

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 27, 2012

General Mark A. Welsh III
Chief of Staff
United States Air Force
U.S. Department of Defense
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear General Welsh:

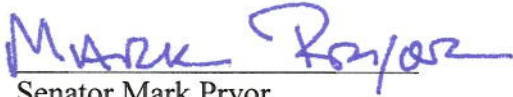
We write today with two purposes. First, we write in regard to a revised United States Air Force (USAF) Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget proposal to Congress as an alternative to the FY 2013 USAF budget request. Second, we write to invite you to visit the 188th Fighter Wing (FW) in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

We are disappointed in the content of the USAF's revised force structure proposal and the process by which this revised proposal was developed. We cannot support a plan that was not developed in coordination with relevant entities and that does not have adequate analysis and justification of the proposed changes. Since February of this year, we have asked for the strategic military analysis, readiness study, and budget analysis that led to the decision to eliminate the A-10 flying mission at the 188th FW. We have yet to receive the analysis and justification. We are, again, asking for this information.

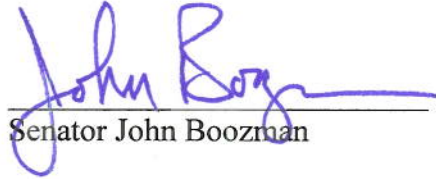
As you know, the revised force structure proposal includes the elimination of the A-10 flying mission at the 188th FW in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The 188th FW is home to the Flying Razorbacks and employs nearly 1,000 members in both a full- and part-time capacity. The 188th FW has consistently responded when called to defend our nation. Their readiness and capability have been demonstrated at home and overseas through multiple deployments and when tasked with monitoring the skies over America on September 11, 2001. The 188th FW is a textbook model in terms of operational readiness and efficiency, while performing their mission through the most cost-effective means possible.

We request that you visit the 188th FW, and we would be honored to host you to give you a complete picture of their capabilities, readiness level, and superior airspace and facilities. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and are ready to work with you to ensure that our USAF maintains the most capable and ready units. We look forward to your response.

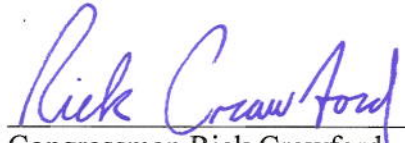
Sincerely,



Senator Mark Pryor



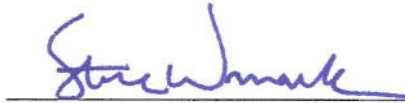
Senator John Boozman



Congressman Rick Crawford



Congressman Tim Griffin



Congressman Steve Womack



Congressman Mike Ross



Congressman-Elect Tom Cotton