

Dear *60 Minutes*,

I urge you to highlight the wastefulness and damaging effects of the F-35A program. In particular I'd like to have you investigate the potential basing of the F-35A at the Burlington International Airport. This basing is wasteful and damaging because it is bad for the communities near the airport, in the following ways: (1) Economics – The Air Force DEIS says that thousands of homes will be in a noise zone that makes them “incompatible with residential use,” and the effect will be decreased property values; (2) Health – While the DEIS uses outdated studies on the health effects of noise, recent scientific consensus affirms that excessive exposure to environmental noise, especially jet noise, causes hearing loss, heart attack, stroke, mental disturbance, and impaired cognitive development in children; and (3) Safety – the DEIS offers Crash Zone maps within which there are *thousands of homes* in the neighborhoods surrounding this commercial airport. Certainly, this overpriced and underperforming weapons system does not belong in the most densely populated area of Vermont.

Thank you,

Dear *60 Minutes*,

Wasteful government spending is one of the most important issues facing us today.

I live in Vermont, and our politicians (Senators Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders, Congressman Peter Welch, and Governor Peter Shumlin) all have progressive reputations, but are proving to be some of the unexpected enablers of such wasteful spending. Though they criticize excessive military spending in general, when it comes to the F-35A – an overpriced and underperforming weapons system – they suddenly get transformed into lovers of military pork. In particular, they want the F-35A to be based in the Burlington area, something the Air Force itself says is NOT an economic or environmental boon for our state in its own Draft Environmental Impact Statement. They refuse to debate or discuss the matter in any meaningful way with the grassroots opposition, who have thoroughly researched the economic, health, and safety problems with the basing.

So while these politicians call themselves "progressive," they quietly feed at the trough of military pork.

Please investigate this hypocrisy and contradiction!

Thank you,

Dear *60 Minutes*,

I urge you to investigate the denial of a robust, transparent democratic process in the decision process taking place for the potential bedding of the F-35A in Burlington, Vermont. We have two Vermont senators, liberal Patrick Leahy and progressive Bernie Sanders, who have steadfastly refused to meet with the citizens of Winooski, where over 50% of the residents' homes would be designated "not compatible with residential use," by Federal Aviation Administration standards. The initial scoring data for Burlington has been proven to have been *inaccurate*, because it reported zero homes in the noise zone and crash zone, while there are more than 3,000 homes in those zones! Numerous requests for information (including 2 Freedom of Information Act requests) have been denied without adequate justification. We do not understand why citizens are being refused access to the scoring data for all the potential bases, while Burlington remains at the top of the list over the other Air Guard bases competing for the F-35A, even though *thousands* of local residents will be negatively affected, according to the Air Force DEIS. Please investigate!

Thank you,

Dear *60 Minutes*,

There is a very disturbing controversy taking place in Burlington, Vermont, because of the proposed basing of 18-24 Air Force F-35A's in the most densely populated area of our state. Vermont big business is essentially *buying support* for the basing of the fighter/bomber plane at our commercial airport. They have flown our political leaders south to measure noise (by chartered private flight), and in doing so, ignored the \$2-million 2-year Air Force noise-metric study, in favor of recording sound on their iPads. Our leaders listened to these aircraft while wearing ear plugs, determining the jet noise to be "surprisingly quiet." In addition, Vermont big business essentially *bought* our recent City Council election in South Burlington, where the airport is located. The amount of money spent on this election is *astounding* compared to every previous election, and the campaigns were characterized by vicious attacks on Council members who opposed the basing in a 2012 Council Resolution. Please investigate the way that business interests in Vermont are controlling and manipulating a process that should be transparent and democratic.

Thank you,

Dear *60 Minutes*,

Vermonters need your help in investigating a very troubling instance of environmental injustice in our state. Burlington Vermont's commercial airport has somehow been ranked #1 among Air Guard bases for the potential basing of the F-35A Joint Strike Fighter, despite the disturbing fact that the most impacted area is comprised of the *highest numbers of low-income, minority, and refugee populations in the state*. According to the Air Force's DEIS, there is no question that these vulnerable populations will be "disproportionately" negatively affected by the basing, in terms of health, safety, quality of life, and economic harm. And the DEIS was based on 2000 Census data, even though our Refugee Resettlement Program has increased this diverse population tremendously over the past 13 years. Vermonters wonder why Senator Patrick Leahy, as head of the powerful Judiciary Committee, and now third in line to the presidency as Senate Pro Tempore, can't or won't listen to his own constituents, especially when such an injustice has already been confirmed by the Air Force DEIS. Why won't Leahy apply the same standards of justice to his constituents that he would advocate as head of the Judiciary Committee? And why won't Senator Bernie Sanders, whose career has been characterized by concern for disadvantaged populations, stand up to defend the quality of life of our vulnerable neighbors? Please investigate!

Thank you,

Dear *60 Minutes*,

In the small state of Vermont, we are witnessing a classic “David and Goliath” battle. On one side, we have both Vermont Senators, its Congressman, its Governor, 2 local Mayors, the Vermont Air National Guard, the business community, and the largest defense contractor in the world, Lockheed Martin. On the other side, we have one short, tree-hugging, animal-loving, 29-year military veteran, retired Air Force Colonel, ex-nun, coal-miner’s daughter, recent City Council Chairwoman. The issue is the proposed basing of the huge trillion-dollar Air Force fighter/bomber (F-35A) in the middle of the most densely-populated area of our entire state. A grassroots opposition movement is steadily growing behind our brave “David,” against the well-funded, powerful “Goliath” forces. But their attacks on anyone who opposes the basing, and especially against Colonel Rosanne Greco, have been vicious and constant. She has been publicly attacked and personally harassed (including vandalism to her home and property). And similar efforts have been made to discredit anyone who opposes the basing. Please investigate this!

Thank you,
