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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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9,600 ARIZONANS REGISTER THEIR SUPPORT FOR LUKE TO SERVE AS F-35 TRAINING BASE

GLENDALE, Ariz. – Nearly 10,000 people have registered their support for the new F-35 training mission coming to Luke Air Force Base since Gov. Jan Brewer, Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs and other elected officials launched a campaign last month to generate awareness of the positive impacts the Air Force’s next generation strike fighter will bring to Arizona.

Luke Forward organizers, who had set a goal of having 5,000 registered supporters by the end of the year, are thrilled with the level of support the campaign has received thus far.

“The response has been overwhelming,” said Scruggs, who is co-chairing *Luke Forward* with Charley Freericks, chairman of Fighter Country Partnership. “We knew there were a lot of Luke supporters throughout the state, and this campaign is providing them an opportunity to officially show that support. We are encouraging people to continue registering their support as there is still a lot of work to be done.”

People can register their support at www.LukeForward.com.

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10,000 supporters/add 1-1-1

“With the recent announcement that Luke Air Force Base is one of five bases nationwide being considered by the Air Force to receive the new F-35 or joint strike fighter training mission, it’s important the state and communities surrounding Luke send a strong message to the Department of Defense that Arizona wants Luke to continue to serve as the country’s premier fighter pilot training facility,” said Freericks.

It is anticipated the Air Force will soon begin holding public “scoping” meetings in advance of its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process at Luke and the other candidate bases. Both the scoping meetings and the eventual EIS process allow individual citizens and communities around the candidate bases to provide input during the formal assessment of each base.

Based on the results of the EIS, the Air Force is expected to announce its F-35 preferred basing locations in late spring 2010 with the release of its draft EIS.

Once that process is completed, the Air Force will issue its “record of decision” and announce its final basing decision. This announcement is anticipated to be made in early 2011.

The *Luke Forward* campaign was developed by the West Valley Partners and Fighter Country Partnership. The West Valley Partners include Avondale, Buckeye, Glendale, Gila Bend, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Maricopa County, Peoria, Phoenix, Surprise, Tolleson, Wickenburg and Youngtown. For more information on *Luke Forward* or to schedule a business or community presentation, call 623-882-2191 or visit www.LukeForward.com. ###