

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 1, 2012

The Honorable Michael B. Donley  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330

Dear Secretary Donley,

The President's proposed Fiscal Year 2013 budget included plans to divest the C-27J from the Air National Guard as well as decommission the 179th Airlift Wing at Mansfield Lahm Air National Guard Base. Such actions would result in a reduction of approximately 800 of the 1,000 Guardsmen currently stationed at Mansfield. Yesterday, the White House stated, "The President is committed to working with the Department of Defense to find a mission for Mansfield Lahm Air National Guard Base, so that the men and women who serve there can continue to make their important contribution to our national security."

I remain deeply concerned about the future of the C-27J and the impact the proposal to mothball the aircraft has already had on our deployed operations and I remain committed to ensuring this proposal is properly reviewed. I do, however, welcome the White House announcement that if the C-27J is not retained in the Air National Guard, the President is already committed to finding a mission at Mansfield Lahm Air National Guard Base, so that those who currently serve there can continue to do so. Given that this announcement is contrary to the President's Budget submitted in February as well as the numerous conversations I've had with you and other Air Force leaders on this topic, I would appreciate your insight on the following questions:

1. When were you informed of the President's decision to reverse his proposal to remove the mission for 80 percent of the Guardsmen at Mansfield Lahm?
2. When did you plan to inform the Congressional Defense Committees of this intended change to the President's Budget?
3. What steps have you taken in working with the President to find a mission for Mansfield Lahm, so that the men and women who serve there can continue to make their important contribution to our national security?
4. What missions are you evaluating and what is your expected decision making timeline?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Given our upcoming deliberations of the National Defense Authorization Act and the fact that the original proposal was to remove these 800 Guardsmen from the force within Fiscal Year 2013, I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman