

On February 29, 2008, the United States Air Force announced it had selected Northrop Grumman and EADS to build the new fleet of refueling tankers at Brookley Field in Mobile. Since that day, the Mobile County Commission has been extremely proactive in promoting the tanker and fostering a regional and grass-roots based effort to support the initiative.

Next week, the State of Alabama, Northrop Grumman, and EADS will announce plans to further these efforts. Mobile County is proud of its work to secure the tanker contract and to foster regional economic development cooperation. Those efforts are detailed in the following pages.

With the tanker contract currently in the re-bidding process, the Mobile County Commission remains steadfast in its belief that these jets will ultimately be built in Mobile. Furthermore, the commission knows that every citizen of Mobile County, Alabama, the Gulf Coast, and the country has an important role to play in making sure that America's war fighters get the best equipment while the American taxpayers receive the best value.

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# KEEPOURTANKER.COM

In March 2008, Northrop Grumman and EADS were awarded the contract to build the new generation of Air Force refueling tankers at Brookley Field in Mobile. Losing competitor Boeing immediately began an intense, misleading, public relations campaign.

While Northrop Grumman and EADS officials developed their response, Mobile, the Gulf Coast, its workers and residents were attacked in print and electronically by Boeing and its political supports and union workers. These groups were spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in this public relations campaign and Northrop Grumman, EADS, and Mobile were taking a beating in the national press.

The Mobile County Commission launched a response. KeepOurTanker.com went live in March 2008 and was operational before Northrop Grumman's own site supporting the KC-45 tanker. It was the only on-line avenue that provided important information and rallied supporters of the KC-45.

KeepOurTanker.com was very successful as the tanker battle played out over the spring and summer of 2008:

- More than one million unique visitors used the site in its first week of operation
- On June 18, 2008; following the release of the GAO report, keepourtanker.com had almost a half million visitors.
- 200,000 ultimately signed an on-line petition
- 15,000 signed up to subscribe to periodic electronic newsletters. More than 60 of these email blasts were sent with an "open" rate of more than 62%
- Between March and July, 2008, an average of 20,000 people visited the website daily
- Links to convey KC-45 support to congressional leaders were established

KeepOurTanker.com was redesigned and re-launched in April, 2009 in anticipation of the re-opening of the tanker competition. KeepOurTanker.com has become the go-to internet site for news articles about the tanker battle. News and information about the competition is updated daily. The site provides important links to Northrop Grumman's website and ComeBackHomeToMobile.com – another initiative of the Mobile County Commission that has collected more than 10,000 resumes

Proving imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Boeing launched a similar website in September 2009 – almost 18 months after KeepOurTanker.com debuted.

# Other media

In addition to launching the KeepOurTanker website, the Mobile County Commission has also used other media to garner support for the Northrop Grumman/EADS tanker.

## TV advertising

The commission produced a 30 second TV extolling the virtue of the Northrop Grumman KC-45. The commercial played internationally on the Golf Channel during an LPGA tournament broadcast from Mobile.

A second commercial spot highlighting all of Mobile County's economic development gains, including the tanker, was broadcast on ESPN during the 2009 GMAC Bowl and on the NFL Network during the 2009 Senior Bowl.

The videos also played numerous times on the stadium JumboTron before 40,000 fans attending the Senior Bowl in Mobile

## Radio

The Mobile County Commission has produced several public affairs programs concerning the tanker competition. Airtime was donated by Clear Channel radio and played on numerous stations along the Gulf Coast. "Tanker Talk" was also made available at KeepOurTanker.com

Several :30 and :60 public service announcements were also produced with Clear Channel Radio providing airtime. The spots detailed the economic benefit of the tanker project to the region and directed listeners to KeepOurTanker.com

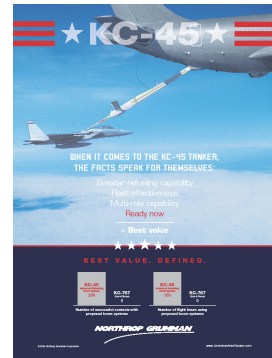
## Outdoor Advertising

At the request of the Mobile County Commission, Lamar Advertising provided 62 billboards scattered across the Gulf Coast. The billboards welcomed Northrop Grumman the KC-45 tanker to the area.



## Print Advertising

The Mobile County Commission partnered with Northrop Grumman, the Mobile Airport Authority, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Mobile, and other entities in the purchase of full-page ads to run in the Washington Post and other major newspapers



## Social Networking

KeepOurTanker.com and ComeBackHomeToMobile.com have utilized social networking to promote the campaign including blogging, targeting myspace users, and posting on college and university bulletin boards. This helped to create buzz about Mobile and job opportunities here.



