



MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Administration

77 S. High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
www.governor.ohio.gov

April 17, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to express my opposition to Legislative Proposal 480 that the Secretary of the Air Force has forwarded to Congress.

This proposed legislation presents a clear challenge to the authority of Governors, while severely undermining the intent of the Militia Act of 1903. Federalizing Ohio National Guard units into the United States Space Force, and moving or eliminating these units, at the sole direction of the Secretary of the Air Force, clearly circumvents my authorities as Governor.

As Commander in Chief of the Ohio National Guard, I retain the responsibility for these military organizations and their missions under section 32 U.S.C. § 104(c) and 10 U.S.C. § 18238. Usurping this power would be unprecedented, and I respectfully ask that you not do so. Every Ohio National Guard member takes an oath not only to the United States of America, but to Ohio as well. I honor their dual commitment by ensuring that all Ohio National Guard members can serve in the communities where they live, work, and raise their families. When called, they stand ready to deploy - anytime, anywhere.

The United States Air Force and Space Force intelligence, development, and acquisition requirements are key to success in strategic Global Power Competition. I fully support the Ohio National Guard's contribution to that mission now and in the foreseeable future. This mission can be readily fulfilled through the constitution of a Space National Guard, under the Governors and state Adjutants Generals. In the alternative, existing Air National Guard support to both Air and Space forces fully meets mission requirements. I urge you to adopt either approach and direct the Department of the Air Force to immediately implement such a solution.

Ohio pledges our sustained commitment to advance our national security capabilities in Air and Space. Our Ohio National Guard members proudly serve Ohio and our nation, and I see no compelling rationale to de-construct the Guard's mission or organization. Thank you.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Governor



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cc:

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary of Defense
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Washington, DC 20301-1000

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The Ohio Congressional Delegation