



May 25, 2023

The Honorable Frank Kendall
Secretary, United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Kendall,

It is our privilege and pleasure to support you in your service to our Nation as Secretary of the Air Force. We are confident that your depth of experience with some of our Nation's most challenging technological programs has prepared you well for your current position.

In the last several weeks, troubling rumors have surfaced regarding the current Administration's role in reversing the Air Force's decision to locate the US Space Command Headquarters at Redstone. More recently we have learned that the Air Force may have made unauthorized capital investments in facilities and improvements at the temporary headquarters with the intent of turning it into the permanent headquarters.

The decision to base the interim Space Command headquarters at Peterson AFB was based on short-term factors. Laying claim to this important Command based on where the interim headquarters is located is a disservice to the complexity of the basing decision-making process. The permanent basing assessment considered affordability, efficiency, best value and how to maximize existing long-term, multi-discipline space expertise and mission success. At the same time, the basing study carefully considered the strategic risks created by collocating two Unified Combatant Commands (COCOMs) in a potentially vulnerable location.

In making the site selection announcement, Sec. Barrett emphasized Redstone's outstanding qualifications and its long history of performance in all of the relevant criteria. The same objective process applied in previous rounds of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) seems to have been applied to the US Space Command HQ analysis and recommendation.

The Redstone Region is nationally recognized for supporting its military families. The cost of living is low, and the area has good schools, transportation, research universities, and a superior quality of life. The 70+ diverse federal agencies on Redstone provide all tenants the opportunity to collaborate and solve the most challenging problems that the US Space Command may face.

The decision to locate the Headquarters at Redstone appears to have been rooted in military strategy; the capacity, capabilities and costs of the sites; and the attributes of the communities supporting the base.

The Redstone Region provides exceptional cost benefits reflected in the basing analysis assessment that Redstone offers the lowest cost of construction, with an index 17% below the national average and a sustainment cost 18% lower than the national average. Add to that, a shovel-ready site with plenty of room to grow, a history of successfully delivering large construction projects on time and within budget, excellent access to Redstone through its six widely dispersed gates, and it's easy to understand why Redstone became the ideal choice for the Headquarters.

Suggestions that the Services of our military cannot rapidly, affordably, and efficiently execute major mission relocations without adversely impacting mission effectiveness is incorrect. The BRAC consolidations at Redstone in the 1990s and 2000s gave the Services significant experience in moving activities efficiently and without adverse impact on mission capability during relocations. The successful wartime relocation of the four-star Army Materiel Command demonstrates the ability of our community to effectively support the DOD in achieving its objectives without compromising its mission. These BRAC actions also provided Redstone with significant experience in managing such relocations. Other successful relocations during this period included relocations of the Army Aviation Command headquarters, the headquarters for the Army Space and Missile Defense Command, the majority of the Missile Defense Agency and several other commands. The FBI is in the process of relocating many of its functions to Redstone, bringing thousands of highly skilled FBI personnel to the Region.

Based on the numerous successful previous Redstone BRAC actions, I have no doubt the permanent location of HQ USSPACECOM from Peterson AFB to Redstone Arsenal can be completed efficiently and that the action will result in significant financial savings to our Nation and invaluable mission compatibility over the long term.

Redstone will offer the best value for our Nation as the future home to US Space Command. We look forward to the US Space Command joining our 70 other federal agencies, 75,000 defense and aerospace workers and the over 400 aerospace and defense contractors that call the Redstone Region home. We also look forward to working with you in your capacity as the Secretary of the Air Force.

Best regards,



Chip Cherry
President & CEO
Huntsville/Madison County Chamber