

U.S. Rep. Pocan: Leads bipartisan letter calling for protection of 'Buy American' requirements

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Washington, D.C. – **U.S. Representative Mark Pocan (WI-02)** last week led a bipartisan group of 35 Members of the House of Representatives in [calling](#) for conferees of the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to protect 'Buy American' laws. Specifically, Members called for adopting Section 862 of the House bill and rejecting Section 863 of the Senate counterpart in order to require the U.S. Navy to use American made products for critical shipboard components in sealift and auxiliary ships.

“Jeopardizing the stability of companies—located in states across the country—that manufacture these defense components would harm our military’s ability to rely on secure and stable supplies in an increasingly dynamic global security environment,” **Members wrote.** “If domestic sources for critical defense components exit the market, our military could be forced into relying on countries that do not share our interests, including strategic adversaries like China or Russia, or countries with lax supply chain security practices, for parts and supplies.”

“This would unnecessarily inject risk into the defense acquisition system, ranging from counterfeit parts to uncertain lifecycle sustainment support to cybersecurity vulnerabilities,” **Members continued.** “On the other hand, domestic content restrictions help ensure that critical products meet our military’s high standards for reliability, availability, and maintainability, supporting the warfighter’s safety and effectiveness.”

Eroding Buy American requirements also runs counter to two Presidential initiatives—President Trump’s Executive Order directing the Pentagon to strengthen domestic manufacturing capabilities and his “Buy American, Hire American” Executive Order to better enforce current domestic content laws.

Excluding section 863 of the Senate-passed NDAA would maintain the existing domestic content requirements that Department of Defense components have complied with for years. Including Section 862 of the House-passed NDAA will strengthen the domestic industrial base. It is also important to note that these requirements can be waived for cost, schedule, and non-competitive reasons. In other words, Department of Defense components retain flexibility under these laws.

The full letter is available [here](#).