Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 13, 2015

The Honorable Ash Carter
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Carter,

We are writing to express our support for the Advanced Functional Fabrics of America (AFFOA) proposal to the Department of Defense (DOD), FOA-W15QKN-15-R-0074, regarding a Manufacturing Innovation Institute (MII) in the field of Revolutionary Fibers and Textiles.

To date, the AFFOA team spans 28 states and includes 40 industry partners. AFFOA will enable rapid prototyping of a spectrum of products from fabric-based wearable devices to portable shelters incorporating previously unimaginable protective and energy-harvesting capabilities.

The proposed institute is a public-private partnership that will revitalize the fiber and textile industry. Our states are home to both manufacturing enterprises throughout the revolutionary fiber and textile supply chain and some of the best STEM education and workforce training programs in the country.

AFFOA will be managed by the Massachusetts Manufacturing Technology & Innovation Corporation (M2TIC) with headquarters in the Cambridge, MA technology district and an innovation and training center in central Massachusetts. State and local governments and partner companies will contribute over $200 million as cost share to AFFOA over its first five years. Together, our states offer AFFOA and the Department of Defense unparalleled resources for the establishment and operation of the newest component of the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Tom Reed
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Katherine Clark
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress