

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 25, 2012

General William L. Shelton
 Commander, Air Force Space Command
 150 Vandenberg Street, Suite 1150
 Peterson Air Force Base, CO 80914-4184

Dear General Shelton:

Our nation is currently facing a huge budget deficit and the federal government must make tough choices. At the same time, it is critical we continue to support our national priorities and preserve important scientific, commercial and defense capabilities. The United States has long been a leader in the area of space operations, and as we move forward with significant spending cuts across a broad range of federal programs, we must search for innovative solutions to maintain this role. I urge you to examine the full range of U.S. space infrastructure, including commercial and state-owned facilities, to supplement Vandenberg Air Force Base and maintain our access to space.

Kodiak Launch Complex (KLC), located in Kodiak, Alaska, offers tremendous value to the U.S. Air Force and other federal agencies. As the nation's only high-latitude full service spaceport, KLC is uniquely-positioned to support launches into polar orbit, including the Molniya and Tundra orbits. It is also the only U.S. facility capable of supporting high inclination launch missions without land over-flight, thereby improving safety and eliminating the need for inefficient dog-leg flight segments. As a national strategic space asset operated by the state-owned Alaska Aerospace Corporation KLC, it offers exceptional value and flexibility to its customers.

I would appreciate hearing your views on how the Air Force may be able to further integrate KLC into future space launch capabilities as an efficient and cost-effective facility. I appreciate your attention and look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Begich
 United States Senator