Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 25, 2017

The Honorable Heather Wilson
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Wilson:

It is our understanding that the Air Force intends to eventually retire three squadrons of the A-10 Thunderbolt II as their wings run out of service life and replace them with two squadrons of the F-35 Lightning II. The 127th Wing at Selfridge ANGB currently hosts an A-10 squadron and is under consideration in the strategic basing process for the 5th and 6th operational locations for the F-35A. We strongly urge the Air Force to select the 127th Wing based on the fiscal, operational and programmatic needs of the Air Force and the military judgment of its experienced senior leadership.

Earlier this month a site survey team visited Selfridge ANGB to see firsthand that the former F-16 base is perfectly suited to serve as the next Air National Guard F-35A operations base. We believe the strategic basing process will show that Selfridge's outstanding Airmen, modern facilities, unique training range and low cost of conversion with no risk to the mission make the 127th Wing the best choice for bedding down the F-35A. The site survey team will identify core advantages of the 127th Wing:

Personnel – As the recipients of the 2015 Spaatz Trophy as the best flying organization in the Air National Guard, the women and men have proven their mettle in combat, under the inspection microscope, and all around the world every day. They were also awarded the Meritorious Unit Award – only the 3rd ANG Wing in history to be recognized as such for "outstanding devotion & exceptional performance." The 127th Wing citizen Airmen have the proven skills, determination, and tenacity to succeed at any mission.

Facilities – Selfridge has the ability to immediately, with very small modifications, beddown the F-35A. Selfridge is the only base under consideration that could house every one of the planned F-35As inside environmentally controlled hangars. The base's large modern operations facilities provide robust and resilient infrastructure to provide maintenance, operations, and security for unsurpassed readiness.

Training – Selfridge supports 100% of the Air Force's Ready Aircrew Program Requirements for the F-35A. Michigan hosts the largest contiguous joint service range/airspace complex east of the Mississippi River, including supersonic airspace, unique littoral topography, a vast overland

joint fires range with all-altitude ordnance capability to an over water/over land live fire range with moving targets and mobile advanced electronic joint threat emitters. These locations provide tremendous opportunities for development of F-35 close air support tactics and joint training with allies. Every year the Michigan National Guard hosts Operation Northern Strike bringing together over 5,000 Army, Air Force, Marines, and Special Forces from over 20 states and allies for a joint exercise. This is the only accredited reserve component joint training in the United States.

In addition, the 127th Wing concurrently operates the KC-135 Stratotanker in the global mobility mission – offering unparalleled synergy of training, efficiency, and mobility opportunities/operations. About 150 miles to the west, the 110th Attack Wing at W.K. Kellogg ANGB in Battle Creek operates the MQ-9 mission and will have a new cybersecurity mission go operational in 2018. Both missions will assist future F-35A training with manned and unmanned teaming.

Cost – There are no "double conversions" associated with selecting the 127th Wing. The cost of conversion is minimal allowing the retirement of an A-10 squadron by 2023. In fact, the modification of the facilities to ensure full F-35A compatibility is expected to cost approximately $10 million with little or no increased personnel costs.

The future F-35 mission has the support of not only the Michigan Congressional Delegation, but also State and local leadership. The citizens living around Selfridge ANGB have hosted military airfield operations for 100 years and look forward to welcoming future active duty Airmen and their families when an active association for the F-35 is established.

We are very proud of the men and women serving in the Michigan National Guard. Over the past decade, the State of Michigan absorbed 25% of the cuts to personnel in the Air Guard. The 110th Wing and 127th Wing of the Michigan Air Guard have overcome many challenges and changes in mission, but are now on paths to become the most advanced Wings in the country. A decision to beddown the F-35A at Selfridge will complete the transformation and modernization of these vital national assets.

Sincerely,

Gary C. Peters United States Senator	Debbie Stabenow United States Senator	Paul Mitchell Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

John Conyers
Member of Congress

Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg
Member of Congress

Bill Huizenga
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Mike Bishop
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Debbie Dingell
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Member of Congress

John Moolenaar
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Dave Trott
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Jack Bergman
Member of Congress

CC: General David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force
Lieutenant General Scott Rice, Director, Air National Guard