



CITY OF  
TUCSON

OFFICE OF THE  
MAYOR

ROBERT E. WALKUP

February 1, 2010

Michael B. Donley  
Secretary of the U.S. Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

General Norton A. Schwartz  
Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Donley and General Schwartz:

I write to you today to reaffirm and express my unwavering support for the mission of the 162<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing at Tucson International Airport and to convey all of the benefits the City of Tucson has to offer the Air Force's newest aircraft, the F-35 Lightning II.

When the Air Force announced last October that Tucson was one of five locations under consideration for F-35 training it came as excellent news for our community. I, along with a vast majority of Tucson residents, fully support the basing of F-35 aircraft at Tucson Airport.

The advantages of pilot training in Tucson, its consistent weather, its access to military training ranges and its existing military aviation infrastructure, are clear. In addition, the 162<sup>nd</sup>'s 41 years of experience in pilot training and 21 years in international F-16 pilot training make the unit uniquely qualified for F-35 training.

Equally important is the community support for the continued role of the Arizona Air National Guard and its mission. The Guard has long served this nation as a pilot training center and this community as a powerful economic force. The base's annual \$280 million economic impact on the local community cannot be overstated. In these challenging economic times, Tucson residents recognize the importance of sustaining our largest economic generators for the long term.

We have always supported our Airmen and wish to continue that tradition with F-35 training in Tucson. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding this very important and effective partnership.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Walkup  
Mayor

cc: Senator John McCain  
Senator Jon Kyl  
Congressman Raul Grijalva  
Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords  
Governor Jan Brewer  
162<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing Minuteman Committee