

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 29, 2016

The Honorable Deborah Lee James  
Secretary of the Air Force  
3000 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington D.C. 20350-1000

Dear Secretary James:

We write to express our unwavering support for the selection of Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Washington, as the Main Operating Base-4 (MOB-4) bed down location for the KC-46A Pegasus Aerial Refueling Tanker. Fairchild is unquestionably the best candidate for MOB-4.

Fairchild is strategically located to support the Department of Defense's rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region, and is ideally positioned to support the spectrum of bilateral and multilateral training exercises, and contingency operations in the U.S. Pacific Command's area of responsibility. Fairchild is within 100 nautical miles of numerous tanker tracks, which reduces the cost of en-route fuel and maximizes offload capabilities. The base's location provides a decided advantage in shortening the distance to key staging bases in the Pacific.

It is important to recognize that Fairchild already possesses significant infrastructure to accommodate the KC-46A and related personnel. The base provides substantial runway, hangar, and ramp capacity for the tanker, as well as four squadron operation and maintenance facilities. The Air Force has long recognized Fairchild's strategic importance by investing in its infrastructure, including more than \$400 million over the past several years alone. These investments, which include a runway replacement, a new wing headquarters, construction of a fitness center and funding for a new dormitory for its Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape school, together with its existing capacity and training facilities, will minimize new construction and other costs necessary to bed down the KC-46A and maximize the resources available to support associated personnel.

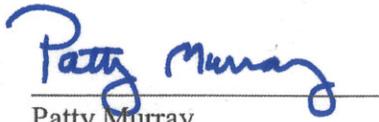
Fairchild enjoys strong community support for its missions and personnel. Spokane is home to Fairchild because, shortly after the start of World War II, Spokane businesses and public-minded citizens donated more than \$125,000 to purchase 1,400 acres that were presented to the War Department to build the Spokane Army Air Depot. The community has since remained a strong partner and supporter of the base, especially through the adoption of the Joint Land Use Study by both the City of Spokane and Spokane County, which prevents future incompatible land use and development in order to protect current and future missions. In 2012, Washington State convened the Washington Military Alliance, a coalition of military and defense-related public and private stakeholder organizations to strengthen collaborative efforts supporting our state's military and defense infrastructure.

Fairchild is home to a classic association of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Air Refueling Wing with the Washington Air National Guard's 141<sup>st</sup> Refueling Wing. This association combines the expertise and efficiencies of both active

duty and guard components, ensuring world-class aerial refueling, airlift, and aeromedical evacuation capabilities while fostering operational innovation and efficiency. The long-standing association at Fairchild has a demonstrated record of high performance that serves as a working model of the total Air Force and an example for the air mobility community.

Fairchild is the ideal candidate for the MOB-4 of the KC-46A because of its strategic location to support the Pacific rebalance, its infrastructure and capacity to cost-effectively accommodate this new tanker, strong community support, and the mission expertise resulting from the classic association of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Air Refueling Wing and the 141<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Wing. We encourage you to carefully consider these attributes and select Fairchild Air Force Base for MOB-4 for the KC-46A. Thank you for your service to our Air Force and the country.

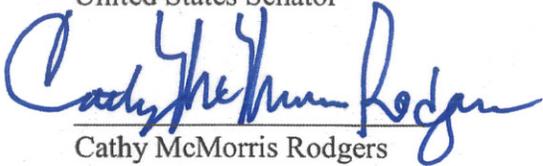
Sincerely,



Patty Murray  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



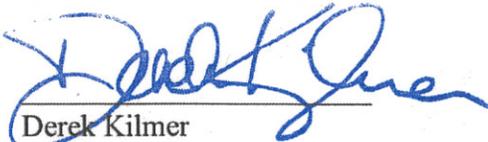
Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress



Denny Heck  
Member of Congress



Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress



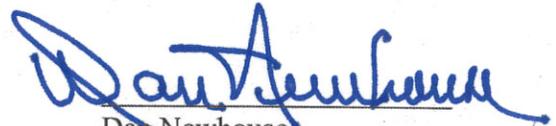
Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



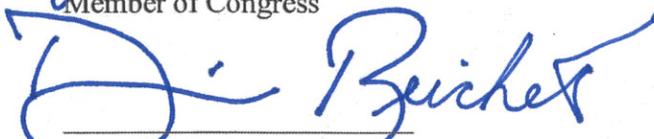
Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



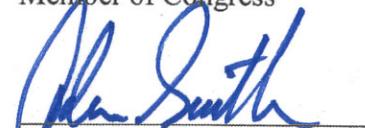
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress