

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

July 2, 2026

Dear President Trump:

We write today to express deep concern about any effort to sell F-35s to Turkey. With President Erdogan's continued aggression toward our greatest partners along with his troubling defense partnerships with our adversaries, it is not in the best interest of our country to sell them F-35s.

The F-35 program is an innovative and strategically important defense initiative within the Department of War. The program is built upon the principle of commonality, and designed to create a unified aircraft platform capable of serving multiple branches of the U.S. military while strengthening coordination among allied nations. This program is heavily relied upon by the U.S. and our allies because of its emphasis on air superiority, affordability through shared production, and technological innovation. The international structure of the program enables allied countries to operate interoperable systems, strengthening collective defense partnerships and military coordination across NATO and other allied networks.

In 2019, despite repeated warnings from both the U.S. and our NATO allies, President Erdogan decided to purchase the Russian-made S-400 air defense system while still remaining a partner in the F-35 program. This posed a major security threat, and your Administration officially removed Turkey from the program as a result. Additionally, through the FY2020 NDAA which was signed into law, Congress codified restrictions to limit the transfer of the F-35 aircraft and related equipment while Turkey maintained possession of the S-400 air defense system. This not only included the jets themselves, but also technical data, support equipment, and infrastructure connected to operating the aircraft. The message was clear, Turkey could not remain in the program while operating the Russian system.

Since 2019, President Erdogan has only further antagonized the U.S. and our NATO allies. Turkey continues to maintain a military presence in the northern occupied part of Cyprus and has engaged in aggressive actions toward Greece due to recurring maritime and air disputes. Further, there is constant and growing anti-Israel rhetoric, all while Turkey maintains bilateral relations with Iran. While Turkey has been a NATO ally since 1952, they have hardly been a reliable partner in the present day.

Just as you pushed to first prohibit the sale of F-35s to Turkey in 2019, we urge you to maintain this prohibition today. Any action otherwise would send the wrong message to President Erdogan and to our allies and partners both in Europe and the Middle East.

Sincerely,



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Michael V. Lawler  
Member of Congress



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Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



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Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress



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Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



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Jeff Hurd  
Member of Congress



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Max L. Miller  
Member of Congress



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Young Kim  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



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Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress