

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 16, 2013

General Mark A. Welsh
Chief of Staff
United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear General Welsh,

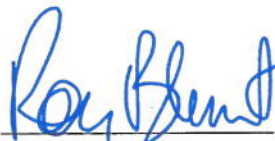
Thank you for your response to our March 5, 2013 letter regarding the need to provide additional intra-theater airlift capability to the 139th Airlift Wing (AW) at Rosecrans Air National Guard Base in Saint Joseph, Missouri. We applaud the Air Force's decision to base 11 C-130H aircraft at the 139th AW. The 139th AW's record of operational success in combat, flexibility, and cost effectiveness justifies this decision.

Today, the 139th AW remains engaged in global operations with well trained, equipped and deployable Citizen-Airman for the states and federal missions with immediate combat-ready aircraft. Unfortunately, the 139th AW and the Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center (AATTC) contain one of the largest concentrations of C-130 crewmembers in the country without the benefit of a C-130 simulator capability.

By providing simulator training to the AATTC, the 139th AW would not only achieve considerable cost savings to the taxpayer, but also serve as an effective and comprehensive academic and simulation training complement to the AATTC's current development and testing work. The AATTC have trained air crews for the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Command, Air Mobility Command, Air Combat Command, Air Force Special Operations Command, United States Marine Corps, and 16 allied nations.

Furthermore, we are assured by the civic leaders of St. Joseph that they stand ready to support public private partnerships necessary to facilitate a simulator facility at the 139th Airlift Wing. The men and women who serve the Air Force in Missouri continue a long history and tradition of success and innovation at the 139th Airlift Wing. C-130 simulator training presents a great value for Missouri, the Air Force, and our national defense. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator