result in better operations and safety for our noble aircrews and the people they transport all over the world.

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Given the need to create jobs, protect our country, and stimulate the economy, I strongly request that you consider the dual procurement process. A two company, multi-state model would prove to be a win-win for many.

Sincerely,



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