

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 5, 2012

Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force
1690 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Dear Secretary Donley:

We write to share our concerns with the recently announced restructuring of the Air Force and to request the analysis used to arrive at the proposed level of aircraft retirements and personnel reductions from the force. We are incredibly proud of the nearly 2,300 Airmen that serve in the Wisconsin Air National Guard, and believe the proposed structure realignment may have an unbalanced impact on our state, and the nation.

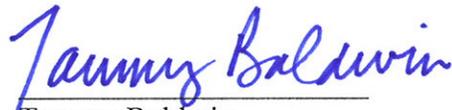
If this plan is approved by Congress, the Wisconsin Air National Guard would lose two of our Milwaukee-based 128th Air Refueling Wing's fleet of KC-135 Stratotankers, and retire the Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing's RC-26. Losing the tankers reverses the Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) decision to robust the unit from 9 to 12 tankers. Losing the one and only RC-26 in our state will severely limit the regional anti-narcotics efforts, emergency preparedness, and training capacity.

In addition, we are very concerned about the planned cuts of more than 5,000 Air National Guard members over the next year, who represent a majority of the proposed reduction in Air Force personnel. Without the underlying analysis, it remains unclear how drastically reducing the Air National Guard is consistent with the goal of meeting our future national security needs in a constrained budget environment. The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve personnel account for 14 percent of personnel funds, but perform over half of all Air Force missions. The Air National Guard alone provides 35 percent of Air Force capabilities with only 6 percent of its budget. Further, Guard and Reserve pilots and personnel have on average more experience than their Active Duty counterparts. Growing our Guard and Reserve capabilities—rather than shrinking them—would seemingly best maintain mission readiness in the most cost-effective manner.

To better understand your rationale behind this proposal, we request the detailed analysis you used to reach the decisions about plane realignments and personnel cuts, including the proposed balance of Active Duty to Air National Guard and Air Reserve cuts.

Thank you for your continued leadership of the USAF and for your timely cooperation in these important matters.

Sincerely,



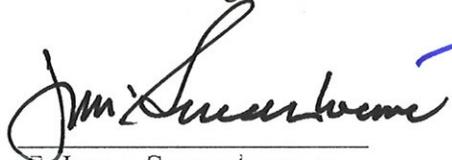
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



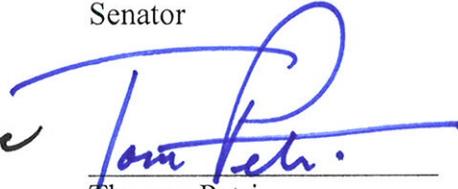
Herb Kohl
Senator



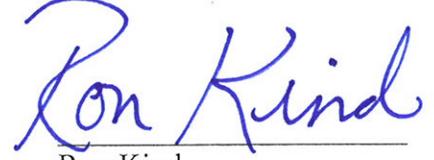
Ron Johnson
Senator



F. James Sensenbrenner
Member of Congress



Thomas Petri
Member of Congress



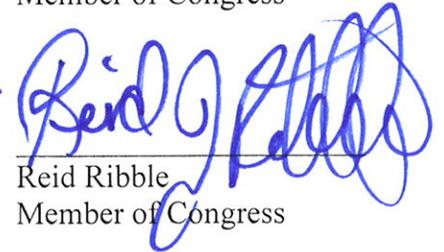
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Sean Duffy
Member of Congress



Reid Ribble
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress