

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2012

The Honorable Michael B. Donley
Secretary
United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We strongly encourage your selection of McConnell Air Force Base as the Main Operating Base (MOB) #1 when replacing tanker aircraft from KC-135R's to KC-46A's starting in 2016. McConnell AFB is the option whose location, capacity, and mission will best meet the needs of the U.S. Air Force.

For most of the past century, Wichita, Kansas has been the Air Capital of the World—providing aviation products across the private and government sectors. Wichita has played a key role for our nation's military, building everything from the T-6, the nation's primary military trainer aircraft, to the VC-25, the Commander in Chief's aircraft. In addition, McConnell AFB has been a consistent and positive presence in our community since 1941.

The geographic location of McConnell AFB is one of its greatest assets, providing the U.S. Air Force with the strategic flexibility needed to carry out a variety of missions, both overseas and at home. Historical data on refueling tracks over Kansas substantiates the importance of geography and McConnell AFB as a significant contributor.

As you know, McConnell AFB is currently home to 48 KC-135R's, which are part of the 22nd Air Refueling Wing and the Air Force Reserve's 931st Air Refueling Group. The criteria for MOB#1 calls for a base capacity of 36 KC-46A's. McConnell AFB is, by far, the largest KC-135 tanker base in the country and will easily be able to house MOB#1 when factoring hangar, runway and ramp space. In addition, the criteria also notes MOB#1 should have a classic association, which McConnell AFB currently possesses.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Kathleen Ferguson, recently held informative briefings for our staff where she explained that the Air Refueling Receiver Demand Model used to assess basing will focus on the day-to-day, long-term missions rather than allowing global events or administration priorities to influence the scoring. We anticipate this commitment to modeling and prioritization will be upheld and future unknown contingencies will not factor in the decision process.

We are heartened by the criteria the U.S. Air Force is using to assess basing for MOB#1. We believe that McConnell AFB will score extremely well as compared to other bases if properly

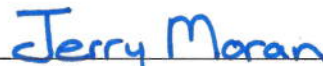
applied. We presume that you will continue to hear from other delegations throughout the decision-making process. However, we ask that you remain pragmatic and unbiased when weighing criteria and scoring. Kansans have a long-standing history of service and support to air power, and we hope this tradition continues with MOB#1 basing at McConnell AFB.

We appreciate your attention to this important and crucial mission. We look forward to personally discussing the viability of McConnell AFB for MOB#1 of KC-46A basing. Thank you for your commitment to America's Air Force.

Sincerely,



Pat Roberts
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Mike Pompeo
Member of Congress