

20 June 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) wholeheartedly endorses the *Hidden Figures Congressional Gold Medal Act*. Through their work at the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Dr. Christine Darden, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Dorothy Vaughan made significant technical contributions to the nation in the areas of aerodynamics and human spaceflight during the Space Race. In addition to their technical contributions, these women were pioneers in their fields serving in roles previously unheard of for women or minorities.

Today, the aerospace industry continues to be underrepresented by women and minorities. According to Aviation Week & Space Technology's 2017 Aerospace & Defense Workforce Study, less than 25 percent of the aerospace and defense (A&D) workforce consists of ethnic minorities and women. This figure has not changed significantly in four decades despite a major shift in the demographics of the United States. More specifically, 24 percent of the A&D workforce is female, down from 26 percent in 2007. Meanwhile, all minorities/races made up 21 percent of the A&D workforce in 2017. This must change. Increasing diversity in the workforce will increase innovation and creative problem solving, leading to overall increased productivity of the industry. To help achieve this, these women should be recognized so future generations may be inspired to follow in their footsteps.

Thank you for considering this request, and I hope the senator will sign on as a co-sponsor of the *Hidden Figures Congressional Gold Medal Act*.

Sincerely,



Daniel Dumbacher
Executive Director

