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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

17 September 2020

The Honorable Barbara M. Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force
1160 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Barrett,

Thank you for your continued leadership of the Department of the Air Force and in your pivotal role shaping the United States Space Force. I write to you today in support of basing U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM) headquarters in Arizona. Both the Tucson and Phoenix Metropolitan Area's meet all of the Department's screening and evaluation criteria and would be ideal permanent locations for the Command's headquarters.

The Cities of South Tucson, Glendale, Peoria, and Youngtown have all been nominated by Governor Doug Ducey. They are located in central and south Arizona which boasts an ideal climate and record number of clear days perfect for SPACECOM missions. Arizona's climate has already drawn numerous defense and aerospace companies including Raytheon, Honeywell, Boeing, General Dynamics, and L3 Harris. Over 55,000 Arizona residents are employed in the aerospace and defense industries. Collaboration with these companies will be vital for SPACECOM's future success and locating the headquarters in Arizona will allow for close coordination with the newest military service.

The Phoenix Metropolitan Area is home to Luke Air Force Base (Luke AFB). Glendale, Peoria, and Youngtown are all located within 15 miles of Luke AFB, one of twenty military installations in Arizona. Luke AFB hosts the 56th Fighter Wing, the world's largest fighter wing, and the Air Education and Training Command, the primary active-duty fighter pilot training wing. Over 400 pilots and 300 air control professionals graduate annually at Luke AFB. The 56th Fighter Wing also oversees the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range.

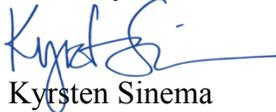
South Tucson is approximately seven miles from Davis-Monthan AFB, home to the 355th Fighter Group of the Air Force. The 355th Fighter Group contains the 355th Training Squadron, which designs, conducts, and maintains academic flying, specialized, and electronic interactive training for A-10C aircraft and operates advanced fighter aircraft simulators. The 355th also performs a robust international F-16 pilot training mission, which reinforces relationships with our international partners. Additionally, the Fort Huachuca Army installation in southern Arizona has a number of relevant critical missions, including NETCOM, Signal and Cyber capabilities, and the Electronic Proving Ground.

Arizona also benefits from four top universities with strong ties to NASA and the aerospace industry. Arizona State University's (ASU) four main campuses are located in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area and provides access to one of the world's leading centers for observational and theoretical research in astronomy and astrophysics. The University of Arizona (UArizona) Lunar and Planetary Laboratory has been a part of every major NASA mission since the Apollo era in the 1960s. On July 17, 2019, the Administrator of NASA Jim Bridenstine stated at a United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation hearing that ASU and UArizona are "leading the world when it comes to university engagement with NASA and developing these programs and projects". In northern Arizona, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Prescott Campus includes the nation's top undergraduate aerospace, aeronautical, and astronautical programs, and Northern Arizona University has a diverse array of relevant programs.

Arizona provides the necessary existing military infrastructure, community support, and future workforce for a successful, sustained SPACECOM headquarters. The additional resources nearby, such as ASU, UArizona, and the Barry M. Goldwater Range, provide further evidence that Arizona is among the most competitive locations to host SPACECOM headquarters.

I thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator