

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 2, 2026

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War
U.S. Department of War
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C., 20301

Secretary Hegseth,

Thank you for your leadership in strengthening America's defense industrial base. We strongly support the Arizona State University Research Enterprise (ASURE) proposal to establish the Applied Research for Manufacturing Operational Readiness (ARMOR) Center at ASU's Polytechnic campus. This investment would give the Army a national capability for advanced manufacturing research, qualification, and transition. It would also position Arizona to host a University Affiliated Research Center supporting the Army's modernization and readiness mission.

Arizona is uniquely positioned to host this capability. The state is a national leader in defense manufacturing, home to Raytheon, Honeywell Aerospace, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, and Boeing, backed by hundreds of specialized suppliers for missiles, aircraft, avionics, and electronics. Arizona also leads the nation in semiconductor and microelectronics investment, with more than \$210 billion announced since 2020, giving the Army access to a mature ecosystem for developing, testing, and scaling advanced manufacturing technologies.

Arizona's military infrastructure reinforces this ecosystem. Fort Huachuca supports critical Army missions, and Yuma Proving Ground offers world-class testing and evaluation. Luke Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, and Marine Corps Air Station Yuma add further operational capacity. Few states combine manufacturing, research, testing, and military operations in one place.

ASU has already built the foundation to make the ARMOR Center operational on day one. Its \$200 million Interdisciplinary Science and Technology Building 12 at the Polytechnic campus includes roughly \$6 million in advanced manufacturing equipment. ASU is the only U.S. university offering bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in manufacturing engineering, and it graduates more than 1,000 students annually in manufacturing, mechanical, and industrial engineering. Over the past three fiscal years, ASU has performed nearly \$300 million in Department of War research and leads one of the nation's eight Microelectronics Commons hubs.

The ARMOR Center would unite these strengths to advance additive manufacturing, AI-enabled manufacturing, advanced composites, and point-of-need production. A UARC in Arizona would deepen the Army's partnership with a state that already delivers defense manufacturing, semiconductor production, federally funded research, and a skilled engineering workforce. It would also expand the Army's ability to qualify and transition emerging technologies, strengthen domestic production, and reduce vulnerabilities in the defense supply chain.

We respectfully request full and fair consideration of ASURE's proposal. Arizona's defense industrial base, military infrastructure, research capacity, and workforce make it the natural home for this national capability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Elijah Crane
Member of Congress