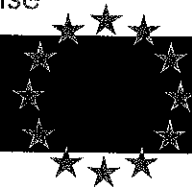


# Ellsworth Task Force

A Community's Pledge To Our Nation's Defense



March 7, 2014

Mayor Sam Kooiker  
City of Rapid City  
300 Sixth Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mayor Kooiker:

In your considerations of the 2015 Rapid City Budget, the Ellsworth Task Force requests that you include \$75,000 in funding for the *Ellsworth Task Force*. With the President's 2015 Federal Budget requesting Congressional authorization of rounds of Base Realignment and Closure in 2017, the need for our community to maintain a state of readiness regarding retention and expansion of Ellsworth AFB continues to be imperative.

Over the past twenty-four years, the Ellsworth Task Force has managed a coordinated program of information and action items with local and state government/business leaders, our Congressional Delegation, defense officials and industry representatives. In terms of the effectiveness, the success our community realized in avoiding Ellsworth AFB being included in the Secretary of Defense's base closure recommendations in 1995 and reversing the 2005 recommendation by the Secretary of Defense to close Ellsworth stands as proof that our posture of continuing readiness works. Without reservation, the dedicated support of the City of Rapid City has proven to be valuable in terms of both government policy and funding.

Such support has allowed the Task Force to focus on activities that have seen retention and modernization of the B-1 Bomber fleet; on-going expansion of the Powder River Training Complex; establishment of the Air Force Financial Services Center at Ellsworth and arrival of a Remotely Piloted Aircraft unit to the base. From our experiences in past rounds of closure, we have watched unprepared communities spend extraordinary amounts of funds to defend themselves. Conversely, those with on-going advocacies, such as ours, ensure their community's competitiveness for new missions and during any closure considerations.

From a strictly economic perspective, we can readily assess the impact of losing our area's largest singular employer and the greatest individual generator of annual spending in western South Dakota. Without reservation, the loss of population, institutional spending, personal incomes and the tax revenues generated by Ellsworth's economic impact would depress our local economy. Further, as we have seen in other communities, if a base's contributions can be replaced, they will only occur over an extended period of recovery. In the interim, those communities face the challenges of redeveloping a massive industrial facility and replacing thousands of valuable jobs.

MAR 10 2014

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Our bottom line is that the prudent dollars spent to retain Ellsworth brings our community a return on investment in excess of \$352 million in annual economic impact. While we realize that you face competing budget demands, please consider that few, if any, expenditures return such direct benefits in terms of economic impact, jobs and tax revenues.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration, please contact me at 381-5791 with any questions that you or Council members may have for the Ellsworth Task Force.

Sincerely,



Pat McElgunn, Executive Director  
Ellsworth Task Force

cc: Pauline Sumption, Finance Office