

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1904

November 5, 2018

Mr. Eric D. Chewning
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Industrial Policy
1400 Defense Pentagon, Room 3B854
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Chewning:

I am writing to request your support to accelerate the development of novel and improved tungsten heavy alloy and molybdenum products and manufacturing technologies for ammunition applications such as powder manufacturing, powder consolidation technologies, thermomechanical processes, machining, and fabrication.

Tungsten products are used in a number of applications important to the warfighter, including large and medium caliber kinetic energy penetrators, shape charges, fragmentation sleeves and rings, radar and communications systems, among others. The domestic production of molybdenum and tungsten products, however, is quite limited, with only one U.S.-owned and fully integrated manufacturer. It is critical that the Department continue to partner with critical suppliers in the defense industrial base to ensure adequate domestic supply and technological overmatch with our near-peer competitors.

A recent review of the defense manufacturing and industrial base ordered by the President concluded that “[i]t is imperative that producers and supply chains of materials deemed essential to U.S. defense and civilian demand are robust, resilient, competitive, and responsive to support current and long-term economic security, current military operations, future wartime mobilization, and unanticipated surge demand.” Moreover, accelerated development of tungsten heavy alloy and molybdenum products is consistent with increasing soldier lethality, a top modernization priority of the Army.

Congress appropriated funding in fiscal year 2019 for Defense-wide RDT&E, Line 192, Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment Support, in an amount greater than the President’s budget request in order to advance these efforts. As the Department allocates this funding, I encourage you, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, to partner with industry to advance tungsten heavy alloy and molybdenum defense products. Ensuring technological superiority for tungsten heavy alloy and molybdenum products is an important national security imperative.

If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to have your staff contact [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

cc: Dr. Bruce Jette
Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Acquisition, Logistics and Technology)