



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

June 24, 2020

The Honorable John Henderson
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Henderson:

Thank you for considering Texas as the location for the headquarters of the critical U.S. Space Command. Three Texas cities—Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio—have self-nominated to be the location for the headquarters. All of these cities meet the required screening criteria, and I strongly endorse all of them.

There is no place more supportive of military missions, and no place more welcoming to our service members and their families, than the State of Texas. We also have the resources, universities, and human capital necessary to support something as important to the nation's future as Space Command.

Texas has supported the defense, aerospace, and aviation industries for decades, and two of our most active and growing industry sectors are cyber-security and defense technologies. The Texan entrepreneurial spirit and our innovative research universities contributed to the state's recent selection as the home of the new Army Futures Command. We would happily welcome Space Command as well.

Though we can never fully repay our debt to those who risk all to defend our freedoms, in Texas we are committed to serving those who serve. We have invested new funding in transition skills training, accelerated degree programs, and employment placement programs for veterans and transitioning service members and their families. In 2019, I signed the following into law:

- Texas Senate Bill 1200 allows a military spouse with an occupational license from another state to practice that occupation in Texas for up to three years without a Texas license if the licensing requirements are substantially equivalent to Texas requirements.
- Texas House Bill 2214 facilitates the efficient issuance of occupational licenses to military members, spouses, and veterans.

- Texas House Bill 1597 established residency for military-connected children to enroll in public schools as soon as their parent or guardian receives Permanent Change of Station orders.

Our state also has a legacy of command and control of human mission space flight operations, including the International Space Station, at NASA's Johnson Space Center. SpaceX has also built a launch facility on the Texas coast and an engine testing and processing facility in central Texas. We also host numerous other companies in the defense and space industries, including Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrup Grumman, and Raytheon Technologies. Texas also has public and private universities with robust space and technology research capabilities. We have an excellent quality of life and a low cost of living, which have helped develop an immediately-accessible workforce of qualified and highly-educated employees who can get Space Command headquarters up and running as quickly as possible.

As governor of this great state, I am proud of our unwavering support for the 15 major military installations and the headquarters of Army Futures Command that are so essential to our nation's defense. These military installations and the men and women who serve at them are an integral part of the Texas community. Over the last five years, my Texas Military Preparedness Commission has awarded over \$66 million in grants for infrastructure projects to ensure these installations continue to add unmatched military value. The commission has another \$16 million in grants to award in 2021.

As a Texan, I am proud that the tradition of military service runs deep in the Lone Star State. In addition to active duty personnel, Texas is home to 1.6 million veterans and their families — including my brother, a retired Commander who served 20 years in the U.S. Navy.

You will not find a better location for the headquarters for U.S. Space Command than in Texas. Thank you again for considering Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio as potential locations for the U.S. Space Command headquarters. My office stands ready to provide any additional information you need. The point of contact for my Texas Military Preparedness Commission is Keith Graf. He may be reached at keith.graf@gov.texas.gov, or phone at 512-475-0487.

Sincerely,



Greg Abbott
Governor

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cc: The Honorable Barbara M. Barrett
General John W. Raymond