

Scruggs: Luke would be a perfect fit for F-35

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Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs talks in an interview about Luke Air Force Base and the Luke Forward initiative to land the F-35 fighter, as well as about noise and land issues.

1. Mayor, what is Luke Forward?

The Luke Forward campaign is a statewide initiative to bring the new F-35 joint-strike fighter to Luke Air Force Base. Communities across the country are vying for this mission, so it's critical that government, business and community leaders throughout Arizona come together as partners to secure the new F-35 mission for our state.

2. What would landing the new fighter, the F-35, mean for Luke AFB, the West Valley and Arizona?

Arizona's \$9 billion military industry is one of the largest industries in the state, and Luke Air Force Base alone generates more than \$2 billion of that economic impact annually. The F-35 mission will bring with it decades of sustainable economic benefits and an immediate infusion of \$150 million in construction-related projects. The mission will also generate additional employment and construction jobs, wages, consumer spending and investments throughout the region and state.

3. Are there land or noise issues surrounding the F-35?

There are land, sound and air-quality impacts that result from any fighter jet, whether it's the F-35, F-16 or F-15. Federal law requires that potential environment impacts must be analyzed and studied before the F-35 is stationed at Luke. When Arizona established noise-contour lines around Luke AFB through statutory regulations, we had the foresight to make the impacted area within the noise lines larger than necessary in order to accommodate new aircrafts and training missions. The current noise lines are almost twice as large than what is necessary for today's mission.

4. Why do you believe Luke is the best choice as the newest home of the fighter?

Based on the criteria the Air Force will use to evaluate sites, Luke is perfectly positioned to receive the F-35. Luke has the experience, infrastructure and facilities for the F-35, and our state features the ideal climate, land, airspace and training ranges that cannot be replicated.

5. Where can Arizonans learn more?

They can visit lukeforward.com or call 623-882-2191 to schedule a presentation for a business, civic or community group.