Background

Currently, the Air National Guard operates nearly 50% of the Total Air Force C-130 tactical airlift mission, which are airlift missions within a combat zone. Most Air National Guard C-130 wings operate C-130H Hercules aircraft which are over 30 years old while some operate new C-130J Super Hercules aircraft.

Because the Air Force plans to continue utilizing the C-130 aircraft beyond 2040, it is critical to modernize the Air National Guard C-130 fleet by continuing to simultaneously upgrade some C-130H aircraft with modern technology and replacing others with new C-130J aircraft. Funding critical modernization efforts will ensure the safety, reliability and effectiveness of the Air National Guard C-130 fleet, both at home and abroad.

Thanks to Congress, funding has been included in defense appropriations each year since Fiscal Year 2017 to designate 16 total C-130J aircraft to the Air National Guard. Once these aircraft have been fielded to their units, the Air National Guard will operate 4 total C-130J Super Hercules wings.

Additionally, thanks to Congress modernization funding has been provided to ensure upgrades of older C-130H aircraft. This funding is primarily for C-130H Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) Increments 1 and 2, as well as upgrading the C-130H T-56 engine with a Series 3.5 upgrade and replacing aging C-130H propellers with the NP-2000 8-bladed propeller.

The Issue

The Air National Guard C-130 Hercules fleet requires continued funding for modernization and recapitalization to ensure its aircraft can successfully engage in overseas contingency operations and respond to homeland emergencies well into the future.

Recommendation

- Continue annually designating C-130J aircraft to the Air National Guard within defense appropriations legislation
- Continue funding for C-130H avionics modernization, engine upgrades, and propeller replacements within defense appropriations legislation.
Engine Upgrade and Propeller Replacement

The T-56 3.5 Series engine upgrade is projected to:
- Reduce life-cycle costs with fewer depot-level inductions required.
- Increase time-on-wing by over 20% and the acceptable cargo load.
- Improve fuel economy in excess of 10% and rate of climb.

Additionally, replacing propellers on each C-130H with the NP-2000 is projected to:
- Provide improved thrust and readiness while reducing operations and support costs.
- Decrease maintenance time.
- Increase performance and fuel efficiency.

Continuing to provide new C-130J aircraft to the Air National Guard and funding modernization of legacy Air National Guard C-130H aircraft will ensure its C-130 fleet continues to meet its dual mission of deploying in support of overseas contingency operations and providing rapid domestic emergency response.

States Impacted

AR: Jacksonville, 189th Airlift Wing
CA: Oxnard, 146th Airlift Wing
CT: Windsor Locks, 103rd Airlift Wing
DE: New Castle, 166th Airlift Wing
GA: Savannah, 165th Airlift Wing
IL: Peoria, 122nd Airlift Wing
KY: Louisville, 123rd Airlift Wing
MN: Minneapolis-St. Paul, 133rd Airlift Wing
MO: St. Joseph, 139th Airlift Wing
MT: Great Falls, 120th Airlift Wing
NV: Reno, 152nd Airlift Wing
NY: Schenectady, 109th Airlift Wing
OH: Mansfield, 179th Airlift Wing
RI: North Kingstown, 143rd Airlift Wing
TX: Fort Worth, 136th Airlift Wing
WV: Charleston, 130th Airlift Wing
WY: Cheyenne, 153rd Airlift Wing

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