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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2013

Secretary Eric Fanning
Acting Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Fanning,

As the Total Force Task Force and National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force prepare recommendations on the future makeup of the Air Force, I thank you for coming to Pittsburgh and regret that the legislative calendar will keep me in Washington for votes. As you examine the assets of the 911th Airlift Wing and the 171st Air National Guard, I ask that you consider these important facts.

The Pittsburgh region is home to two of the most accomplished and cost-effective military bases in the Air Force: the 911th and the 171st. Located adjacent to the Pittsburgh International Airport, these bases are model institutions for a lean and efficient fighting force. No other reserve or guard station can claim to have all-weather access—24-7-365—to four ten thousand foot runways at a fixed cost of only \$20,000 per annum. Other reserve and guard bases must pay runway and emergency response expenses that are 200 times greater than that amount, costing in excess \$100 million over a ten-year period. Since pilots and crews at the 911th and 171st can train in open skies under diverse weather conditions without delay—unlike the congested conditions at other facilities—the cost per flying hour is significantly lower.

The favorable cost structure is the result of the community's unequivocal support for our nation's military. At the federal, state, and local levels, elected officials and the community have worked to create a favorable climate for the military to grow in Western Pennsylvania. Moving forward, the region is prepared to work with the 911th and 171st on expansion plans. The Allegheny County Airport Authority has offered land and ramp space to the 911th if the base were to add aircraft or house a larger platform.

The airport corridor is also home to other military units and disaster response units, helping to facilitate joint-training exercises and emergency preparedness operations with local law enforcement. The 316th Army Reserve is located across the street from the 911th, where a new Navy Operations and Support Center is being built. In addition, a new commissary is under construction and ground will soon be broken for a new Post Exchange to serve tens of thousands of eligible and retired military families.

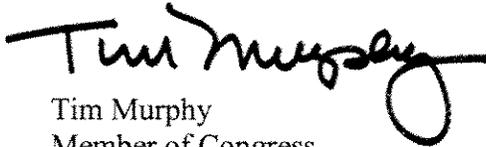
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The community basing model has served the interests of both Western Pennsylvania and the Pentagon. The Pittsburgh region's commitment to ensuring the 911th and 171st continue to be successful and cost-effective installations is steadfast. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further with you and stand ready to assist in any way I can to seeing that our Air Force can fulfill its mission to "aim high...fly-fight-win."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "M" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tim Murphy
Member of Congress

TM: bdg