

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 5, 2018

The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
100 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Mattis:

As the Missile Defense Agency moves forward with a final report to determine the feasibility of a third Ground-Based Midcourse Defense site, we write in strong support of the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center's bid to be the preferred Continental United States Interceptor Site (CIS) for the East Coast Missile Defense System.

From its days as an arsenal during World War II to its role as a National Guard training facility today, Camp Ravenna has a proud history of contributing to America's national security, and is well equipped to meet the needs of the MDA to house this important facility. The base's strategic location, cost-effective operation, optimal size, access to robust regional infrastructure, and ability to prioritize the missile defense mission make it well-suited for this important role.

Located in Northeastern Ohio, Portage County offers the vital infrastructure and talented workforce required for a project of this significance and provides significant advantages for site constructability and affordability. These factors will allow the cost-effective and timely deployment of the CIS.

As the agency's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) makes clear, Camp Ravenna's location boasts access to existing transportation networks needed to bring the project to fruition. Portage County's transportation portfolio includes an extensive road network with two primary and one auxiliary interstate highways, access to class one railroad with an active, dedicated spur onsite, nearby airports such as Akron-Canton Regional Airport and Youngstown Air Reserve Station, and nearby Lake Erie and Ohio River ports. In particular, the Port of Cleveland and Camp Ravenna are only forty eight miles apart and the route does not require the removal of current roadway features or involve multi-state jurisdictions for load permitting. This infrastructure can easily accommodate increased traffic during both the site's construction and operational phases.

Further, our region offers a vibrant and skilled construction and manufacturing workforce. We encourage your process to evaluate the construction employment data available at the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The Ravenna site can draw on a construction workforce exceeding 61,000 Ohioans – including from the nearby areas of Youngstown, Cleveland, Akron, and Canton. The Agency's EIS confirmed that "an adequate workforce would be available to support a project with the scope of the potential CIS." The accessibility to a skilled workforce will factor directly into the affordability and site constructability factors under consideration.

Additionally, the region's long history in engineering, aerospace and manufacturing provides a unique advantage for Camp Ravenna. It is located less than an hour's drive to five public universities and three public community colleges – not to mention the numerous private colleges and universities across the region – providing an ample source of engineering, technical, accounting, and environmental services talent. Further, the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center in Cleveland and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton are examples of Federal Government investment in the State of Ohio, due in no small part to our highly diverse and skilled workforce.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Missile Defense Agency to help grow and enhance Camp Ravenna by building this important defense facility in Portage County. We appreciate your consideration of Camp Ravenna as the preferred CIS for the East Coast Missile Defense System and look forward to the completion of the Ballistic Missile Defense Review.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



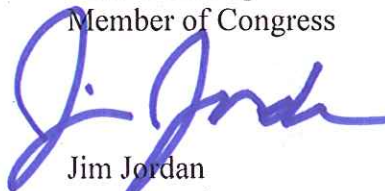
Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



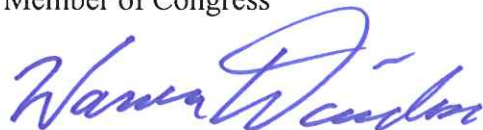
Jim Jordan
Member of Congress



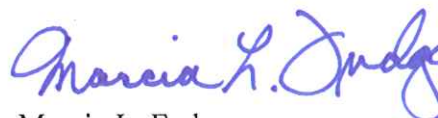
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce
Member of Congress



Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Jim Renacci
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress