

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

March 14, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President, United States of America  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to thank you for your continued support for an interagency transfer of a retired National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) space shuttle orbiter for preservation and display at the National Museum of the United States Air Force (NMUSAF) in Ohio. We were pleased to see funds allocated in your FY12 Budget Request that would prepare the NMUSAF for preservation and display of the retired NASA Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. We wish to express our support for the transfer of the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* to the NMUSAF by emphasizing the mutual advantages for NASA, the Air Force, and the American people.

A key benefit of placing the *Atlantis* at the NMUSAF, near the historic home and workplace of the Wright brothers and within the Congressionally-designated National Aviation Heritage Area, is that it will highlight important national aerospace heritage. Ohio, the birthplace of aviation, has a proud, century-long history of aviation pioneering and human spaceflight development. The Air Force has played a central role in the development of space capabilities as a full partner with NASA in human spaceflight, from its origins in the Mercury program to today. The Air Force has also contributed more than \$8 billion in research and development, operations and maintenance, procurement, and construction funding in support of the shuttle program. The Department of Defense has sponsored numerous shuttle missions, five of which were on *Atlantis*. Displaying the *Atlantis* at the NMUSAF would underscore the Department's important contributions to our national security through human spaceflight. There is no better place to tell that story than in the Defense Department's largest and most popular museum.

Public visibility and accessibility are key benefits to placing *Atlantis* at the Air Force's national museum. The NMUSAF, located on historic Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, is a cross roads of Middle America. Within a day's drive of 60 percent of the U.S. population, the Museum hosts 1.3 million visitors annually. The NMUSAF, which is the world's oldest and largest aviation museum, provides a premier venue to showcase the Orbiter. Its ample free parking and free admission make it easily accessible to all.

Of particular note, the Museum has adopted a mission to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and has committed to an intensive STEM education program, not only in connection with the space shuttle, but with all its educational programming. The Ohio Department of Education, a national leader in STEM education, will partner with the Museum to use the shuttle for maximum educational benefits, especially in lessons directly aligned with STEM.

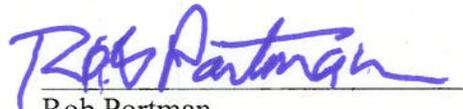
Moreover, the NMUSAF will use *Atlantis* not only for educational purposes, but in fulfilling its central mission to preserve and present the Air Force story, and to archive aerospace defense technology. The Museum has world-class aviation preservationists – with the knowledge and resources needed to preserve an orbiter. No other museum in the world can bring to bear the level of knowledge and resources needed to preserve an orbiter. Thus, by keeping the shuttle in the Air Force and the federal government, a shuttle located at NMUSAF will continue to provide taxpayer benefits.

We again thank you for your support of preparations to place a space shuttle orbiter under Air Force stewardship at the NMUSAF and we'll be glad to have your continued support in the future. We all look forward to Ohio becoming the home for this national treasure and being able to aid in sharing an important chapter in space history for all Americans.

Sincerely,



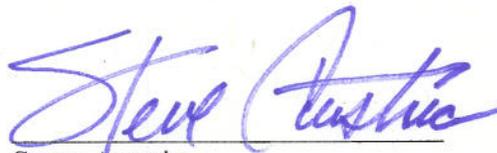
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Rob Portman  
United States Senator



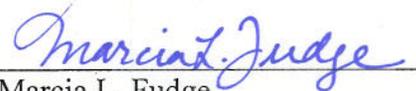
Michael R. Turner  
Member of Congress



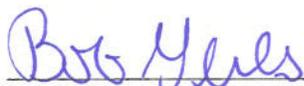
Steve Austria  
Member of Congress



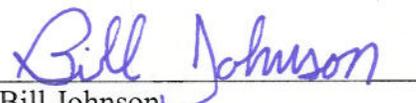
Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress



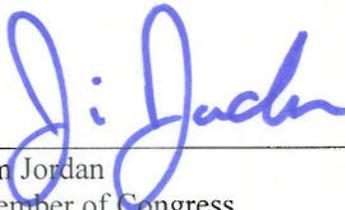
Marcia L. Fudge  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



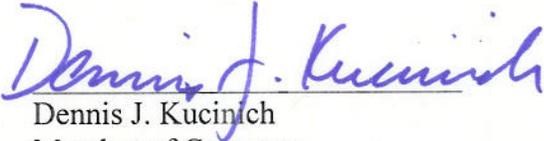
Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress



Jim Jordan  
Member of Congress



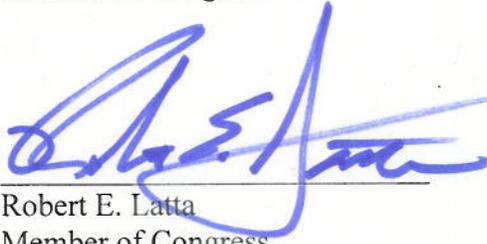
Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



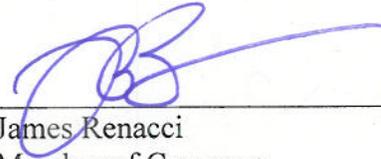
Dennis J. Kucinich  
Member of Congress



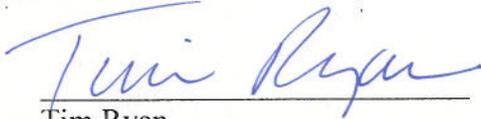
Steven C. LaTourette  
Member of Congress



Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress



James Renacci  
Member of Congress



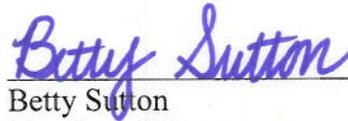
Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress



Jean Schmidt  
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton  
Member of Congress



Patrick Tiberi  
Member of Congress