

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3307

April 9, 2008

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Honorable Donald Winter
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Winter,

I recently met with local elected officials from Camden, Currituck and Gates Counties, and I am relaying to you the considerable resistance these communities continue to have towards a potential outlying landing field (OLF).

As you know, my position on this issue is straightforward – if the Navy wants to build an OLF in North Carolina, there absolutely must be broad local support for such a facility. At this point, however, it is abundantly clear that there is deep and growing opposition to an OLF at both proposed sites in northeastern North Carolina. In fact, there is greater local opposition than was the case several months ago.

North Carolina has a proud tradition of supporting our service members and welcomes the military's continued and expanded presence in our state, as well as the accompanying economic benefits. That said, it is troubling that the Navy has not made clear what, if any, economic benefits an OLF would create for the affected area. I am frankly baffled that many months have passed since the new OLF sites were identified, but officials and residents in these counties have yet to hear any compelling reasons why they should accept this facility.

As a representative of my constituents, I question whether it is prudent for the Navy to move forward with additional studies on these contested sites – spending millions in taxpayer dollars and causing further emotional and financial tolls on the residents of northeastern North Carolina along the way. Bear in mind, North Carolinians vividly recall the several stressful years and several millions of dollars expended in studying the widely opposed Site C in Washington and Beaufort Counties.

I fear that now we could be heading down the same road and allowing history to repeat itself. I fully understand that the Navy truly needs this facility, but I would respectfully offer that this process cannot and should not occur in a vacuum. A sincere and forthcoming effort by the Navy to outline the economic benefits is crucial to securing broad local support. As a member of the Senate

Armed Services Committee, I remain fully committed to working with the Navy, but I expect the Navy to be responsive to the serious concerns of my constituents.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Dole". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Elizabeth Dole
United States Senator