Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2016

The Honorable Deborah Lee James
Secretary of the Air Force
1160 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Dear Secretary James:

As members of Ohio's Congressional delegation, we would like to invite you to visit the 180th Fighter Wing (180th FW) in Toledo, Ohio, for an in-depth look at the unit as a potential assignment location for the F-35A mission.

The 180th FW stands out among northern tier bases as a potential location. Since 9/11, the National Guard has played an increasingly vital role in overseas contingency operations. The 180th FW has deployed multiple times to support warfighters overseas. Just as significant is the 180th FW's role in Homeland Defense. The 180th FW is within 600 miles of 60 percent of the U.S. population. Since 2008, the 180th FW has been entrusted with the 24/7/365 Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) mission, protecting major U.S. metropolitan areas and some of our most critical infrastructure from attack.

The excellent work of the men and women of the 180th FW has not gone unnoticed. The 180th FW has been named ACA Unit of the Year twice, received five Air Force Outstanding Unit awards, consistently been rated in the top one percent for mission readiness, and been called the "benchmark operation" by the North American Aerospace Defense Command Region Commander. The 180th FW is currently led by an Active Duty Air Force Wing Commander and is slated to become an Active Associate Wing of the Air Force in 2018, further enhancing its strategic value to the Total Force.

The 180th FW's leadership and readiness for future mission sets goes beyond its record of operational excellence. The unit has prioritized energy efficiency and improved infrastructure to ensure effective performance long into the future. The wing has 150 available acres for expansion and could easily accommodate another 500,000 square feet of facility space. The 180th FW is well-positioned to take on the requirements of the F-35A mission.

Lastly, the continuous support from the State of Ohio, the City of Toledo and surrounding communities make the 180th FW the best choice for the F-35A mission. Standing shoulder to shoulder with community partners, the 180th FW is ready for this challenge. We strongly

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encourage you to come see the merits of 180th FW first-hand. Given the time-frame of the Air Force's basing decision, we ask that your staff follow up with the Ohio National Guard and our offices before the Corona Top meeting at Wright-Patterson AFB in June. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob Portman
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress