

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 11, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Barbara M. Barrett  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

General David L. Goldfein  
Chief of Staff  
United States Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Esper, Secretary Barrett and General Goldfein,

As the Air Force examines Air Force Reserve installations for the fielding of four new C-130J model aircraft as authorized and appropriated in the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, we want to express our strong support for the 910<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing based at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio (YARS). The proven performance of the unit, combined with the advantageous location, infrastructure, and community associated with the site, would give this location unique benefit to the Air Force.

When compared with other basing alternatives, we are confident that Youngstown and the 910<sup>th</sup> will serve as a superb, cost-effective choice. The 910th has unique access to uncongested airspace. It has ramp space for a total of 16 C-130 aircraft, so there is no need for additional MILCON to accommodate the additional C-130s. It is located adjacent to a regional airport with Night Vision Goggle (NVG) training lighting and maintains control of a training range at nearby Camp James A. Garfield, suitable for both aerial spray as well as tactical airlift training, which allows the wing to conduct critical training nearly at will and maintain aircrew qualifications.

The 910th's location in the northern Midwest places it in a strategic location for completing one of the wing's dual primary missions: providing the Department of Defense's only large-area fixed wing aerial spray capability. Between Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019, the 910th Airlift Wing conducted scheduled aerial spray training missions at Camp Blanding, Florida; Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range, Kansas; Williston Army Corps of Engineer area, Grand Forks and Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota; Joint Base Charleston and Parris Island Marine Corps Recruiting Depot, South Carolina; Utah Test and Training Range, Utah; Langley Air Force Base and Craney Island, Virginia. The 910th conducted herbicide missions in Utah as well as Kansas and conducted insecticide missions at the remaining locations. Additionally, the 910th provided much needed insect control at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida

while the installation and its Airmen recovered from the devastating effects of Hurricane Michael. During these aerial spray missions, the 910th aircraft, aircrews and ground support personnel teamed up to fly 91 aerial spray sorties while treating a total of 367,572 acres of affected area.

In addition to these scheduled aerial spray missions, Youngstown's Reserve Citizen Airmen have expertly brought their unique aerial spray capabilities to bear in times of national emergency. For example, between May and June of 2010, the 910th Airlift Wing's 757th Airlift Squadron conducted aerial spray to aid in neutralizing the Deepwater Horizon oil spill caused by the April 2010 sinking of the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico. This mission marked the first real world application of oil spill dispersants by the 910th Airlift Wing during which the 910th Airlift Wing flew 93 sorties covering more than 30,000 acres.

The 910th has also deployed overseas multiple times in support of wartime contingency operations with coalition partners. To support these missions, the 910th regularly trains alongside their joint partners to maintain proficiency in tactical airlift -- the second of the 910th's two primary missions. Most recently, between May and September 2019, more than 130 members from the 910th Airlift Wing's flying, maintenance and other ground support squadrons deployed to complete airlift operations to various military installations throughout the U.S. Central Command (US-CENTCOM) Area of Operations (AOR). These 910th Reserve Citizen Airmen and aircraft completed more than 1,719 flying hours. During these missions, they flew 751 combat and combat support sorties and the aircrews moved 4,301 passengers and 41 Distinguished Visitors, hauled 1,650 pallets of cargo weighing more than 2,487 tons and transported 179 aeromedical patients.

We appreciate that in your testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee on 3 December, 2019 you indicated that the two most important issues in future basing decisions would be reciprocity of licensure for spouses and quality of schools. We are pleased that Governor Mike DeWine recently signed reciprocity into law legislation that would require state agencies to issue temporary occupational licenses to military spouses if they held a license in another state. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper recently congratulated Governor DeWine and the State of Ohio for the reciprocity law, which will improve the lives of service members and their families when they relocate to Ohio. Furthermore, in past basing evaluations against other Reserve installations, YARS has scored very high in average pupil to teacher ratio, and average high school graduation rate. It also scored near the top in GS Locality Pay as well as 0-3 with dependents BAH Rate.

The people of Ohio support our military and are proud to be family, friends, and neighbors of the dedicated men and women of the 910th. The Air Force Reserve and the 910th Wing in particular have taken great steps in achieving cost effectiveness and mission readiness. We stand ready to assist you in the selection process for assigning the C-130J's to a well deserving wing, and believe that the 910th Wing in Youngstown, Ohio will best meet the needs of the mission.

Thank you for your consideration.



Rob Portman  
U.S. Senator



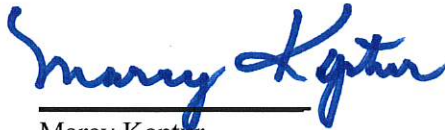
Sherrod Brown  
U.S. Senator



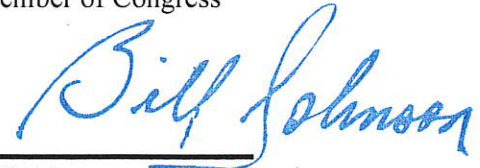
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Member of Congress



Mike Turner  
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



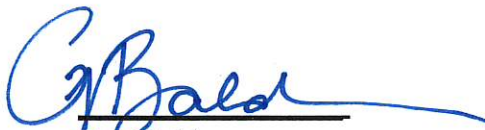
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David P. Joyce  
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Troy Balderson  
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Steve Stivers  
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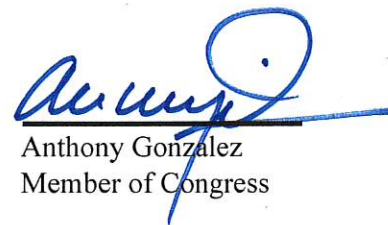
Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.  
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez  
Member of Congress

Cc: Lt. Gen Richard W. Scobee, Chief of Air Force Reserve