

Consulting Team Hired for Scott Air Force Base Retention and Expansion Effort

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The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois today announced that former U.S. Representative Jerry Costello and retired USAF General Duncan McNabb are among a team of consultants retained to support the regional task force formed earlier this year to ensure that Scott Air Force Base continues to thrive and expand despite anticipated future reductions in defense spending and service reorganizations. Smith Dawson & Andrews, a Washington, D.C. government relations firm, will complete the team supporting the Scott Air Force Base and Southwestern Illinois Defense Assets Retention and Expansion Task Force.

“I applaud the task force for its commitment to making Scott’s future growth a priority and it’s clear that they are fully engaged on this issue,” said Congressman Bill Enyart (D-IL). “I look forward to working closely with the task force members and the team they are assembling to accomplish the hard work that lies ahead.”

“The Task Force is confident that this expert team will enable us to maximize our efforts to preserve and expand Scott Air Force Base and its vital role in the economy of Southwestern Illinois and the entire St. Louis region,” said task force Co-Chair Ellen Krohne, Executive Director of the Leadership Council, which has been a driving force behind the successful efforts in support of Scott Air Force Base during prior rounds of Base Realignment and Closure. “Costello’s understanding of how Washington functions is critical to our effort. During his 12 terms in Congress, Jerry worked effectively to support Scott Air Force Base and its commands. We are very pleased that we will continue to have the benefit of his strategic counsel.”

“General Duncan McNabb is clearly one of America’s leading authorities on the Department of Defense and the policies, procedures and decision-making structure of the Air Force, and has a valuable insight into the Air Force of the future,” said Jack

Griffith, a retired Air Force major general and member of the Task Force. “We are very fortunate that he has agreed to join this team.”

Before his retirement from the Air Force in 2011 after 37 years of service, General McNabb served for three years as commander of the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), one of nine unified commands of the United States Department of Defense. Located at Scott Air Force Base, the mission of USTRANSCOM is to provide air, land and sea transportation for the Department of Defense. General McNabb previously served as Air Force Vice Chief of Staff and as commander of the Air Mobility Command, based at Scott AFB, and several other commands.

Jerry Costello formed The Jerry Costello Group early in 2013 following his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives, where he represented Southwestern Illinois for more than 24 years. While in Congress, Costello was known for his bipartisan, consensus-building approach and thorough and effective representation of his district’s interests.

Founded in 1981 by Illinois native James P. Smith, Smith Dawson & Andrews is a government relations firm that provides Washington representation to a variety of clients, including local governments, transportation providers, nonprofit organizations and private businesses.

The Scott Air Force Base and Southwestern Illinois Defense Assets Retention and Expansion Task Force was created in May 2013 by Madison and St. Clair Counties and the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois to serve as “one voice” in providing regional support for retention and expansion efforts. In addition to Ms. Krohne, the Task Force is co-chaired by Terry Beach, Director of Economic Development for St. Clair County, and Frank Miles, Executive Director of Southwestern Illinois College’s Sam Wolf Granite City Campus, representing Madison County. Additional taskforce members aside from Griffith include Gerry Schuetzenhofer, President of Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors and Chairman of the Leadership Council’s Military Affairs Committee; Ronda Sauget, President of Validus Strategies and current President of the Leadership Council; Mike Leopold, Senior Vice President of Huntleigh Security Corp., and John Lengerman, Executive Director of the Greater Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce.

The St. Louis region is familiar with the base closure process. In 1995 and again in 2005, Madison and St. Clair counties, the State of Illinois, the Leadership Council and St. Louis regional partners worked with the Illinois delegation to keep Scott Air Force Base open. After much hard work, preparation, cooperation and support, the groups’ efforts successfully defended the base during both rounds of BRAC, and in the last 10 years, the economic impact of the base has increased by 40 percent. The total annual

impact of Scott AFB on the region now tops \$3 billion. The base is the fourth largest employer in the St. Louis area and the largest employer in Illinois south of Springfield.

The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois is a member-based, economic development corporation representing Madison and St. Clair counties. The Council works to unite business, industry, government, education and labor for economic growth in Southwestern Illinois. These effective partnerships serve as a driving force behind successful economic development efforts throughout the Metro East region.