

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 28, 2024

Mr. Mike O'Toole
Director, Civil Military Programs
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower and Reserve Affairs
1500 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1500

Dear Mr. Mike O'Toole:

We are writing to express our strong support for the establishment of a STARBASE program in Maryland. The STARBASE program, especially its focus on STEM for elementary school students, represents a crucial investment in the future of our children, our state, and our nation. The importance of STEM education cannot be overstated. As we continue to advance in an increasingly technology-driven world, the demand for skilled professionals in these fields is higher than ever. The STARBASE program has a proven track record of success in inspiring young minds and providing them with the foundational skills necessary to pursue careers in STEM.

Maryland is home to some of the nation's leading institutions in research and development and is uniquely positioned to benefit from the STARBASE program. Our state's rich history of innovation and our proximity to major scientific hubs, like NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, make Maryland an ideal location for this initiative. The Maryland National Guard is well-equipped to lead this program, leveraging its resources and expertise to provide exceptional educational experiences for our youth.

Bolstering STEM education and strengthening our future workforce is a national priority. By investing in our young students today, we are ensuring that the United States remains competitive on the global stage and fosters a greater understanding of the military's role in society, building bridges between our armed forces and the communities they serve. The long-term impact of STARBASE includes a more educated workforce and the potential for groundbreaking innovations to drive economic growth and national security.

We urge you to support the creation of a STARBASE program in Maryland. The impact on our students, our state, and our nation will be profound. Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to advancing STEM education through the STARBASE initiative.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator