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Rupert J. Hammond-Chambers  
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## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 26, 2018

Arlington, Virginia, USA

### ***U.S. Senators Cornyn and Inhofe Urge President Trump to Support New Fighters for Taiwan***

In a March 26, 2018 letter, Senators John Cornyn and James Inhofe urge President Donald Trump to support the sale to Taiwan of a new tranche of modern, U.S.-built fighters - the F-35B with its vertical lift capability, or additional F-16Vs - to boost Taiwan's air defense capabilities.

The Senators wrote, "*Taiwan has a legitimate requirement to field a modern fighter fleet to address a myriad of defense contingencies. Therefore, Taiwan is requesting U.S. support in their procurement of the F-35B.*" "*However, if determined that release of the F-35B to Taiwan is premature, we hope that you will instead make available additional F-16Vs to address the quantitative and qualitative challenges confronting Taiwan's fighter fleet. Taiwan already fields the F-16, and this would represent a cost-effective solution to Taiwan's legitimate defense requirement for additional fighters.*"

Cornyn and Inhofe also noted, "*These fighters will have a positive impact on Taiwan's self-defense and would act as a necessary deterrent to China's aggressive military posture across the Asia-Pacific region.*"

China's force modernization efforts are having a destabilizing impact on the entire North East Asian security environment. Japan and Korea, as well as forward-deployed U.S. forces, are procuring and/or upgrading their fleets of modern fighters in response. It is entirely consistent with U.S. interests to support Taiwan's efforts to do likewise. To maintain a credible defense against China's coercive military posture, Taiwan urgently needs to modernize its fighter fleet.

It has now been 25 years since Taiwan last bought new-build fighters, and this has become a challenge for the Taiwan Air Force. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen recognizes this challenge, and has stated her willingness to take decisive action including budgeting significant funds to procure new fighters. A U.S. sale of new fighters to Taiwan would have a positive impact on Taiwan's defense spending, and would represent an important increase in Taiwan's commitment to its own defense and security.

Rupert Hammond-Chambers, President of the US-Taiwan Business Council, noted that "*failing to sell new-built fighters to Taiwan is to relegate the Taiwan Air Force to marginalization and eventual extinction. That would significantly weaken the island, which is inherently destabilizing, while placing an additional burden on U.S. and allied forces to manage the airspace between Okinawa and the Philippines.*"

Hammond-Chambers also said, "*The Council supports the sale of additional fighters to Taiwan. We believe that such a sale is consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) requirement to provide Taiwan with arms to defend itself. It would also be an important development in the Trump Administration's policy of promoting capacity-building amongst Asian friends and allies, it would represent an important defense export opportunity for American companies, and it would be an appropriate response to China's ongoing force modernization efforts and its constant coercive training deployments against Taiwan.*"

A copy of the letter is attached, and can also be downloaded from the Council's website at [www.us-taiwan.org](http://www.us-taiwan.org).



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**About the US-Taiwan Business Council:**

The US-Taiwan Business Council ([www.us-taiwan.org](http://www.us-taiwan.org)) is a membership-based non-profit association, founded in 1976 to foster trade and business relations between the United States and Taiwan. The Council provides its members with business intelligence, offers access to an extensive network of relationships, and serves as a vital and effective representative in dealing with business, trade, and investment matters.

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