

**CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**  
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December 10, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin, III  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin:

I write today following up on conversations I held with Colonel Anthony Smith, Commander, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and 87<sup>th</sup> Air Base Wing today, and separate conversations I have held over the last week, such as with law enforcement officials including Ocean County Sheriff Mike Mastronardy and Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden, Coast Guard officers, and local elected officials, among others.

As you no doubt are also aware, there have been numerous instances of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) flying over New Jersey, including in close proximity to sensitive sites and critical infrastructure, to include military installations located in my district.

As you know, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL) possess capabilities to identify and take down unauthorized unmanned aerial systems and have utilized this capability to address overflights of the installation.

I urgently request all capabilities possessed by the Department of Defense, especially those in use by JBMDL to be immediately deployed to identify and address the potential threats posed by UAS over the state of New Jersey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Smith".

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress