

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 30, 2009

Lieutenant General Harry M. Wyatt, III
Director
Air National Guard
1411 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202-3231

Dear Lieutenant General Wyatt:

We are writing to convey our concerns about the Massachusetts Air National Guard's proposal to expand and lower the flight level for the Condor 1 and Condor 2 flight training areas over Western Maine. Some of our constituents have asked that their concerns, many of which are outlined below, be addressed prior to the rescheduled public hearing on November 14, 2009.

We appreciate the Air National Guard's recent decisions to reschedule the public hearing to review the draft of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and extend the public comment period until the end of the year—both of which will allow citizens a better opportunity to weigh in on the study and express their concerns. Nevertheless, many of our constituents continue to be concerned about the draft EIS and the potential impact these flight level changes would have on the environment, the economy, and the quality of life in Western Maine.

We understand the need and importance of providing appropriate training capacity for our Air National Guard, but we believe more information is needed about the effects of these proposed changes. Many constituents are concerned about the work conducted on the EIS, and they are particularly concerned that the document is not signed and lacks a list of authors' qualifications. We request that the Air National Guard provide this information, which is standard inclusion for all draft and final EISs, and make it public as soon as possible.

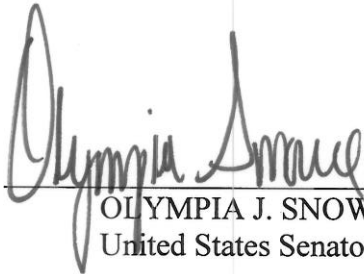
A group of our constituents also continue to be concerned that the economic impact of the proposed changes has not been given sufficient attention or analysis. In your letter to Governor Baldacci last month, you stated that further investigation into studies Governor Baldacci raised is needed, the findings of which will be incorporated into the final EIS. We believe the economic impact is an important component in considering the proposals, and look forward to your further investigation on the matter.


Maine State Representative Thomas Saviello, who represents Maine House District 90 in Western Maine, has brought his concerns about the proposals to us, including those that have been outlined above. We have enclosed a copy of his correspondence for your review, and we

ask that you respond to his concerns. We have asked the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to respond to our concerns regarding the FAA's position and participation to date.

We are grateful for the vital contributions the Air National Guard makes to our nation's defense, and we thank you for your efforts to ensure that these proposals are considered in the most thorough and comprehensive way. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to working with you in finding suitable airspace in which to conduct your training exercises.

Sincerely,


OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
United States Senator


SUSAN M. COLLINS
United States Senator

Enclosure