

United States Senate

July 01, 2024

Honorable Christine E. Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
U.S. Department of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Wormuth:

We write to express concern about the high number of Class A accidents and resulting casualties within the Army aviation community over the last year across multiple platforms, including the deadly UH-72 Lakota helicopter crash in Rio Grande City, Texas and several incidents involving the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter. This alarming trend raises significant questions about the safety and effectiveness of Army rotary-wing aviation operations.

As you know, Ft. Cavazos and Ft. Bliss are home to sizable Army Aviation contingents, and my constituents have expressed concern about the recent accident trend. The ongoing maintenance issues in the Texas-based Attack battalions amplifies this concern.

Our nation relies on the effectiveness of the Army's aviation formations, and our Soldiers' safety depends on the reliability of our aviation platforms. To help us better understand the training, maintenance, and materiel challenges that may have contributed to these accidents, please provide the following no later than August 1, 2024:

1. The findings and related recommendations of any investigations related to the AH-64 Apache's tail rotor blade conducted from January 2022 to present.
2. The steps the Army has taken in response to the August 15, 2018 GAO report entitled "Military Aviation Mishaps: DOD Needs to Improve Its Approach for Collecting and Analyzing Data to Manage Risks" (GAO-18-586R) and any funding required to further those steps.
3. The findings and related recommendations of any investigations related to the elevated number of UH-60 Black Hawk major mishaps from 2022 to present.
4. The findings and related recommendations from any Army studies assessing annual flight hour requirements for, and proficiency of, Army rotary wing pilots.
5. An assessment of the relationship between flying hour program reductions, such as the decline from 10.6 per month in FY23 to 8 per month in FY25, and the increased rate of major mishaps.
6. Any current or planned Army efforts to leverage artificial intelligence capabilities to mitigate the risk of rotary-wing human error in the enduring and future vertical lift fleets.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



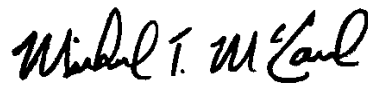
Ronny L. Jackson
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John R. Carter
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Kay Granger
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Brian Babin
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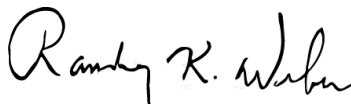
Tony Gonzales
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