

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 12, 2022

The Honorable Frank Kendall III
Secretary of the Air Force
U.S. Department of Defense
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Kendall:

As members of the Texas delegation, we write regarding your April 4, 2022, announcement that the United States Space Force (USSF) will only consider current Space Force Bases as the future home of Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM). We request that you expand the possible locations for basing STARCOM so that Texas can compete as a basing location for STARCOM.

We believe Texas would be an ideal home for STARCOM given the state's dynamic role in ensuring our national security, unparalleled leadership in space exploration, and access to a high-tech and highly-skilled workforce, especially as it pertains to the training of Airmen and Guardians within the Department of the Air Force.

From Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) to both Dyess and Sheppard Air Force Bases, Texas has a long history of supporting our military readiness. For years, the state has trained some of our finest Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen, with currently more than 117,000 active-duty personnel living in Texas. Additionally, we house nearly 60,000 reservists, more than any other state in the country.¹

As you know, San Antonio, Texas, *often called Military City, U.S.A.*, boasts the largest joint base within the Department of Defense at JBSA.² This sizeable military presence positions us at the forefront of our nation's overall defense strategy. JBSA is also home to Air Education and Training Command and the home base for basic military training for Airmen and Guardians. Additionally, San Antonio is home to Port San Antonio, a dynamic technology and innovation campus, which is a leader in defense, aerospace, and cybersecurity industries and has a unique partnership with JBSA.

Further, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has called Texas home for more than 50 years with Spaceports in both Houston and Midland. Southeast Texas also houses the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC), Mission Control, and the Astronaut corps. For years, JSC has partnered with Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base to expand our civil, commercial, and defense collaboration in the aerospace industry, further solidifying our leadership in space. These are just a few of the facilities that serve as an example of our well-established presence in this field, which will directly serve the mission of STARCOM.

¹ <https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports>

² <https://www.sanantonio.gov/military-veteran-affairs/sabases>

With roughly 148,000 men and women serving in the aerospace and aviation industry in more than 1,400 organizations, Texas is continuing to expand upon its storied leadership in space.³ When Neil Armstrong stepped out of the Apollo Command Module, becoming the first man on the moon, he called Mission Control in Houston. And when Benjamin Foulois climbed aboard Army Aircraft No. 1, attempting to achieve the first military flight in the United States, he successfully took off from Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. And now, we have seen the nation's most prominent private space companies investing their resources in and all around the state.

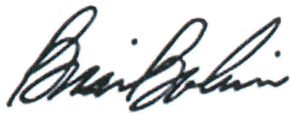
SpaceX, America's largest private space corporation, has built its main launching facility in Boca Chica, Texas. Blue Origin, another leading aerospace manufacturer, maintains a suborbital launch facility near Van Horn, Texas. Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and BAE Systems are among many aerospace and defense companies making innovative breakthroughs in Austin – Intuitive Machines, Axiom, and United Space Alliance are helping revolutionize space exploration in Houston – and Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, and Collins Aerospace are tackling some of the most advanced issues in Dallas-Fort Worth.

Texas plays an integral part in our nation's space and defense missions and should be included for consideration for the next STARCOM headquarters. Texas leads in space and can provide STARCOM strategic access to the newest innovations and the most technologically capable workforce in the space industry.

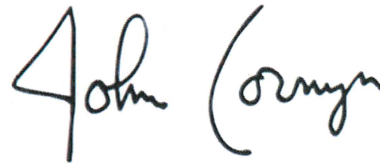
We request that you reconsider the April 4th announcement to only consider current Space Force Bases as the future location of STARCOM. This request is rooted in our shared interest with the USSF and our commitment to helping the Space Force achieve its mission of protecting the U.S. and allied interests in space.

We appreciate all you do to keep our nation and our allies safe, and we respectfully urge you to consider Texas in your basing action for this important headquarters.

Sincerely,



Brian Babin, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

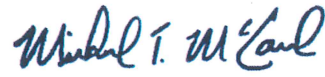


John Cornyn
United States Senator

³ https://businessintexas.com/business-sectors/aerospace-aviation/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&creative=565298143861&matchtype=e&network=g&utm_campaign=RR-Virginia&utm_adgroup=VAaerospace&utm_term=aerospace%20companies%20texas&locphysical=1027243&locinterest=&gclid=Cj0KCQjw06OTBhC_ARIsAAU1yOXsEGqPDUma2Bgri9E8unm6tt2yxsHang4oshsPPWFqUeKgHas2Wk8aAtr0EALw_wcB



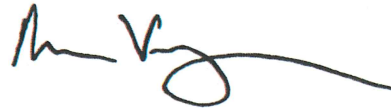
Ted Cruz
United States Senator



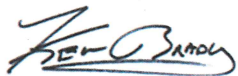
Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress



Kay Granger
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



Kevin Brady
Member of Congress



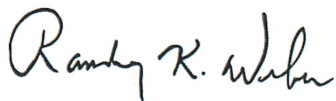
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress



Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



Sylvia Garcia
Member of Congress



Jodey Arrington
Member of Congress

Jake Ellzey
Member of Congress

Ronny L. Jackson, M.D.
Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

Roger Williams
Member of Congress

Lance Gooden
Member of Congress

Tony Gonzales
Member of Congress

Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Troy Nehls

Troy Nehls
Member of Congress

Michael Cloud

Michael Cloud
Member of Congress

John Carter

John Carter
Member of Congress

Chip Roy

Chip Roy
Member of Congress

Pat Fallon

Pat Fallon
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

Llyod Doggett

Llyod Doggett
Member of Congress

Colin Allred

Colin Allred
Member of Congress

Beth Van Duyne

Beth Van Duyne
Member of Congress

August Pfluger

August Pfluger
Member of Congress

Van Taylor

Van Taylor
Member of Congress

Mayra Flores

Mayra Flores
Member of Congress