



**House Armed Services, Veteran Affairs, and Homeland Security Committee
Testimony of Alesha Washington
Vice President, Government Advocacy
Greater Cleveland Partnership
October 11, 2017**

Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Lanese, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security Committee, my name is Alesha Washington and I am the Vice President of Government Advocacy at the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP). GCP is the largest chamber of commerce in the State of Ohio representing 8,500 small, mid-market and large companies across Northeast Ohio. Our mission is to mobilize private sector leadership, expertise and resources to create jobs and leverage investment to improve the economic vitality of our region.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 8, which urges the United States Missile Defense Agency to select Camp Ravenna as the preferred site for a future east coast missile defense system.

Northeast Ohio is home to many federal and defense assets. Protecting the military value, economic impact and development of these assets are critical to the region and state. GCP has long served as the lead advocate for the NASA Glenn Research Center and Plum Brook Station. We also played a lead role with the business community and political leadership to reverse a decision in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process that would have eliminated DFAS Cleveland. We are pleased to join our partners at the Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Eastern Ohio Military Affairs Committee to support Ohio being selected for a new east coast missile defense site.

The opportunity before Camp Ravenna not only boosts Ohio's military value at the national level but also creates the potential for much needed economic development in a distressed area of the broader Northeast Ohio region. If selected, this project would represent more than \$3 billion of investment into our region through major construction and jobs over a three to five-year period. Ongoing, we anticipate more than 800 high-quality permanent jobs to maintain operation of the site.

This is a substantial opportunity for our state. We urge the Ohio House of Representatives to support this resolution and ongoing advocacy efforts to position Ohio for this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.