

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 9, 2009

The Honorable Michael Donley
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

General Norman Schwartz
Chief of Staff of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Donley and General Schwartz:

Our purpose in writing is to request a staff briefing on Air Force processes and plans for the future consolidation of bases supporting F-22 Raptor training and operations. During the recent announcement of candidate installations for the permanent stationing of the F-35 Lightning, Air Force representatives indicated that the Department may be conducting a concurrent review of F-22 basing. During congressional testimony this year, you acknowledged that, owing to the relatively small number of aircraft in the F-22 fleet, the Air Force is studying ways to maximize the effective use of the aircraft for both training and combat operations. Subsequently, your legislative liaison informed us that there were "... ongoing discussions at the corporate level on how best to manage what will be a relatively small fleet of combat coded aircraft ... but there is no firm date on when or if a decision is forthcoming."


Fiscal Year 2010 force structure adjustments will result in the retirement of the F-15 squadron at Langley Air Force Base (LAFB), Virginia, resulting in the loss of an additional 399 military jobs from an area already hard hit by the 2005 BRAC decisions. Only 36 F-22 Raptors will be stationed at this world-class installation following this drawdown. LAFB clearly has excess operational capacity and modern facilities specifically constructed for the F-22 Raptor. The consolidation of this critical national asset at one of the premier fighter bases in the Air Force would vastly improve efficiencies in maintenance and operations of the overall fleet, as well as allow the Active and Air National Guard components to continue to work together at LAFB to support homeland defense and overseas contingency missions.


We seek to gain a better understanding of the status of the Air Force's plan for realignment of the remaining F-22 squadrons and the steps it will follow to ensure basing decisions are made in the same objective, transparent, and defensible way as was used to select candidate bases for the F-35. Our staff will coordinate the briefing's scheduling through your Air Force Liaison Offices.

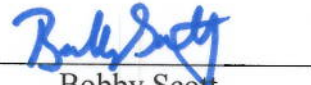
Thank you for your consideration of this request.

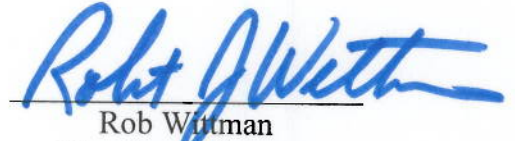
Sincerely,


Jim Webb
U.S. Senator


Mark Warner
U.S. Senator


Glenn Nye
Member of Congress


Bobby Scott
Member of Congress


Rob Wittman
Member of Congress