

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Barrett:

We write supporting selection of the 130th Airlift Wing (AW), McLaughlin Air National Guard Base (ANGB) in Charleston, West Virginia for the current Air National Guard C-130J-30 Recapitalization and Basing. We believe what is most significant is the 130th Airlift Wing has the capability to park, hangar and operate C-130J-30s without any required Military Construction (MILCON) appropriations providing a high performing, yet low risk basing option. We highly recommend the 130th AW for consideration and believe they exceed the Air Force criteria for the selection process.

As Members of the West Virginia Congressional Delegation, we support this recapitalization and continue to support the missions of the 130th Airlift Wing. The 130th Airlift Wing is a strong candidate exceeding mission, capacity, and cost considerations:

Mission- The 130th Airlift Wing's location allows for multiple training operations due to its proximity to the various Special Tactics and Contingency Response units within the region. Yeager Airport provides a more challenging location that would benefit from higher performance C-130Js by having a comparatively shorter runway of 6715 feet. McLaughlin ANGB is in an ideal location on the east coast and provides some of the most challenging terrain for aircrew training in this area of the country, preparing our aircrew for warfare in potential future conflict zones. Landing zones are available for Assault/Maximum Effort Training at both our local airfield and at venues within twenty minutes of flying time. The 130th Airlift Wing has regularly demonstrated their mission capability with C-130Hs, generating one of the highest Mission Capability rates, averaging 74.6% from February 2019 to January 2020; exceeding the ANG target of 72.0%. The 130th Airlift Wing's strength numbers are consistently solid at 100% strength, Adjusted Vacancy Fill Rate at 87% and Retention Rate of 89%.

Capacity - The 130th Airlift Wing can park, operate, and maintain stretch model C-130J-30s without any required Military Construction appropriations. The modern hangar facilities at McLaughlin ANGB have been tested and confirmed that C-130J-30 aircraft fit with no structural modifications necessary. Today, the 130th Airlift Wing can park eight C-130J-30's (two in hangars; six on the apron) without any required Military Construction appropriations. The cost benefits of this alone should position McLaughlin ANGB as a strong candidate for basing of the C-130J-30. The fuel cell and isochronal dock hangars are modernized and have the ability to park C-130J-30s using existing waivers without hangar modification, reducing risk required to bring outdated facilities up to modern standards. The 130th Airlift Wing is prepared to use Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) funds for relocating taxiway striping, ramp tie downs, and jack points in hangars. Also, the 130th Airlift Wing airport lease was renewed in 2002 and is current until 2052.

Cost - It cannot be emphasized enough that the Air Force possesses a location capable of basing C-130J-30 aircraft immediately without waiting to determine if Military Construction funding will be appropriated in a potentially challenging budget year. The 130th Airlift Wing will only require FSRM funding to meet required modifications to facilitate C-130J-30 aircraft and, where appropriate, implement reasonable waiver options to further save costs to the government. The 130th Airlift Wing is also among the lowest in locality costs in the nation, further adding to the cost effectiveness of this basing decision.

Concerns: Based on the virtual site survey process conducted by the National Guard Bureau (NGB), we have identified several concerns in the scoring results that we believe deserve closer examination in your basing decision. Both of our hangars meet the capacity to park C-130J-30s with no construction and only minimal waivers which provides a low risk, near term solution for basing. However, we have been informed the criteria used by NGB were modified after the site survey process began and potentially negates these critical points because the existing fire suppression system does not have triple infrared (IR) detection technology, which is a new requirement for all candidate units. Another scoring concern based on a change made by NGB during the site survey process is that NGB stated our existing ramp is not capable of parking six C-130J-30s due to the existence of waivers, resulting in a \$7M MILCON cost. That is not correct. We have the ability to adjust our parking plan on our current property for approximately \$300K in FSRM costs and eliminate all waivers, if needed. The waivers simply maximize the utility of the existing ramp.

As you are well aware, any additional requirements and modifications to current criteria must be notified to Congressional offices in order to avoid the appearance of political impact on Department of Defense basing decisions. This is why the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act directs the Secretaries of the military departments to provide a briefing to disclose all information that went into the ranking and scoring process of their basing decisions for the last 12 months.

On behalf of the men and women serving in the 130th Airlift Wing, we provide our strongest support in the recapitalization efforts and appreciate your consideration to base C-130J-30 aircraft in Charleston, WV. We can park and operate these aircraft without using Military Construction funds. The 130th Airlift Wing continues to be a unit of distinction and enjoys providing rapid global mobility and sustainment for America's armed forces. You can count on the 130th Airlift Wing to bring the Air Force into the forefront of the 21st century with the basing of C-130J-30 aircraft in Charleston, West Virginia.

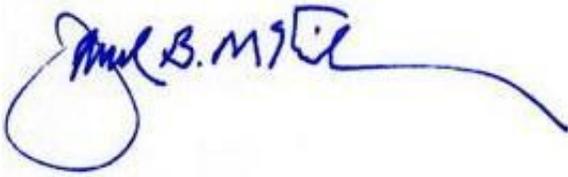
Thank you for your time and consideration. Montani Semper Liberi.



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of David B. McKinley, P.E. in blue ink, featuring a large loop at the start and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David B. McKinley, P.E.
United States Representative

Handwritten signature of Alex X. Mooney in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

Alex X. Mooney
United States Representative

Handwritten signature of Carol D. Miller in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

Carol D. Miller
United States Representative