

Coburn Amendment 404— To eliminate duplication, fragmentation, and overlap within the 15 “unmanned aircraft” programs.

Background: In 2012, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found the Federal government has 15 “unmanned aircraft” programs, which will cost \$37.5 billion from FY 2012-2016.

This amendment allows the appropriate committees to reduce the deficit through eliminating, consolidating or reforming duplicative and overlapping “unmanned aircraft” programs outlined in GAO’s annual report to reduce program duplication.

15 Overlapping Programs: GAO found 15 unmanned aircraft programs within five categories based on weight, altitude, and speed. GAO found overlap between group four and five and it is expected that another \$32.4 billion will be spent to complete these programs. For example, GAO found the Navy is planning to spend \$3 billion in order to develop its own version of the Air Force Global Hawk, rather than using the Air Force’s Global Hawk. An analysis was not conducted “to determine the cost-effectiveness of developing a new aircraft to meet the Navy’s requirements versus buying more Global Hawks.”¹

In addition to the unmanned aircraft systems, GAO found duplication and overlap between the sensors that were being developed for Army, Navy, and Air Force technologies. A Department of Defense (DOD) study determined it could have saved nearly \$1.2 billion had the Air Force and Army used the same sensor to track ground communication.

DOD also plans to spend about \$3 billion through FY 2016 to acquire 13 ground control stations. GAO found overlap and duplication within 10 of these systems, and it was determined “the associated software is about 90

¹ GAO-12-342SP, “2012 Annual Report: Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap and Fragmentation, Achieve Savings, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, February 2012, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf>.

percent duplicative because similar software is developed for each ground control station.”²

\$37.5 billion between FY2012 through FY2016: GAO estimates that the cost of the current unmanned aircraft systems will exceed \$37.5 billion in FY2012-FY2016. Additionally, the sensors will cost an added \$9 billion.

² GAO-12-342SP, “2012 Annual Report: Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap and Fragmentation, Achieve Savings, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, February 2012, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588818.pdf>.