

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 28, 2022

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chair
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
SD-122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chair
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
SD-122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chair
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Ranking Member
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
H-405 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Chair Tester, Vice Chair Shelby, Chair McCollum, and Ranking Member Calvert:

We write to urge you to include \$11.5 million for the Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center in Savannah, Georgia in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Defense Appropriations Bill.

With Russia's military aggression in Europe and China's increased engagement in Asia and the Pacific threatening our allies and partners, we cannot compromise our military's combat readiness.

The Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) is the most heavily utilized, unique, and cost-efficient training facility in the Air Force. It offers unparalleled opportunities for peer-to-peer air combat training, regional training conferences, classified engagements, and support for regional operations. Notably, the Savannah CRTC, located on the Georgia Coast, is one of very few locations in the United States featuring an accredited 6,000 square/foot Special Access Program Facility (SAPF) to support our nation's cutting-edge 5th generation fighter aircraft, the F-35 and the F-22. Funded by the National Guard Bureau, the Savannah CRTC represents a uniquely cost-efficient taxpayer investment, owing to its shared airfield with the 165th Airlift Wing.

Importantly, the Savannah CRTC is already a site for considerable investment. Congress, at the request of the National Guard Bureau, chose to invest \$25 million in military construction funding for a hangar to support 5th generation fighter maintenance. This project is scheduled for completion in August 2022.

Closing the CRTC would pointedly undercut the usefulness of this investment. Furthermore, the Savannah CRTC was recently selected by Air Combat Command to host two exercises annually to train for Agile Combat Employment in support of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force guidance.

As members of Congress, we recognize that budgets have limits and hard decisions must be made to protect our country's bottom line. But our military's capacity to conduct realistic, live training sets us apart from our adversaries. We can see from Russia's tactical incompetency in

Ukraine how disastrous it can be if a nation does not properly prepare its warfighters. That is exactly why the Savannah CRTC must remain open—it provides high quality and cost-effective training.

Therefore, we ask that the committee fully fund the Savannah CRTC at \$11.5 million. This includes \$3.45 million for Aircraft Operations (Line 10 SAG 011F), \$1.2 million for Mission Support (Line 20 SAG 011G), and \$350,000 for Base support (Line 60 SAG 011Z). Additionally, we ask that the committee appropriate \$6.5 million for National Guard Air Personnel to ensure operations remain fully staffed at this critical moment.

We also ask you to include the following report language preventing the Air National Guard from divesting the Savannah CRTC.

None of the funds appropriated by this or any other act may be used to implement reduction in force, closure or realignment of missions of the Air National Guard at the CRTC Savannah.

We urge your continued support Air National Guard readiness, and we appreciate your consideration of our request to fund the Savannah CRTC in FY23.

Sincerely,



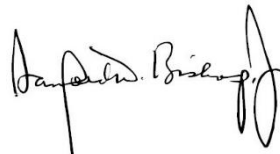
Raphael Warnock
U.S. Senator



Jon Ossoff
U.S. Senator



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
U.S. Representative



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
U.S. Representative



Austin Scott
U.S. Representative