



Legislation Text

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Clerk 05/01/2008

A MOTION supporting withdrawal of federal appropriation for the Airbus tanker and supporting a new competitive contract for the building of certain military hardware.

WHEREAS, the United States Air Force recently awarded to Northrop Grumman Corp. and European partner Airbus a \$35 billion contract to build airborne refueling planes, rather than the Everett, Washington-based Boeing facility, and

WHEREAS, at a time of looming national recession, the \$35-billion contract, which could ultimately be worth \$100 billion over thirty years, for aerial refueling tankers has already led to a sharp decline in share price for the American company and an increase in stock price for the foreign competitor, and

WHEREAS, the loss of the tanker contract to Airbus affects the future of the American aerospace industry and America's competitive advantage, through a loss of aerospace manufacturing capacity and intellectual resources, and

WHEREAS, the Boeing company has a long and storied history of building the world's greatest commercial and military aircraft, including nearly two thousand tankers, in stark contrast to Airbus, which has no experience building tankers, and

WHEREAS, the awarding of this multibillion dollar contract, to be paid by American taxpayers to Airbus's parent company, the European Aeronautic Defense and Space company, could ultimately mean the loss of thousands of local jobs and thousands more statewide and nationwide at a time when such highly skilled and well-paying jobs are greatly needed to spur economic growth and thwart any recessionary trends, and

WHEREAS Airbus has never built a tanker in cooperation with Northrop/Grumman, has no factory to build a tanker and has not hired or trained the skilled workers necessary to do this work, and

WHEREAS, much of the infrastructure and many of the skilled laborers and engineers that would be needed to build parts for the new tanker in Mobile, Alabama, do not yet exist, as opposed to the facility in Everett, Washington, which is ready, willing and able to build the American-made tankers immediately, and

WHEREAS, a Machinists Union-member-built Boeing tanker would have provide nine thousand jobs in Washington state, more than forty-four thousand family-wage jobs in the United States and added \$400 million to our state's economy, and

WHEREAS, the Airbus tanker's substantial size will require additional billions of dollars in construction costs to expand air bases and landing strips and to construct new hangers, and

WHEREAS, the Boeing Company has formally protested the decision and asked the Government Accountability Office to determine if the tanker acquisition process, including the cost analysis, was unfair and flawed, and

WHEREAS, the council firmly believes that in order to protect our national security and America's military strength in the world, it is right and justified to invest in our American engineers, our manufacturing industry, and our military, rather than rely on that of a foreign government that may or may not agree with our mission in the world and could undermine it by withholding needed supplies and machinery;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The council urges the United States Congress to take action to halt the procurement of foreign-made tankers to be used by the United States Air Force and reconsider the awarding of this contract in the name of national and economic security.

B. The council clerk is directed to forward this motion to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the

Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the state of Washington.