



STATE OF ARIZONA

JANICE K. BREWER
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

May 19, 2014

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McCain:

Please accept my sincerest gratitude for your dedicated service as a member of the United States Congress and all you have accomplished for Arizona and our military service members. Our state is today in a unique position to provide leadership and viable solutions to the fiscal challenges faced by the Department of Defense. We fully understand the magnitude of budgetary cuts imposed by the Budget Control Act and appreciate the difficult decisions that must be made to reduce defense spending in the coming years. Arizonans stand united to ensure America's armed forces remain a ready and capable combat force to deter aggression and defend freedom in this turbulent global environment.

We believe no other location in the United States can compete with all that Arizona offers the Department of Defense, especially in terms of optimal joint training conditions, infrastructure, interoperability and community support. The Department's sequestration-driven proposals for sweeping cuts to key defense programs are alarming because they represent loss of capability and an underutilization of the greatest military training airspace and ranges the world has ever known.

These cuts not only degrade our national defense, they also threaten the economic stability of our state. More than 50,000 Arizonans currently serve within the state in uniform or as Department civil servants. An additional 35,000 are employed as defense contractors. This year we expect a study of Arizona's principal military operations to project an annual economic impact far above \$9.1 billion – the stated impact from a 2008 study commissioned by the Arizona Department of Commerce. Defense represents the number one industry in Arizona and is therefore worthy of preservation and enhancement.

Divestment of the A-10 Thunderbolt II is simply not in the nation's best interest. The United States Air Force plans to retire all 283 A-10s from its inventory because it contends it is a "single-role" aircraft. That single role – close air support – is more accurately described as the A-10's primary role, as it also proves to be effective as a forward air control and combat search and rescue platform. Regardless of mission, the A-10 performs at less cost per flying hour than any fighter or bomber. Additionally, its close air support role happens to be the most important

to any U.S. service member fighting the enemy on the ground. No aircraft provides close air support to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines on the battlefield as well as the A-10. We owe our brave men and women in harm's way the best possible close air support so they can return home to their families. Until an equally effective replacement for the A-10 reaches operational capability, and to avoid a serious gap in our national defense, it must be retained at an appropriate funding level.

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base must be sustained. The Air Force intends to phase out all 84 of Davis-Monthan's A-10s by 2019. The service also intends to move seven EC-130H Compass Call aircraft out of the base within two years. Without robust flying missions the installation's future is tenuous. While the Defense Department contemplates a round of Base Realignment and Closures in 2017, the loss would have a catastrophic impact on the Air Force's ability to train pilots for attack and fighter missions. Retirement of the A-10 without a significant follow-on flying mission for the base is clearly an oversight that must be corrected. The base is strategically located for access to the Barry M. Goldwater Range; 57,000 cubic miles of airspace and battlefield targets at nine air-to-ground ranges. Proximity to these ranges and Arizona's year-round flying weather *should* ensure Davis-Monthan's future role in national defense. But to further ensure the base's future, we want all elected leaders and Defense Department officials to know that Arizonans are proud of their military installations and support the military members who serve here. While we strongly oppose the loss of A-10s, we strongly urge your favorable consideration to support additional flying missions at the base – F-16 Fighting Falcons in the short term, and F-35 Lightning II aircraft in the long term. We know Southern Arizona residents share solidarity to that commitment. A recent survey commissioned by the Southern Arizona Defense Alliance reflected that more than 90 percent of Southern Arizonans support the region's military bases, with 75 percent of those saying they felt "strong" or "very strong" support.

The combat capability of the AH-64 Apache should remain in the National Guard. Of all cost cutting initiatives, the most arbitrary and expensive is the U.S. Army's decision to take all Apache attack helicopters away from the Army National Guard. Arizona does not support the disarmament of its Citizen-Soldiers who proved their readiness and attack aviation prowess during three deployments to Afghanistan. Across the nation, America invested in thousands of Army Guard Apache pilots and maintainers who train to the same standards as their active duty counterparts – yet the Army is prepared to dispose of their expertise and spend millions to train new Soldiers for the same mission. We submit that every non-nuclear weapon system must have a reserve capacity and because a Guard attack aviation battalion can be maintained for 40 percent of the cost of an active duty battalion, the choice is clear. The current budget environment should not force us to deal in absolutes, but rather to find the correct active and reserve balance that leverages the Guard's cost-saving benefits as well as Arizona's geographic advantages. The loss of our 24 Apaches at Silverbell Army Heliport in Marana place that installation at the greatest risk for closure, and with our attack aviation training partnership with the Republic of Singapore at the heliport, they too stand to lose their sizeable investment in Arizona.

Arizona supports new missions at all of its military installations. The United States Air Force and Marine Corps know what Arizonans know – we have the best fighter training environment in the world. The Air Force's decision to base the F-35A at Luke Air Force Base in Glendale and

The Honorable John McCain

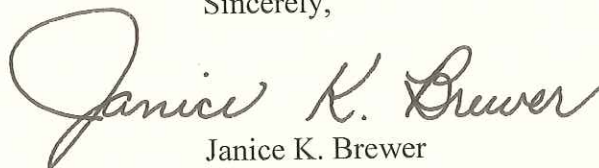
May 19, 2014

Page 3 of 3

the Marine Corps' decision to base F-35B aircraft at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma underscores our state's value to the Department of Defense. Arizona aspires to strengthen its position as America's military aviation center of excellence. To that end, we welcome all future flying missions. We support future F-35 basing at Tucson International Airport's Air Guard Station – a base with an environmental clearance and ramp space for up to 72 F-35s. We support the Army Intelligence Training Center and basing remotely piloted aircraft at Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista, as well as continuing the Fort's irreplaceable ability at its Electronic Proving Grounds to test, evaluate, and simulate cyber and electromagnetic capabilities and threats in an open-air environment with limited spectrum encroachment. We support the recapitalization of the Arizona Air National Guard's KC-135 Stratotanker fleet with KC-46 Pegasus tankers at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. We proudly support the international military training relationships established in our state and welcome new ones as we work together to strengthen the defenses of our partner nations.

America needs Arizona now more than ever. In light of fiscal realities, the best foundation for a strong national defense resides in Arizona's skies, ranges, military infrastructure, and most importantly, its people. Each defense dollar goes further here than anywhere else. The bases, weather, terrain, low cost of living, strategic necessity, and patriotic spirit are inherent to our state. We ask for your support – and that of each member of our Congressional delegation – as decisions are made about these critical priorities affecting our installations and missions. Arizona is committed to continued service in defense of our great nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice K. Brewer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Janice K. Brewer

Governor