

**Ruth E. Wolf**  
149 West Main Street  
Lexington, Ohio 44904

June 7, 2005

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you concerning the inclusion of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW Mansfield, Ohio on the BRAC list. As a citizen of Richland County Ohio I know that the closure of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW would cause great hardship to our communities by the loss of jobs, loss of income, loss of our young people and the loss of the communities' good will.

Our area is already economically depressed. According to Edward E. Gordon's article in Employee Benefit News in September 2001 "...Mansfield is an ex-industrial town. It never recovered from the 1980's Rust Belt meltdown. The entire county remains economically depressed...." The closing of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW and the loss of the 230 full-time and over 800 part-time jobs would future damage our economy. The Guard generates \$70 million annually to the Richland County economy. Loss of this income could result in schools curtailing programs that enhance the educational experience, the closing of libraries, and our safety services would also be affected.

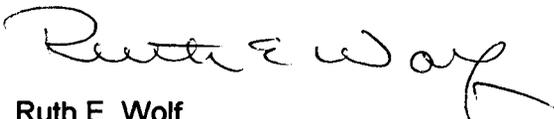
Gordon also reported that the "talented young people leave Mansfield". The Air National Guard Tuition Assistance Program helps educate our young people *and* the ties created by being members of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW helps to keep them in Richland County.

Retired Army General Wesley Clark said in a recent interview "shutting bases and moving jobs from smaller communities shatters an important connection between the military and civilians. Small communities lose sight of the armed forces...". Mansfield and Richland County has a great working relationship with the 179<sup>th</sup> AW. Our citizens support the members of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW even if they disagree with what the government is doing because the members of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW are long time friends, neighbors and family.

According to news reports some of your information may be faulty in regards to the room for potential growth of the 179<sup>th</sup> AW. Please review that information. The City of Mansfield has over 150 acres available to the 179<sup>th</sup> AW should the need arise. Some private individuals in the area also have land the may be available.

Lastly I do not understand the reasoning behind putting "all our eggs in one basket". Why would the Commission suggest that putting most of the C130s or any plane in one location be a smart move? Did we not learn *anything* at Pearl Harbor?

Please keep the Spirit of Mansfield, the Spirit of Lexington, the Spirit of Ontario, the Spirit of Shelby, the Spirit of Galion, the Spirit of Bellville, the Sprit of Butler and the Spirit of Ashland flying and protecting our country. I will thank you and the citizens of Richland County will thank you.



Ruth E. Wolf