



SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873

Office of the President

November 21, 2015

Via Email: NextNGAWest@usace.army.mil

NGA West, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Kansas City District
Attn: Amy Blair
601 E. 12th Street, Room 529
Kansas City, MO 64016

RE: National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency Site Impact

Dear Ms. Blair:

As President of Southeast Missouri State University, I wish to provide the following comments in support of locating the new National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency West (NGA) facility at the state of Missouri's proposed site in North St. Louis.

To put my support in context, please let me share some brief information about Southeast Missouri State University (Southeast). Southeast is a master's-granting regional comprehensive public institution of higher education located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, which is approximately 115 miles south of St. Louis. Because of this proximity, St. Louis is an integral component of our service region. Our total enrollment of almost 12,000 students is comprised of 30-40 percent of students from the St. Louis region. In addition, nearly 22,000 Southeast alumni call the St. Louis area their home. I am proud of Southeast's rich history of producing graduates that return to St. Louis and contribute to the regional economy. Many of these graduates are earning degrees that could benefit NGA – accounting, finance, computer science, cybersecurity and geoscience – nearly 500 in the last five years alone. For these reasons and those stated below, I wholeheartedly support the proposed North St. Louis site for the new NGA West facility.

The location of the NGA facility in North St. Louis will not only be good for higher education in and around St. Louis, but it will also significantly benefit the City of St. Louis and the greater metropolitan region. According to various reports, the new NGA facility will require \$1.2 billion to construct, with a projected \$1.6 billion in total development costs. It is anticipated that an investment of this kind could create over 10,000 construction jobs and 7,000-11,500 permanent jobs throughout Missouri. The overall impact then could mean an additional \$1.4 billion annually to the Missouri economy. These are significant benefits that will greatly impact an area of the St. Louis region that desperately needs it.

When making the final decision concerning where to locate the new NGA West facility, I would urge those in positions of influence to consider the benefit of the North St. Louis site compared to the site in Southern Illinois. The North St. Louis site is the only site that is part of the Administration's Stronger Cities and Strong Communities Initiative and the Promise Zone Program. The proposed site in North St. Louis will also fulfill Executive Order 12072 of 1978, which gives first priority to distressed urban areas in locating new federal facilities or consolidating or relocating existing facilities. Congressman William Lacy Clay, Jr. put it best when he said, "The North St. Louis city site is unmatched in its potential for economic urban regeneration, uplift of economic and housing opportunities for low-income minority residents, and fulfilling the mission of the NGA to protect the security of our nation."

As such, it is my sincere hope that you will consider the North St. Louis site as the new home for the NGA West facility. If I can provide any additional information in support of the relocation of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency West facility, please do not hesitate to contact me at 573-651-2222.

Regards,



Dr. Carlos Vargas
President
Southeast Missouri State University



Christopher R. Martin
Director, Corporate & Governmental Relations

cc: The Honorable Roy Blunt, United States Senate
The Honorable Wm. Lacy Clay, Jr., United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Claire McCaskill, United States Senate
The Honorable Jay Nixon, Governor, State of Missouri
The Honorable Francis Slay, Mayor, City of St. Louis