

WASHINGTON, DC – Senator Jim Webb, Senator Mark Warner, and Congressmen Glenn Nye (VA-02), Bobby Scott (VA-03), Randy Forbes (VA-04), Rob Wittman (VA-01), and Jim Moran (VA-08) welcomed the U.S. Air Force's decision today to add six additional F-22 Raptor aircraft to Langley Air Force Base. Their decision comes just two weeks after the Virginia legislators sent a letter to Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norman Schwartz advocating that "Langley Air Force Base is the best-value alternative for the Air Force and the taxpayer."

Following an earlier decision to halt any further F-22 production, the Air Force was faced with a dilemma – too few planes at too many bases. In an effort to make more efficient and more cost-effective use of its air bases, the Air Force decided to consolidate F-22 basing from four bases to three. In the letter, and during many conversations with top ranking Air Force officials, the Virginia congressional delegation argued that Langley Air Force Base, which already has 36 F-22s assigned, had the capacity and best infrastructure for more.

The senators and congressmen highlighted the base's assets that would make it ideal for additional F-22s – including money authorized to build a Low Observable Hangar and Maintenance Facility, the unparalleled experience of its current Air National Guard squadrons, and its ability to commence full operations with additional F-22 fighters immediately.

"The Air Force's decision to send six additional F-22s to Virginia is good news for Langley and the Hampton Roads community," said Senator Webb. "Assigning additional aircraft to one of the premier fighter bases in the Air Force will improve efficiencies in maintenance and operations. It should also assist Langley's active and Air National Guard components to operate together more effectively in the performance of their missions."

"The Air Force made the right decision in locating these additional F-22 aircraft and more than 100 new personnel at Langley," Senator Warner said. "There will be obvious cost-savings and operational efficiencies through assigning these Raptors to existing bases, and I am pleased the Virginia delegation stood together to effectively make the case for Langley."

"I am incredibly pleased with the Air Force's decision to bring more F-22s to Langley," Nye said. "The added planes will improve F-22 operations, making our current two squadrons more efficient, last longer, and in turn bolster our national security. I will continue to ensure Langley has the best resources possible so we can continue to receive these assets."

Representative Scott said, "I am pleased the US Air force moved forward on the strong recommendation of the Virginia delegation to locate six more F-22 fighter jets at Langley Field along with 102 more people."

"Hampton Roads continues to show that it is a leader in the defense community. I commend the Air Force's decision to use the facility with the best infrastructure and capacity for F-22s. Not only will the use of Langley Air Force Base be beneficial to the Hampton Roads region, but it just makes good sense in terms of improving operational efficiencies," said Forbes.

“This is a great boost for Langley Air Force Base, and a sound decision by the Air Force to utilize existing assets,” Wittman said. “Langley has ready, capable facilities to house the additional aircraft in their squadrons without putting a substantial burden on the taxpayer. I’m pleased to see the base gain over 100 new personnel, boosting jobs in our region. This announcement will result in an increase of three jets per squadron, bringing the total number of jets per squadron up from 18 to 21 combat-ready Raptors.”

“Locating these six additional F-22 Raptor aircraft to Langley Air Force Base will both save taxpayer money and further solidify the Commonwealth’s standing as a preeminent location for defense installations and their supporting industries which represents hundreds of thousands of jobs in Virginia,” Moran said.

The F-22 Raptor combines the latest stealth, supercruise, and avionic technology, coupled with improved supportability, and represents an exponential leap in warfighting capabilities.