

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 7, 2020

The Honorable Barbara Barrett  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Barrett:

As the Air Force implements the FY20 National Defense Authorization Act, we encourage you to take note of Section 2809, *Military Construction Projects for Child Development Centers (CDC) at Military Installations*. This section will require the Under Secretary for Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Energy, Installations and Environment, for each military Department, to submit a priority list of unfunded CDCs by February 15, 2020. The Barksdale AFB CDC East was built in 1970, and as it currently stands, is the oldest in the Air Force. It is not postured for the future, as Barksdale AFB anticipates additional Airmen associated with a new Weapons Generation Facility. We respectfully urge you to prioritize the Barksdale AFB CDC for replacement to provide the quality of life Barksdale's Airmen and their families deserve.

We are proud of the accomplishments and sacrifices the men and women at Barksdale AFB make every day. World circumstances have made the B-52s at Barksdale AFB as relevant and important as ever. Despite the importance of Barksdale's mission and growth in personnel, there is a palpable lack of modern quality of life facilities at Barksdale AFB. Not only is the CDC East old and undersized, the fitness center is inadequate, with just one basketball court. The dining hall was built in the 1950s and merits serious attention. Despite the ingenuity and resourcefulness of Barksdale personnel to keep these facilities operating, we remain concerned the installation's quality of life facilities are not keeping pace with the modern needs of the service members and families who live and work on the installation.

Equally concerning is the quantifiable under-manning in headquarters staff assigned to Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC), and at a critical time in this Major Command's evolution. A recent 2019 Rand Report "*Managing Nuclear Modernization Challenges for the US Air Force*" sponsored by the Director of Strategic Plans, Programs, and Requirements, Air Force Global Strike Command, thoughtfully examines the significant challenges to recapitalize the nation's nuclear enterprise modernization program. The Rand Report compares headquarters staff sizes across certain Major Commands, as well as the number of ACAT 1 programs these Major Commands are executing. The report makes a compelling case that Air Force Global Strike Command is significantly understaffed for the number and complexity of the programs it is overseeing.

The FY20 and FY21 DoD authorization and appropriations bills offer a chance to improve conditions at Barksdale AFB. Headquarters staffing needs to be better aligned to the reality and responsibilities that have been entrusted to Air Force Global Strike Command. Quality of life facilities should be upgraded. The mandate from Congress to the Department of Defense to prioritize CDCs offers the Air Force an opportunity to fully evaluate the quality of life facilities at Barksdale AFB, and to let Congress know what you need to meet the requirements of Barksdale's Airmen and families.

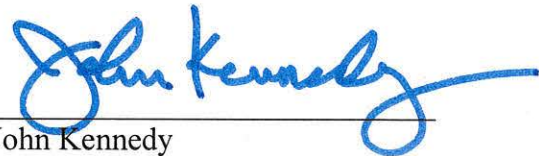
We look forward to supporting you as you lead the Department at this critical time in our nation's history. We can assure you we will do everything possible to support you in order to ensure our Air Force remains the best in the world and the one our nation deserves.

Thank you for your service to the nation.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
U.S. Senator



John Kennedy  
U.S. Senator



Steve Scalise  
U.S. Representative



Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
U.S. Representative



Garret Graves  
U.S. Representative



Clay Higgins  
U.S. Representative



Mike Johnson  
U.S. Representative