

Position: The Reserve Organization of America urges Congress to secure the future of Air Force Reserve Component A-10 Units.

Background: The FY2026 NDAs in both chambers address A-10 divestment but take very different approaches. The outcome will determine whether Reserve Component A-10 units like the 442nd Fighter Wing remain operationally relevant—or are left without a mission, hemorrhaging personnel and capability before follow-on aircraft arrive.

The Senate bill (S. 2296, Section 137) establishes a lower long-term aircraft floor, prohibiting the Air Force from retiring A-10s below a total inventory of 103 aircraft. More importantly, it conditions any divestment on the submission of a detailed recapitalization plan for each affected unit. That plan must include a follow-on mission assignment, a strategy for aircraft reallocation, detailed personnel and training plans, and an assessment of community impacts.

The House bill (H.R. 3838, Section 143) emphasizes short-term protection rather than long-term planning. It prohibits any A-10 retirements during FY2026 and establishes higher short-term inventory floors (62 total aircraft and 96 primary mission aircraft). It also requires the Air Force to submit a report on its plan to retire the A-10 fleet by FY 2029 and directs a study on recapitalization options for Reserve units. However, it does not condition divestment on the assignment of a follow-on mission.

ROA's position is straightforward: No A-10 unit should be divested until a follow-on mission is assigned, resourced, and planned. Anything less risks hollowing out Reserve fighter capability, weakening surge readiness, and losing decades of expertise. To that end, ROA urges conferees to adopt the following in the final NDA:

1. Use the Senate provision (Section 137) as the baseline. Make the waiver requirement (including a certified follow-on mission plan) statutory, not advisory.
2. Codify reserve-specific requirements. Mandate that recapitalization plans address infrastructure reuse, instructor and maintainer retention, and a phased transition timeline that preserves surge capability.
3. For Reserve units like the 442nd, require that no A-10s be divested until replacement aircraft are under contract and an initial cadre training plan is in place.
4. Accept the House's higher FY26 floor for short-term stability but make the Senate's conditional waiver the enduring standard. This blended approach offers short-term stability while locking in the long-term guarantee that no Reserve unit will be "orphaned" in the transition from the A-10.

For contact: *Matthew Schwartzman, mschwartzman@roa.org*