Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 26, 2016

The Honorable Deborah Lee James
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary James:

We write today to commend you on the clear criteria you have laid out for selecting candidate bases to establish additional F-16 Formal Training Units (FTU). Both the interim and final FTU will be critical to combating the ongoing pilot shortage while simultaneously allowing a smooth transition to future airframes at other bases across the country.

We appreciate the open and through process you have shared with our offices as we work to ensure our Airmen receive the best training possible while also operating in a constrained budget environment. We believe that the execution of the process shared with Congress will ultimately lead to success in both of those areas. However, we also believe that Joint Base San Antonio is a in a unique position to not just meet, but rather exceed the goals outlined by the Air Force.

As prestigiously identified, the 149th Fighter Wing located at Kelly Field is a prime host for both interim and final units due to a number of factors. With outstanding year round flying conditions, ranges within 70nm, a number of active air spaces, existing noise contours, and a well-established aviation presence that limits encroachment, mission parameters are easily met and environmental impacts are minimal. Coupled with extensive capacity that includes existing state of the art simulators, extra ramp and hangar space, engine and hydrazine servicing, along with munitions storage we believe that JBSA is in prime position to assume additional FTU.

We also believe that a number of intangibles exist that elevate JBSA over other potential FTU locations. Whether it is the continued investment at the state and local level in infrastructure to support military institutions, the robust private sector aviation presence around Kelly Field, such as the innovative Port San Antonio and their existing relationships with JBSA and the Air Force, or simply the personnel support benefits the largest installation in the DoD enterprise has to offer coupled with historically strong support from "Military City USA." As Members of the San Antonio delegation, we welcome the competition, encourage you to full consider JBSA as a location for the FTU, and hope you will not hesitate to reach out to our offices if we can be of further assistance.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Sincerely,

WILL HURD
Member of Congress

LAMAR SMITH
Member of Congress

HENRY CUELLAR
Member of Congress

cc: General David L. Goldfein
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER