Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2015

General Frank J. Grass
Chief, National Guard Bureau
1636 Defense Pentagon Suite 1E169
Washington, D.C. 20301-001

Dear General Grass:

We are writing to voice our strong support for the Texas Air National Guard (TXANG) and their request for a Cyber Protection Team (CPT) in Texas, specifically in the City of San Antonio. As the Department of Defense (DoD) searches for viable locations for these CPTs, I know that you will find San Antonio, affectionately known as Cyber City U.S.A., meets and exceeds the established criteria for placement of these illustrious teams.

Texas is ranked first for employment in the Information Technology (IT) industry and jobs throughout the IT sector, from software engineers to hardware, installation and maintenance are thriving. San Antonio is also quickly becoming the hub of cyber warfare forces with the presence of the 24th and 25th Air Force, NSA-San Antonio, the University of Texas at San Antonio and the skilled private sector workforce that exists in Central Texas and often looks to recruit directly from the military.

The TXANG is a logical and cost-effective means to defend America in the cyber realm. The TXANG is unique in its diverse ability to perform cyber operations in State Active Duty, Title 32 and Title 10 status. The relationship with 24th Air Force and the TXANG has already been established by a signed agreement, which provides Texas Guard members secure and non-secure positions for current and further growth requirements; no additional funds would be required for the placement of a CPT.

Because of the combination of 24th Air Force and TXANGs 273rd Information Operations Squadron along with a strong IT industry in Central Texas, the ability of the TXANG to recruit and retain cyber warriors is unmatched. The 273rd has been staffed at 134% of capacity for the past three years causing the TXANG to turn away one to two fully qualified cyber personnel per month. These warriors, generally leaving the Active Component, want to continue to serve and protect our nation and state by serving in the TXANG. The TXANG is a perfect choice for these Soldiers and Airmen who are rolling their experience into high-paying civilian jobs, but still desire to serve.

There are also strong academic ties to cyber security in San Antonio. The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is the first Texas school designated as a NSA/DHS center of academic excellence in Information Assurance Education and Cyber Defense. The TXANG and UTSA are currently developing an executive level course in Information Assurance and Cyber Security because of this distinction and an increased National Guard presence would only further this connection. UTSA has also been leading the way in cyber preparedness, partnering with other

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universities to make up a consortium that helps states and communities detect and respond to cyber-attacks.

The threat we face as a nation in the cyber realm is growing every day. Our adversaries are constantly trying to steal valuable information and military secrets. We believe that San Antonio and the Texas Air National Guard exceeds the criteria required for the placement of a CPT by having a strong local IT industry, secure facilities already in place, a vibrant recruiting and retention base, strong academic support, and thriving private sector. I hope that you will keep these benefits in mind as you consider locations for the next round of CPTs. Thank you for your continued service to our nation.

Sincerely,

WILL HURD
Member of Congress

JOAQUIN CASTRO
Member of Congress

HENRY CUELLAR
Member of Congress

LAMAR SMITH
Member of Congress

CC:
Lieutenant General Stanley E. Clarke III
Director, Air National Guard
1000 Air Force Pentagon 5C1052
Washington, D.C. 20330-1000

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