

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War
Department of War
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Troy E. Meink
Secretary of the Air Force
Department of the Air Force
1690 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Hegseth and Secretary Meink:

We write to inquire regarding the 492nd Special Operations Wing (SOW) final basing decision as it has potential, negative implications for Florida and the United States' overall safety and security. We are proud to represent Duke Field as well as Hurlburt Field, which serves as Air Force Special Operation Command's (AFSOC's) headquarters. Given the Trump Administration's increasing focus on Venezuela and the Caribbean, approximately doubling the response time for these Special Operations Forces (SOF) assets and geographically isolating them from U.S. Special Operations Command, Joint Special Operations Command, and the other East Coast-based, SOF units seems contradictory to national security.

Guided by the Biden Administration's 2022 National Defense Strategy, which required the military to "build resilience in the face of destabilizing and potentially catastrophic transboundary challenges such as climate change" and the USAF's Power Projection Wing concept, the Air Force announced Davis Monthan AFB, Arizona as its preferred location in August 2023. Considering the operational efficiencies, Northwest Florida's proximity to Venezuela as well as the Caribbean, and the unique nature of the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range, we question the basis for this decision, especially when the Air Force has not provided a list of what other bases were considered as part of its strategic basing action.

The Air Force's existing, publicly available Strategic Basing Instruction (DAFI 10-503) requires the survey upon which this decision is based to address the "impact of climate change on the proposed action". While modifications were made in the final basing action announced in September 2025, without access to the documents requested below, we are unable to assess to what extent climate change influenced the Air Force's final basing action.

It is our job to represent our constituents, and we will always question decisions removing servicemen and women from Florida, the country's most military friendly state. Each of us, along with our constituents, has been left without a clear rationale on how this decision was made or how it would serve the military's mission. To this end, we respectfully request that the Department of the Air Force provide a written response to the following questions within 30 calendar days. In particular,

1. Why was the determination made to continue the decision-making process that began during the Biden Administration that appears to have expressly considered climate change and the Power Projection Wing concept the Air Force intends to abandon?

Wouldn't it be more prudent to make a decision informed by the Trump Administration's vision for the Air Force, especially in the context of the need to combat narco-terrorism, instead of one where climate change appears to have been an express factor?

2. It is our understanding that this determination was not delegated below the Air Force Secretary level. What alternatives were presented to the Air Force Secretary by the Strategic Basing Board as required by DAFI 10-503? Specifically, what other bases did the Air Force consider for this mission? Why did the Air Force Secretary choose to remove these units from Hurlburt and Duke Fields?
3. How much will the decision cost in total, including new infrastructure requirements, moving expenses, and other costs? While the initial plan was to construct nine new facilities encompassing 408,000 square feet, renovate 28 facilities (585,000 square feet), and demolish two facilities (14,000 square feet), as recently as July 2025, the Senate Committee on Appropriations stated the Air Force had not identified military construction requirements to support the standup of this new Power Projection Wing. With the Trump Administration's focus on efficiency, should a final decision be postponed until the Air Force has communicated these costs to Congress?
4. What is the military rationale for moving units from a base under Air Force Special Operation's control to one where the units will be mere tenants? What studies, if any, did the Air Force conduct to justify their decision? Are you concerned about coordination issues undermining lethality following the move?

Additionally, we respectfully request the following documents concerning this basing action: (1) the Air Force Form 813, Request for Environmental Impact Analysis and the accompanying Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives; (2) the Basing Action Request as well as the name of the approving official; (3) site survey(s) as required by DAFI 10-503 §5.5; (4) all documents provided to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees; (5) any briefing notes associated with the stoplight charts that lacked any context; and (6) the documents provided to the Secretary of the Air Force upon which the final decision was made.

We hope that you will address these concerns with the seriousness they deserve. We look forward to your prompt response and stand ready to work collaboratively to ensure that the best interests of our Armed Forces and our national security are served.

Sincerely,


Jimmy Patronis
Member of Congress


Rick Scott
United States Senator


Ashley Moody
United States Senator