



STATE OF WASHINGTON

December 13, 2011

The Honorable Michael B. Donley
Secretary
United States Air Force
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Donley:

On behalf of the state of Washington, we would like to thank you for the service and sacrifices made by the members and families of the U.S. Air Force on behalf of our nation. We are writing today to express our appreciation of the unique contributions to national security provided by the Air Force and our support in ensuring its ability to maintain air, space, and cyberspace superiority – now, and in the future. As our nation is called upon to make tough strategic decisions driven by the austere fiscal environment, we feel it is critically important that the Air Force receives the resources necessary to remain unrivaled in its ability to provide global vigilance, reach and power.

The Air Force KC-46A tanker will play a pivotal role in the nation's ability to project power anywhere in the world; basing decisions that balance the ability to provide full-spectrum capabilities along with efficient and effective utilization of resources will form the foundation for success. We believe that Fairchild Air Force Base (Fairchild) is a premiere global reach location that is particularly suited to be the first to receive the KC-46A.

Over the last thirty years, more than \$400 million has been invested in base infrastructure. Existing hangar space will accommodate up to four KC-46As in a fully covered environment, with modest investment in military construction. Expansive ramp space is available to support a full complement of KC-46As. This month, Fairchild celebrated the opening of its new 14,000-foot runway. Fairchild's existing infrastructure combined with a history of modernization efforts provides a prime KC-46A basing option requiring little additional investment.

The 92nd Air Refueling Wing, along with the Washington Air National Guard 141st Air Refueling Wing, form one of the largest, most experienced, Total Force tanker associations in the United States Air Force. "Team Fairchild" fosters a culture of efficiency and innovation backed by a reputation of providing world-class air refueling, airlift and aeromedical evacuation capabilities. Be it combat operations, humanitarian relief or civil support – Team Fairchild delivers full spectrum capabilities.

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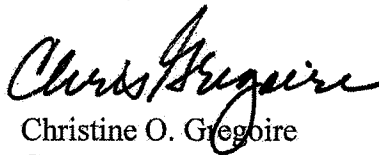
The base is a favorite of active duty airmen and is the second most requested for Air Force assignment in the United States — attracting the military's best and brightest. Over 1,000 Air Guard members reside in the Spokane community.

Fairchild's strategic location makes it a gateway to Asia-Pacific destinations, ideal for staging operations in support of the nation's worldwide rapid global mobility requirements. Also, Fairchild is situated in close proximity to numerous air refueling routes that enhance the Air Force's ability to expeditiously conduct air refueling, for training or real world operations, while minimizing in-transit fuel consumption.

Fairchild has long enjoyed the avid support of Spokane and the greater Washington State communities. Enclosed for your consideration is a white paper prepared by "Forward Fairchild", a coalition of Spokane businesses and community advocates. The paper further describes the benefits associated with Fairchild Air Force Base, the Spokane Community and Washington State.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical strategic basing issue.

Sincerely,



Christine O. Gregoire
Governor



Frank Chopp
Speaker of the House



Lisa Brown
Senate Majority Leader



Richard DeBolt
House Minority Leader



Mike Hewitt
Senate Minority Leader

Enclosure

cc: General Norton A. Schwartz
Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force

The Honorable Terry A. Yonkers, Assistant Secretary
Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics

General Raymond E. Johns Jr.
Commander of Air Mobility Command

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

December 13, 2011

Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force
1690 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Dear Secretary Donley,

On behalf of the State of Washington, we would like to thank you for the service and sacrifice made by the men and women and their families of the United States Air Force on behalf of our nation. It is with that gratitude that we write to you today in support of the KC-46A aerial refueling program and the Air Force's strategic basing process. As you know, the KC-46A will play a critical role in the United States' global strategy. Mission successes will rely heavily on the strategic basing determination process and the effective and efficient use of these aircraft.

Fairchild Air Force Base has been a historic part of our nation's aerial refueling effort and is well suited to achieve global-level reach to the emerging Asia-Pacific theater. The base is a strategic staging platform supporting the rapid worldwide global mobility mission with access to a number of aerial refueling routes while minimizing transit fuel consumption.

Fairchild is also home to a classic association of the 92nd Air Refueling Wing with the Air National Guard 141st Air Refueling Wing. The association marries the best the active duty and reserve component have to offer, providing for world-class aerial refueling, airlift and aeromedical evacuation capabilities while fostering innovation and efficiency in operation. Together, the integrated ARWs deliver a full spectrum of capability with one of the largest, most experienced organizations in the Air Force today.

The Air Force continues to recognize Fairchild's assets and has invested over \$400 million in base infrastructure over the last several decades. Accommodating the new KC-46A will require a modest investment in infrastructure as the Air Force has already improved the 14,000 foot runway and has plans to build a new Wing Headquarters and improved SERE facilities.

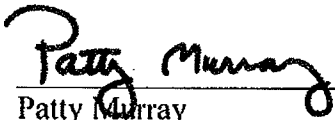
Fairchild provides an exceptional quality of life for its airmen and the local community has embraced the base. It is a strongly desired duty station and is the second-most requested Air Force assignment in the United States. There are also 1,000 Air Guard members who reside in the community with additional retirees who choose Spokane as their home following their military careers.

The Spokane community has a rich history with the military and embraces military personnel, their families, and retirees through programs and events that have drawn numerous military recognitions awarded to the community.

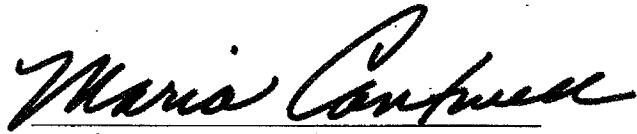
The Spokane community has developed a white paper by "Forward Fairchild," a coalition of Spokane businesses and community advocated that further detail the benefits associated with Fairchild Air Force Base, the Spokane community and Washington State. We have enclosed it for your review.

We look forward to your consideration of Fairchild Air Force Base as a home for the new tanker fleet.

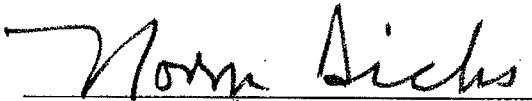
Sincerely,



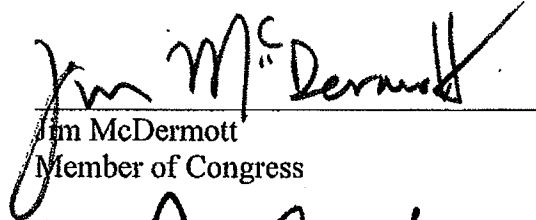
Patty Murray
United States Senator



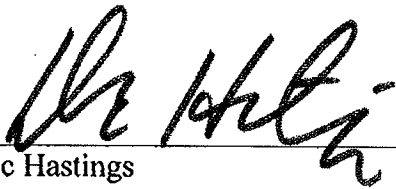
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



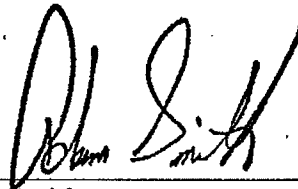
Norm Dicks
Member of Congress



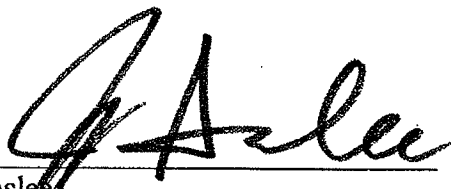
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



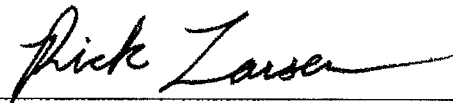
Doc Hastings
Member of Congress



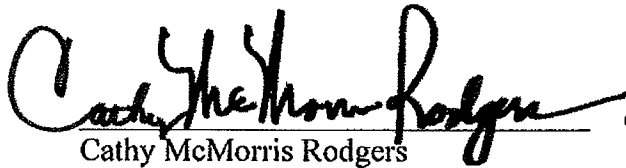
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



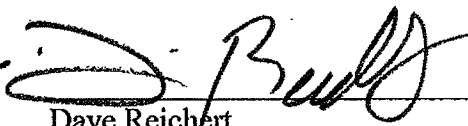
Jay Inslee
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress

Cc: General Norton A. Schwartz, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force
The Honorable Terry A. Yonkers, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for
Installations, Environment and Logistics
General Raymond E. Johns Jr., Commander of Air Mobility Command