



Testimony of
Jeffrey C. Hoagland
President and CEO, Dayton Development Coalition
and
Phillip L. Parker, CAE, CCE
President and CEO, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
Before the Ohio House of Representatives
State Government and Elections Subcommittee on Redistricting
(in conjunction with the Senate Select Committee on Redistricting)
August 22, 2011

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. We are testifying jointly on behalf of the business community of the multicounty region of the Dayton area.

As you consider redrawing Congressional districts following the 2010 decennial census, we urge you to keep Wright-Patterson Air Force Base substantially in a minimum of two Congressional districts. This is our single most important objective in the Congressional redistricting process.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base is the lifeblood of the Dayton region's economy and our Congressional representation is that heart that keeps it flowing. Protecting Wright-Patterson and its tens of thousands of jobs is our most critical action to promote economic development. We view anything that threatens the stability of the base or our ability to protect it as a danger to our economic future and a risk to job growth. The possibility that Wright-Patterson's representation in Congress could be reduced is such a threat.

The Dayton region is unique among all the regions in Ohio for our dependence on the federal government for jobs and economic development. Hence, our requirement for representation in Congress is also unique.

Let us paint a picture for you just how dependent we are on Wright-Patterson for jobs.

More than 27,000 people work at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Not only is that the largest employer in the Dayton area, it creates as many jobs as the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th largest Dayton-based employers *combined*.

There are more people working on this one installation than the total number of federal workers in any single Metropolitan Statistical Area in Ohio. In fact, there are more jobs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base than all the federal employees in the Metropolitan Statistical Areas of Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown, Springfield, and Toledo *combined*.

More than 10.6 percent of the entire Dayton Gross Regional Product results from federal government employment in the Dayton Metropolitan Statistical Area. Compare that with 2.6 percent for Cleveland, 2.1 percent for Cincinnati, and 2.0 percent for Columbus. And that doesn't even include the hundreds of millions of dollars in Air Force procurement dollars spent in the region because of Wright-Patterson.

There is no other region in Ohio with anywhere near the need for Congressional representation as the Dayton region.

Wright-Patterson is not just an asset to the region—it is a pillar of the state's economy and the major center of high technology jobs and research. It is the largest single-site employer in the state. It employs more scientists and engineers than any organization in the state. The Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson spends more money on research than all the universities in Ohio combined.

This powerhouse of jobs and economic development for Dayton and Ohio depends on its representatives in Congress for ongoing support. It was created with the support of our Congressional delegation and it has been sustained to this day.

Since the 1924 consolidation of federal property into what eventually became Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the base has always been contained within a minimum of two Congressional districts. For most of these years, the split has been between the Montgomery County and Greene County portions of the base. Thus, substantial parts of the base were contained in each of two Congressional districts..

Beginning in 2003, the base has been included in *three* Congressional districts. Not only has the main Montgomery County portion been in the 3rd Congressional District and the Greene County portion in the 7th Congressional District, but there is a small Montgomery County portion in the 8th Congressional District as well.

Having more than one Member of the House of Representatives looking after the base has been a factor in the level of Congressional support. That level of support translates to securing and maintaining jobs. Throughout the decades, our Congressional delegation stopped the closing or movement of missions from the base, saving thousands of jobs. Our Congressional delegation also supported missions coming to the base, including the more than 1,000 jobs as a result of the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

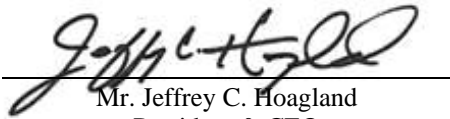
In many of these cases, the base was supported by all (two or three) House members working with our two Senators. Any lower level of support might have resulted in job loss.

It is widely believed that there will be another round of defense base closings in the next decade. Though this process is intended to be free from political interference, Congress continues to play an important role in the final outcome. If there is another BRAC, we will need the full strength of the Wright-Patterson Congressional delegation during this process to ensure that the base is protected.

Furthermore, an important element in the community's successful support for Wright-Patterson has come from strategic placement in advocacy roles by the House members who represent the base. For example, the base is currently represented by House members with strategic positions as members of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees as well as House Leadership. This unique placement has helped Wright Patterson receive the necessary attention in Congress to maintain successful advocacy.

We urge the redrawn Ohio Congressional map to continue Wright-Patterson's representation in three Congressional districts. But at the least, it is critical that there will be substantial portions of the base in at least two Congressional districts. Any redistricting plan that fails to meet this test creates a risk to the economic security of the Dayton region and jeopardizes the long-term future of the tens of thousands of jobs that our region depends on.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mr. Jeffrey C. Hoagland
President & CEO
Dayton Development Coalition



Mr. Phil Parker, CAE, CCE
President & CEO
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce