

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 31, 2021

The Honorable Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon
Chief of Engineers and Commanding General
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20224

Dear Lieutenant General Spellmon:

We write to seek information regarding whether the Army Corps of Engineers request for proposals (RFP) for the construction of the new Compound Semiconductor Laboratory and Microsystem Integration Facility (CSL-MIF) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Lincoln Laboratory includes the option for a Project Labor Agreement (PLA). If it does not, we ask that you reissue the RFP with a PLA option.

In 2013, we wrote to the Department of Defense about the need for modernization of the facilities at the MIT Lincoln Laboratory. Our letter asked that once an agreement on modernization was reached, that "DOD would engage in a discussion with the Massachusetts Building Trades about using union workers on this project and ... consider signing a Project Labor Agreement for construction of these new laboratories."¹

Project Labor Agreements (PLA) are critical to ensure that major federal projects occur on schedule, without costly delays to taxpayers, and utilize a skilled workforce. A study on the use of PLAs in Massachusetts found that PLAs "can prevent the incurrence of ancillary costs," "are appropriate on complex projects," "help keep projects on time," "prevent scheduling premiums," "alleviate potential issues that may arise as a result of the particular geographic constraints of a project," "are appropriate tools for preventing work stoppages and avoiding potential labor disruptions," and can help create jobs for underserved communities.²

Executive Order 13502 encourages federal agencies to consider requiring the use of PLAs for large-scale construction projects.³ The order affirms that PLAs provide "structure and stability to large-scale construction projects, thereby promoting the efficient and expeditious completion of Federal construction contracts."⁴

¹ Letter from Senators Edward Markey and Elizabeth Warren and Representatives William Cowan, Richard Neal, James McGovern, John Tierney, Michael Capuano, Stephen Lynch, Niki Tsongas, William Keating, and Joseph Kennedy to Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter, February 19, 2013.


² Commonwealth of Massachusetts, "Special Commission Report on the Use of Project Labor Agreements in Road, Bridge, and Rail Projects," December 31, 2014, <https://policygroupontradeswomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2015-ma-pla-commission-report-as-posted-1-7-15.pdf>.

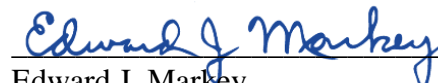
³ Executive Order 13502, "Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects," February 6, 2009, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2009-02-11/pdf/E9-3113.pdf>.

⁴ *Id.*

We understand that responses to the RFP are due on September 16, 2021. Due to the time sensitive nature of this matter, we request an oral briefing via telephone no later than September 7, 2021, and a response no later than September 10, 2021.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense