

March 9, 2009

The Honorable Michael Donley  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1690 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Gen. Norton Schwartz, USAF  
Chief of Staff  
1690 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Donley and General Schwartz:

We write, as members of the Virginia delegation of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, to encourage your careful consideration of Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, as the future base for the new 24th Numbered Air Force (NAF). It is our firm conviction that Langley is the strongest potential site for the new command. Our delegation stands ready to provide the necessary support to ensure our men and women in uniform succeed in this critical mission. We have already made a strong argument about the unique capabilities that Langley would provide to the 24<sup>th</sup>, but today we are writing you to provide an additional opportunity to discuss the Hampton, Virginia community that surrounds Langley.

It is our understanding that you will visit Langley AFB in April when it hosts an "Air Force Week" celebration. The mayor of Hampton, Ms. Molly Ward, has expressed her intention to invite you to a luncheon during the Air Force Week events. We encourage you to spend some time with Mayor Ward so that you may learn firsthand of the strong civic support the Air Force enjoys in the local community. The Virginia delegation is committed to working closely with the Air Force as a long-term partner with our local communities in the Hampton Roads region.

As we have previously mentioned, of the six criteria the Air Force will use to guide the evaluation process leading to a basing decision, it is our understanding that two have been determined to be vital to the success of the 24<sup>th</sup> NAF: (1) mission synergy; and (2) communications / bandwidth capabilities. We are confident that Langley AFB exceeds Air Force requirements in these areas, given its existing cyber installations, resident scientific and technical expertise, as well as access to state-of-the-art, high-speed network connectivity.

Additionally, the availability of mission-ready facilities and suitable support infrastructure will likely become critical factors in our increasingly constrained defense budget environment. The choice of

Langley AFB would offer ample space for development, as well as superb preexisting structures, to house an interim headquarters.

Basing the 24<sup>th</sup> NAF at Langley AFB also would offer numerous synergies given the presence of other major military commands in the local area, including the U.S. Joint Forces Command, the Naval Network Warfare Command, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, the Navy's Fleet Forces Command, and NATO's Allied Command Transformation. In addition to the important nexus with each command's growing emphasis on cyberspace, Air Force men and women stationed in Hampton would have superb career-progression opportunities in service, joint, and allied assignments. Furthermore, Hampton enjoys close proximity to the National Capital Region and the senior leadership of service and defense agencies, including the intelligence community.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.