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March 17, 2015

Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James
1690 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Carter and Secretary James,

On behalf of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG), we write to express our strong support for the Los Angeles Air Force Base and the critical role it plays in our nation's defense.

Los Angeles County has a rich history in aerospace, missile, and defense technology and development. Los Angeles remains the top location for aerospace and defense in the nation because of its expansive supplier base of firms, skilled talent, and unmatched export capacity. L.A.'s selection as an advanced aerospace manufacturing community, one of only twelve manufacturing communities selected nationwide, is testament to its strength within this industry. As is its recent selection to host the Department of Commerce's first annual National Aerospace Foreign Direct Investment Expo.

The Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB) and the Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC) is a critical asset to the aerospace industry and the nation's ability to design the military technology necessary to adequately provide for our national defense. The biggest asset to our country's safety, possessed by the LAAFB and SMC, is its unmatched skilled workforce based in Los Angeles. This brain trust, consisting of 5,879 directly employed military, civilian, and contractor workers and 11,776 indirectly employed, has made its home in Los Angeles and would be unlikely to migrate anywhere else if either the LAAFB or SMC moved some of its operations. This localized, highly skilled workforce is essential to the success of the LAAFB and the SMC, and has time and again proven itself crucial to the defense of the United States of America.

SMC provides the nation with highly sophisticated intelligence gathering infrastructure that has significantly contributed to the U.S. military's advancement in missions such as Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom where SMC is noted as having added "unimaginable speed and precision to American military operations" through the use of space-based surveillance, communications, navigation and meteorology.

As national defense continues to rely more on intelligence gathering, the role SMC has played in developing, acquiring, fielding and sustaining our military space systems cannot be overstated. SMC has proven to be a critical infrastructure asset to our national defense both in the past as well as for the foreseeable future.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN ACTION

Carson El Segundo Gardena Hawthorne Hermosa Beach Inglewood Lawndale Lomita
Manhattan Beach Palos Verdes Estates Rancho Palos Verdes Redondo Beach Rolling Hills
Rolling Hills Estates Torrance Los Angeles District #15 Los Angeles County

LAAFB's and SMC's location also bolsters its strategic importance to our national defense due to the following factors:

- Los Angeles County remains the top location for aerospace and defense in the nation—home to major prime contractor operations, such as Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, and Honeywell, as well as home to more small and mid-sized companies in the A&D supply chain than anywhere else in the nation.
- Los Angeles County graduates more engineers than any other region and has developed sophisticated programs at community colleges and universities to meet the needs of the aerospace and defense industry well into the future.
- Proximity to a significantly large aerospace and defense ecosystem of companies coupled with an unmatched skilled workforce available only in L.A. provides LAAFB with unparalleled built-in benefits to advance our nation's mission.

The Los Angeles Air Force Base is a Los Angeles icon, keeping our region connected to the armed forces and the women and men who keep our country safe. Neither SMC nor Los Angeles would be as strong without the other.

We support the Los Angeles Air Force Base and the Space and Missile Systems Center, and firmly believe any relocation attempt of the SMC would be detrimental to national defense and the mission of the Los Angeles Air Force Base.

Sincerely,

James F. Goodhart
SBCCOG Chair
Councilman, City of Palos Verdes Estates