DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 96TH TEST WING (AFMC)
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE FLORIDA

4 December 2025

Brigadier General Mark A. Massaro, USAF
Commander
96th Test Wing
101 West D Ave, Suite 118
Eglin AFB, FL 32542

Kay Rasmussen
Defense Support Initiatives Manager
One Okaloosa Economic Development Council
PO Box 4097
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549

Dear Ms. Rasmussen,

The United States military's mission is deeply integrated within the Eastern Gulf of America and the region's economy. Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida supports multiple roles, one being a key component in the Major Range and Test Facility Bases (MRTFB) supporting joint service national defense research, development, testing and evaluation across nearly 135,000 square miles of Department of War (DoW) airspace and 125,000 square miles of water access. As such, Eglin AFB, along with other sister wing and joint service test and training range users, holds a key interest in ensuring the long-term viability of the Eastern Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR).

The EGTTR is indispensable for developing the next generation of air armaments and for providing realistic combat training for next generation aircraft and weapon employment. Its unique capabilities support diverse missions, including missile and aircraft testing, air combat training, drone operations, special operations, explosive ordinance disposal, and hypersonic weapons development. Most critically, the EGTTR is one of very few corridors in the U.S. capable of supporting hypersonic weapons test. This essential resource, however, faces increasing encroachment concerns that threaten military readiness. As Eglin AFB's weapons research and development mission rapidly expands, disruptions within the EGTTR could significantly impede the DoW's ability to meet critical national security objectives.

Eglin AFB's critical role in supporting the nation's defense rests upon the continued availability and integrity of the EGTTR. Allowing encroachment to proceed east of the Military Mission Line would significantly compromise the EGTTR's operational capabilities, directly impacting the joint service's ability to conduct essential training and testing activities vital to national security. Protecting the entirety of the EGTTR is essential not only for meeting today's defense requirements but also for ensuring the United States maintains its technological edge and strategic advantage. Preserving the range's capabilities is an investment in our nation's future security.

Sincerely

MARK A. MASSARO
Brigadier General, USAF

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