# ***Regional Support***

Mobile County realized early on the need for regional support of the Northrop Grumman/EADS tanker to off-set the vocal response from Boeing backers in Washington state and Kansas, and among organized labor. The tanker effort should include support from across the Gulf Coast since an aircraft assembly facility in Mobile would provide untold economic opportunities for communities within a several-hour radius.

## **“Tanker Tour”**

County Commissioner Stephen Nodine made dozens of personal appearances in the four-state Gulf Coast area. His message of economic opportunity, regional cooperation, and grassroots tanker support found a willing audience of enthusiastic political, business, and civic leaders.

Among Commissioner Nodine’s speaking engagements outside of Alabama:

- National Association of Industrial Office Properties
- Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce
- Gulf Breeze Rotary
- TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development
- Pensacola Bay Area Armed Services Liaison
- Pensacola Young Professionals
- Escambia County Commission
- Santa Rosa County Commission
- Pensacola Downtown Rotary
- Pensacola News Journal Editorial Board
- Editor, Independent News (Pensacola)
- Biloxi Businessmen’s Association
- Biloxi Sun Herald Editorial Board
- Melbourne (FL) Chamber of Commerce
- Northrop Grumman KC-45 Rally, Melbourne, FL
- New Orleans City Council President
- Baldwin County (AL) Commission
- Jackson County (MS) Commission
- City of Waveland (MS)
- City of Lucedale (MS)
- The office of Florida Gov. Charlie Crist

Commissioner Nodine’s “Tanker Tour” has received considerable press coverage with newspaper articles in Florida, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and television news interviews in the Panama City, Pensacola, Biloxi, and New Orleans markets.

## Regional Cooperation

Commissioner Nodine’s efforts brought together political and business leaders from New Orleans to Tallahassee who all realized the landscape-changing impact the selection of the KC-45 would bring to the area and the entire southeast. In Northwest Florida, the Gulf Coast Aerospace and Defense Coalition was formed. GCAD is a coalition of area and industry leaders from Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties working together to foster strong relationships with domestic and international aerospace and defense companies and to showcase the aerospace assets of the Gulf Coast.



Northwest Florida business and political leaders subsequently joined the Alabama delegation in attending the Farnborough Air Show in England in 2008, and the Paris Air Show in France in 2009. The group showcased Northwest Florida and explored opportunities related to the tanker contract and an aircraft facility in Mobile. Coastal Mississippi representatives have also attended the air shows.



Recently Boeing supporters launched a copy-cat organization. According to its website, the Washington Aerospace Partnership is a “dynamic, diverse coalition of business and labor officials, civic and elected officials and private citizens across Washington who are joining to ensure that we protect and expand jobs in aerospace.”

## Resolutions of Support

While making dozens of personal appearances, Mobile County Commissioners also wrote to every county commission in Alabama, and to dozens of city and county governments and other agencies along the Gulf Coast. They asked the organizations to pass resolutions supporting the Northrop Grumman/EADS tanker and to send them to congressional leaders in Washington

Among the governments and agencies passing such resolutions were:

### Alabama:

State Legislature  
Mobile County  
Baldwin County  
Butler County  
Calhoun County  
Chambers County  
Choctaw County  
Clarke County  
Conecuh County  
Coosa County  
Covington County  
Escambia County  
Lee County  
Marengo County  
Montgomery County  
Pike County  
Randolph County  
St. Clair County  
Sumter County  
Talladega County  
Wilcox County  
City of Mobile  
Town of Dauphin Island  
Town of Summerdale  
City of Saraland  
State Senator Ben Brooks  
State Senator Vivian D. Figures  
State Senator Tripp Pittman

### Mississippi:

State Legislature  
Jackson County  
Harrison County  
City of Biloxi  
City of D'Iberville  
City of Lucedale  
City of Pascagoula

### Florida:

Rep. Jeff Miller (R-Florida 1<sup>st</sup>)  
Escambia County  
Santa Rosa County  
City of Pensacola  
City of Milton  
Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce  
Escambia County Public School District  
Team Santa Rosa Economic Development  
Economic Development of Okaloosa County  
Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce  
Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce  
Navarre Chamber of Commerce  
Florida's Great Northwest  
(16 County Econ Develop Consortium)  
State Rep. Dave Murzin (R-Pensacola)  
State Sen. Don Gaetz (R – Fort Walton Beach)  
State Rep. Clay Ford (R- Gulf Breeze)

### Louisiana:

Jefferson Parish