

June 8, 2010

Rich Rico
Chief of Staff
ANG Readiness Center
3500 Fetchet Avenue
Andrews AFB, MD 20762-5157

Re: Montana Air National Guard; Mission Follow-Up

Dear Chief of Staff Rico:

The Central Montana Defense Alliance was appreciative of your time during the group's visit to the Pentagon back in March 2010.

During the visit we were pleased that you mentioned a special interest in Great Falls and two other Air National Guard Bases (Springfield, Ohio and Puerto Rico). As we recall, the interest in these three bases related to the loss of their flying missions.

As expressed during the meeting, Great Falls is hopeful that it will retain its current F-15 fighter mission. The Montana Air National Guard has recently completed its retro-fit to accommodate the F-15 mission and is well ahead of its readiness schedule. Considering Montana's vast air space and annual number of flying days, we feel Great Falls is an ideal location to continue with the current mission.

Recently, the Air Force Magazine published information that the Air Force announced that the Ohio Air National Guard's 178th Fighter Wing in Springfield will gain three missions. The new missions include hosting a ground control station for the MQ-1 Predator and servicing F-16 bulkheads. The Guard Unit will also support operations of the National Air and Space Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson.

We hope your interest in Great Falls continues. We are hopeful that Air National Guard leadership will continue to explore ways of supporting the current MANG mission or consider viable alternatives, similar to what has occurred in Springfield, Illinois.

If the Central Montana Defense Alliance can be of any assistance, we stand ready to help in any way we can. Thank you for your service and desire to address mission options in Great Falls, Montana.

Very Respectfully,

David Weissman
Chair, Central Montana Defense Alliance

Cc:
Honorable US Senator Max Baucus
Honorable US Senator John Tester
Honorable US Representative Denny Rehberg
Honorable Governor Brian Schweitzer
Brigadier General John Walsh
Brigadier General Bradley Livingston