



FIGHTING FOR ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

America's national security is Sen. Thune's number one priority

From fighting the plan to close Ellsworth to advocating for the future B-21 mission, Sen. Thune works hard to ensure South Dakota continues its critical role in supporting our national defense.

Highlights of Sen. Thune's Commitment to Ellsworth AFB

- **Ellsworth Removed From Base Realignment and Closure List:**
 - Sen. Thune [kept Ellsworth from closing](#) in 2005 by convincing the Air Force that the majority of our B-1 bombers should remain at Ellsworth due to its strategic location.
 - Ellsworth is the second largest employer in South Dakota, contributing \$360 million annually to the local economy.
- **Helped Secure Drone Missions Piloted From Ellsworth:**
 - Ellsworth became a multi-mission base with the arrival of the control stations for the MQ-9 Reapers, unmanned aerial vehicles (also referred to as drones).
 - The [MQ-9 mission makes Ellsworth a leader](#) in advanced, unmanned technology and brings hundreds of new personnel to South Dakota, which increases the size of the Ellsworth community to over 10,000 people.
- **Championed Expansion of the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC):**
 - Increased the training airspace for the B-1B bombers at Ellsworth, which now oversees [the largest training airspace in the continental United States](#).
 - The PRTC saves Ellsworth \$23 million per year in training costs, and it hosts aircraft from across the country in large force exercises for realistic combat training.
 - As former chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Sen. Thune guided the decision by the FAA and Air Force to work jointly on the expansion of the PRTC, accelerating its completion.
- **B-21 Raider Mission Secures Future of Ellsworth:**
 - Stealth bombers will return a nuclear mission to Ellsworth, growing the base community by over 3,000 and bringing hundreds of millions in military construction to support the first B-21 operational and training units.
 - The Air Force estimates that in addition to 1,664 new airmen, the mission will result in 582 indirect jobs and \$23,878,400 in economic activity.
 - The B-21 mission will arrive in the second half of this decade, and [Sen. Thune remains committed](#) to ensuring the base has all the resources it needs to continue the B-1 mission as it prepares to accept the B-21 mission.

For more information, visit www.thune.senate.gov.