

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3003
February 18, 2015

Honorable Ashton Carter
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Carter,

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of Defense. I wish you the best of success as you begin an incredibly important and difficult job. We live in a complex and volatile world, requiring resolute commitment, a comprehensive strategy, and effective execution. With this in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to formally invite you to visit Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL) in Southern New Jersey.

JB MDL is our nation's only tri-service military installation, housing the three major services plus the Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and includes more than 80 mission partners. JB MDL is home to more than 44,000 service men and women and is the second largest employer in the state of New Jersey. JB MDL provides more than 100,000 direct and indirect local jobs and has an estimated \$7 billion economic impact on the region. To give you an idea of its footprint, JB MDL stretches 60 square miles through 10 municipalities across Burlington and Ocean Counties, and is larger than the Washington Beltway.

JB MDL is one the most vital military installations in the United States. The Air Force is the lead Agency at the Joint Base stationed at McGuire Air Force Base. McGuire is the preeminent East Coast mobility hub supporting strategic and tactical airlift of troops and equipment as well as refueling capabilities. McGuire houses both C-17 and KC-10s to perform these missions. McGuire is a prime Air Mobility site due to its location, modern and up to date infrastructure, and proximity next to Fort Dix. Due to these reasons, McGuire would make an ideal home for future KC-46 aerial refueling tankers.

Fort Dix has been America's largest mobilization base, responsible for mobilizing, training, and demobilizing Army Reserve Component forces for active duty, and is one of three Army Power Projection Stations. *More than a quarter of the nation's Army Reserve and National Guard are stationed within a 200 mile radius of Fort Dix.* It has extensive training ranges and is contiguous to both the McGuire AFB and Lakehurst Naval Air Station. Fort Dix has trained, deployed, and demobilized over 60% of the units leaving from the East Coast in support of Iraq and Afghanistan missions. It is also a major training center for Northeastern Reserve and National Guard and active component units and soldiers.

Lakehurst Naval Air Station is home to the Navy's at-sea aircraft launch and recovery technology, engineering and life cycle support. It is the Nation's technology center for aircraft catapults and arresting gear and the Navy center for at-sea aviation support equipment for the Navy and Marine Corps. This full spectrum center is equipped with the only full suite of installed aircraft carrier launch equipment and arresting gear ashore and is home to the transformational "electromagnetic aircraft launch system" and its installed equipment.

JB MDL is a unique and critical asset to our nation's military readiness. The convenience and efficiency provided by having a tri-service military installation, supported additionally by the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, is unparalleled. On top of the benefits to our local community, southern New Jersey is also a competitive location for this installation due to our well educated workforce, excellent infrastructure, and proximity to major metropolitan hubs like Philadelphia and New York City.

I look forward to working together to strengthen America's unique position in the world as a guardian of peace, freedom and justice both here at home and to the degree we are able - abroad. I hope you'll be able to join me for a visit to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and see first-hand the importance of this installation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom MacArthur', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress