



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

1411 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY
ARLINGTON VA 22202-3231

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
416 Senate Russell Office Building
Unites States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1007

Dear Senator Chambliss

Thank you for your inquiry and the opportunity for me to discuss what I believe to be a serious threat to the Air National Guard's ability to fulfill our Nation's highest strategic priority; *defending the Homeland*. The ANG has proudly performed the bulk of this mission, while simultaneously participating in overseas contingency operations, with aircraft that are rapidly nearing the end of their service life. While I believe our Nation has the capacity to recapitalize the ANG, I am not aware of any plan that commits to doing so. As such, we are in need of an immediate solution in order to ensure that America's most cost effective force can continue to perform its most important mission.

While a variety of solutions abound, I believe the nature of the current and future asymmetric threats to our Nation, particularly from seaborne cruise missiles, requires a fighter platform with the requisite speed and detection to address them. The F-22's unique capability in this arena enables it to handle a full spectrum of threats that the ANG's current legacy systems are not capable of addressing. I am fond of saying that "America's most important job should be handled by America's best fighter".

Indeed, I am keenly aware of the severe strain that our current economic situation has placed on the Department of Defense as it attempts to modernize for an ever evolving threat environment. Given this reality, finding more efficient ways to protect our Nation's interests at home and abroad is the new imperative. Many say this will mean making *tough* choices, but I believe we can maintain our vitality by making *smart* choices; leveraging the cost effective and dual use nature of the ANG is the answer. Basing F-22s (and eventually F-35s) at strategic ANG locations throughout the United States while simultaneously making them available to rotationally support worldwide contingency operations is the most responsible approach to satisfying all of our Nation's needs.

Again, thank you for your inquiry and your continued support of the Air National Guard.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. M. Wyatt III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

HARRY M. WYATT III
Lieutenant General, USAF
Director, Air National Guard