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MODERNIZING DEFENSE ACQUISITIONS: ENFORCING PRESIDENT TRUMP'S VISION FOR AN AMERICA FIRST MILITARY

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TOPLINE POINTS

- ★ President Trump's April 9, 2025, Executive Order entitled "Modernizing Defense Acquisitions and Spurring Innovation in the Defense Industrial Base" is a game-changing mandate to restore American military dominance by demanding speed, innovation, and commercial integration in defense acquisitions.
- ★ Bureaucratic inertia within the Department of Defense (DOD) and Intelligence Community (IC) threatens to undermine the President's America First priorities.
- ★ The geospatial intelligence sector's recent budget cuts to commercial partnerships and the contrasting success of the National Security Space Launch program illustrate the stakes of embracing—or resisting—commercial innovation.
- ★ Full alignment with the President's order is essential to maintaining U.S. military superiority and delivering the most advanced capabilities to America's warfighters.



President Trump’s Bold Leadership: Restoring American Military Dominance

President Donald J. Trump has always put American security first, making the tough calls to keep our nation safe. From creating the United States Space Force (America’s first new military branch in over 70 years) to the April 9, 2025, Executive Order, “[Modernizing Defense Acquisitions and Spurring Innovation in the Defense Industrial Base](#),” President Trump has shown that restoring American strength means breaking from the failed status quo and prioritizing results.

This Executive Order recognizes a hard truth: America’s outdated and bureaucratic acquisition system has slowed the delivery of critical capabilities to American warfighters. President Trump’s vision is clear: the United States must field the most lethal, technologically advanced, and rapidly deployable military force in the world. To achieve this, the President has demanded a comprehensive overhaul of the defense acquisition system—putting innovation, speed, and commercial partnerships at the center of America’s national defense strategy.

Bureaucratic Resistance: A Threat to America First Security

Despite the President’s clear directives, the entrenched bureaucracy within the DOD and IC continues to resist these much-needed reforms. For decades, career officials have built a system that too often prioritizes internal processes and legacy programs over the needs of the warfighter. This inertia is not just inefficient—it is dangerous. While the Trump Administration, supported by Congressional instruction, has pushed for “buy what we can, build what we must,” implementation by the entrenched bureaucracy often looks more like “build what we can, buy only when we must.”

Many within the defense and intelligence establishments remain wedded to the old way of doing business. They are slow to embrace commercial innovation and quick to defend their own programs, even when superior solutions exist in the private sector. This resistance undermines the President’s America First agenda and puts American lives at risk.

Case Study 1: Geospatial Intelligence and the EOCL Program

The geospatial intelligence sector offers a clear example of bureaucratic resistance. Agencies like the [National Reconnaissance Office](#) (NRO) and [National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency](#) (NGA) have traditionally relied upon building and operating their own satellite constellations. However, rapid advances in the commercial sector now allow for faster, more affordable, and more flexible solutions.

The [Electro-Optical Commercial Layer](#) (EOCL) program was designed to leverage these commercial capabilities. The goal was simple: bring more advanced geospatial intelligence online quickly and affordably by partnering with leading American companies. The results of the program have been significant, with a significantly higher volume of near-real time high-resolution imagery that is actively shared with the U.S. military and allied forces to provide a critical edge on the battlefield.



Yet, despite this clear intent, bureaucrats have moved to cut the EOCL budget [by 40%](#), sparking [industry warnings](#). This decision directly contradicts President Trump’s order and the stated objectives of Defense Secretary Hegseth and Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard. Instead of accelerating innovation, these officials are protecting their own turf—at the expense of America’s security.

This is not an isolated incident. It is part of a broader trend of bureaucratic resistance that threatens to undermine the President’s bold vision for a modern, lethal, and agile military.

Case Study 2: National Security Space Launch—A Model for Commercial Integration

While the EOCL program highlights the dangers of bureaucratic resistance, the [National Security Space Launch](#) (NSSL) program demonstrates the power of embracing commercial innovation. In recent years, the NSSL program has successfully attracted, developed, and integrated commercial launch providers into critical national security missions. By opening the door to American companies with proven, scalable technologies, the NSSL program has delivered more launches, faster timelines, and significant cost savings to the taxpayer.

This success is no accident. It is the direct result of a willingness to break with legacy approaches and put America’s world-leading private sector to work for national defense. The NSSL program stands as proof that when the DOD and IC align with the President’s America First vision—prioritizing commercial capabilities and streamlining acquisition—America’s warfighters and taxpayers win.

The Stakes: Why Full Alignment Matters

If non-elected bureaucrats within the defense and intelligence communities continue to resist commercial integration and acquisition reform, America’s military edge will erode. Our adversaries are not waiting. China and Russia are racing ahead, fielding new capabilities at breakneck speed. America cannot afford to be hamstrung by outdated processes and bureaucratic self-interest.

President Trump’s Executive Order is not optional. It is a mandate to put the needs of the warfighter and the security of the American people first. Every day that bureaucrats delay or obstruct these reforms is a day that America falls further behind.

Recommendations: Enforcing the President’s America First Vision

To deliver on President Trump’s vision, the following steps are essential:

- ★ **Mandate Commercial Integration:** Require all defense and intelligence acquisition programs to demonstrate how they are leveraging commercial innovation, with clear metrics and public reporting.
- ★ **Reward Innovation and Speed:** Align incentives within the acquisition workforce to prioritize rapid fielding of proven technologies.
- ★ **Streamline Acquisition Processes:** Eliminate unnecessary regulations and approvals that slow down the delivery of critical capabilities.



- ★ **Reverse Bureaucratic Cuts to Successful Commercial Partnerships:** Restore full funding to the EOCL program and any other commercial partnerships that have been undermined by internal resistance.
- ★ **Accountability for Obstruction:** Identify and remove officials who continue to prioritize legacy programs over the President’s directives.

Conclusion

President Trump’s leadership has set a new standard for American military strength. The creation of the Space Force and the April 9 Executive Order are proof of his commitment to restoring American dominance. Still, the fight is not over. Bureaucratic resistance within the DOD and IC remains a serious threat to the President’s America First agenda.

The contrasting experiences of the EOCL and NSSL programs make the stakes clear: when America’s defense establishment embraces commercial innovation, the nation wins. When it clings to outdated processes and bureaucratic self-interest, the nation loses. The Trump Administration—and all who believe in putting American security first—must remain vigilant. Only by rooting out bureaucratic obstruction and fully embracing commercial innovation can we ensure that America’s warfighters have the tools they need to defend our freedom, now and in the future.

