

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 3, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Unmanned aerial systems (UAS) present a growing threat to U.S. service members and our allies. We write to express our full support for the Department of Defense's efforts to work with allies like Israel to improve our counter-UAS (C-UAS) capabilities.

In August 2019, Israel reportedly struck an Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force and Iranian-backed militia facilities in Syria to thwart a planned attack on Israeli using explosive-laden "kamikaze-style" drones designed to detonate upon impact. You have also expressed concern about China's proliferation of advanced aerial drones to the Middle East. U.S. troops in the Middle East or in the Indo-Pacific may confront these drones in the future.

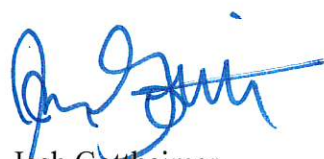
Clearly, the United States must continue to ensure our troops and our allies including Israel are protected against enemy unmanned aerial systems.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 (P.L. 116-92) includes Section 1278. This provision would authorize the department to "carry out joint research, development, test, and evaluation to establish capabilities for countering unmanned aerial systems (C-UAS) that threaten the United States or Israel."

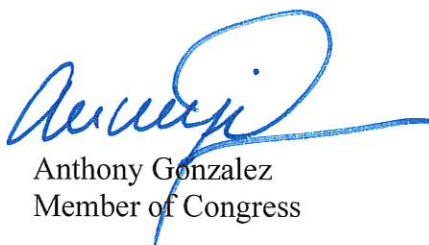
Similarly, the June 11, 2019, Senate Armed Services Committee Report (116-48) on the SASC-passed FY 2020 NDAA requires the Department of Defense to submit a report to the congressional defense committees no later than March 1, 2020 on enhanced cooperative research and development efforts with Israel. We encourage the department to submit this written and unclassified report promptly. In the report, we encourage the department to explicitly identify any specific opportunities to work with Israel on C-UAS cooperative research and development.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress