

United States Senate

November 10, 2015

Mr. Robert Cardillo
Director
National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
7500 GEOINT Drive
Springfield, VA 22150

Dear Director Cardillo:

Scott Air Force Base (AFB) has three unrivaled strengths that I urge you to consider when determining the future location of National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) West. Relocating NGA to Scott AFB, home of the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), would eliminate the vulnerabilities associated with the necessary 20-mile long data connection to the Missouri sites. Additionally, the unflagging support of the surrounding community and its willingness to provide 200 acres of land at no cost to the NGA provides sustainable residence for the NGA community.

Earlier this month I visited Scott AFB Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) headquarters, the IT keepers of the entire military, and a key component in the security of NGA West's classified work. NGA West and DISA's mission depends on the reliability of this critical connection. During my visit I held a one-inch thick fiber optic cable, similar to the fiber cable that currently travels over 20 miles from Scott AFB and cross the Mississippi River into Missouri. The information flowing along this vulnerable cable is far too vital to our national security to risk losing if the cable is cut or damaged. Bringing NGA West to Scott AFB will allow for a direct, buried ultra-high speed link between the two entities, which will provide a secure, tamper-proof, high performance link.

To fulfill its mission, NGA requires secure, state-of-the-art facilities, the core motivation behind the NGA West's decision to move from its current outdated building and into a new site. The land in St. Clair County, Illinois, offered to NGA for free, consists of about 200 acres adjacent to Scott AFB and allows for room to grow. Additionally, there is important precedence to this partnership; NGA West's sister site, NGA East, is adjacent to and directly supported by Ft. Belvoir in Virginia. This move would also ensure NGA West employees are offered the additional protection of a military base, as opposed to any potential site in Missouri.

Support for the relocation to Scott AFB is unanimous with the federal, state and local levels of government. As you know, relocation to Scott AFB also enjoys the total support of a non-profit organization known as the Leadership Council of Southwest Illinois. The existing transit system will provide a new stop for employees directly at the doorstep of the new site, and drivers will benefit from a new exit off of I-64. St. Clair County and the entire state of Illinois are ready to welcome this workforce with open arms and special attention to employees' needs.

I truly believe that Illinois alone provides a cost-effective, mission focused solution which ensures that NGA West advances critical capability and contribute to our national security. I fully support placing the NGA West facility in St. Clair County, Illinois.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kirk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Mark Kirk
United States Senate