

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 1, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Gowdy and Ranking Member Cummings:

We write to you today to express our opposition to H.R. 1339, the Freedom from Government Competition Act, which would repeal the moratorium adopted with bi-partisan support on the A-76 studies. As representatives of districts that are home to military facilities, we continue to oppose lifting the moratorium or taking any other action that would needlessly hamper the ability of these facilities and their workers to do their jobs in defense of our nation.

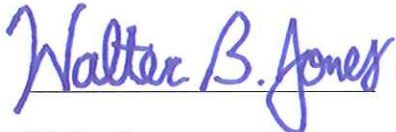
Currently, public-private competitions rely on a process that both the GAO and the Inspector General of the Department of Defense determined could not demonstrate any savings to the taxpayer. According to the Inspector General, “multi-million dollar decisions are based, in part, on a factor not supported by data.” The A-76 process also incorporates an arbitrary 12% overhead factor cost for federal employees, but not for contractors.

Further, while it has been more than a decade since the scandalous treatment of veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center came to light, the harms suffered by soldiers receiving treatment there cannot be allowed to fade from our memories. The investigations into substandard conditions at a facility responsible for treating our nation’s veterans are what spurred Congress to adopt a moratorium on A-76 public-private competitions in the first place. We would all do well to remember what is at stake in this debate – nothing less than the health and dignity of our national heroes.

Since the neglect at Walter Reed came to light, Congress has maintained a moratorium on A-76 studies dating back to 2010. As recently as July of 2017, the House voted 253-172 to maintain the moratorium and include the prohibition in several appropriations bills. This robust opposition comes from the simple fact that the A-76 process is not moored in reality.

American taxpayers deserve good stewardship of their resources from their representatives. The A-76 process is simply an abuse of their trust. This is why we urge that you not withhold H.R. 1339 from any further action in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Walter B. Jones in blue ink.

Walter Jones
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Dave Loebsack in blue ink.

Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress