

JUL 28 2005

7/25/05

Dear Mr Skinner Received

I would just like to thank you for taking the time to visit via teleconference with the Ouelmas delegation regarding the 188th AFG Lighter Wing in Ft Smith.

I'm sure you realize I am a family member. I'm writing for all the men and women of the 188th.

So, Over two-thousand are presently deployed overseas. They have passed all their inspections with the highest grades. They are the most cost effective base in the United States. They train military and civil engineering people constantly. They take their tasks and responsibilities seriously. They are good enough to deploy against America's worst enemy. I just feel they have enough to be concerned about in Iraq without having to worry about their jobs back home. The decision will be made before my word one and

Many others come home.

Mr Skinner, I know it
as all about, how valuable
they are to the military.
The fire department has
a training exercise center that
has been used more than
the other four in the U.S.
Over the past year, they can
simulate a fire with any
kind of combustible
agent whereas the others can
only use propane. It teaches
the firefighters to get use
to the smoky situations
and physical conditions
safely. The firefighters do not
know what kind of fuel they
will be called upon during
an emergency. They are trained
in all fields. The chiefs
from other states have appeared
on local TV to say they
want their firemen trained
at the 188th. They even travel
to other bases to teach classes.
Why move these firefighters
away and close the most
used training center? They
are valuable to the military.
The pilots, flight line crews,
and engineering have passed

Every inspection with highest marks. In April, they dedicated a new OMT training center at a large cost to the government.

I believe in the 185th and I feel they were scored incorrectly on the list for closing. I can tell you more about the fire department because my family member is a member.

I'm sure Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Bowman, Mr. Frey and Mr. Hutchinson filled you in on the other departments of the 188th in more detail.

I know for a fact they are constantly training at nights and days to make them one of the best. We hear them flying over and feel blessed to have them.

Please keep our unit flying. We have met all challenges and we can take a new mission. Please come for a visit. Please rethink the issue of the 188th AFWG in Ft Smith, AR. In our pledge to our country we state "liberty and justice for

All." The 188th should not have to be worried about their jobs while deployed. That is not fair.

I'm sorry for the handwriting. I'm a sister who loves her brother who has Rheumatoid and Osteoporosis. Don't pity me. I'm the most blessed person you will ever meet, because I know God still cares I'm praying for my husband and all military in Iraq and also praying and writing in support of his job and the rest of the 188th.

Please help us.

I'm praying for the BRAC because from I've learned you are nine very fine men who have been asked to take on a horrible task. May God Bless you. Let there be peace on this country and justice for the 188th. Please recheck the numbers and scores.

Thank you

Brenda J. Hubbard
1521 W 043rd St
St Smith AR 72404



RECEIVED

06272005

To the members of the BRAC
Commission; I would to
respectfully ask you to read
my letter concerning the 188th
Fighter Wing in Ft Smith, Arkansas.

My handwriting is terrible
due to rheumatoid but my heart
is fully in this letter.

I feel the closure or scaling
down of the 188th is unfounded.

Every department at this base
has always made it a top
priority to keep the full time
employees as well as weekend
warriors with the very latest
training as compared with any
other National Guard in the
U.S. They have continually
passed all inspections with
flying colors. At present
the 188th is so valuable that
over half of them are deployed
to Iraq. I do not feel the
military would deploy so many
people if they did not feel they
are valuable in the battle for

freedom for the Iraqi people
as well as the U.S.

I would like to tell you
about the firefighting training
facility. It is 1 of 5 in the
U.S. The 188th is the only
one of the five that can use
all combustible products to
produce a more smoky situation
with less physical conditions
to train the firefighters. The
other four can only use propane.
A firefighter cannot be guaranteed
he will only face propane
combustible products when he
deals with a real life situation.
Everyone wants the best
training for their troops. The
training center is very safe
to conduct these maneuvers.
The 188th firefighting training
center has been used more
than any of the other
four in the last year.

This would be such a
shame to the taxpayers and

to the Civil ^{Fire} Engineering and military fighters everywhere to just simply close such a well used and productive training center. The Crash Station is a relatively new building as well.

In April of this year they dedicated a new OIT Operations Training Building that has training abilities for many departments. This was a very expensive undertaking by the government to walk away.

Please, folks, come and look over the 188th Fighter Wing. You will find the best of the best in the men and women of the 188th. They guard our airport. The planes are constantly watching our skies as well as over Oklahoma, Louisiana, ~~Arkansas~~ Mississippi and Missouri. Even though half of them are deployed the rest of the base is working

over and have to keep it
up and going.

These people are deployed
to Iraq. I do not feel the
defense department would have
sent them if they could not
do the job. So please keep
the 188th Fighter Wing
opened. Give us another
mission. Please keep the pilots,
our firefighters and the other
departments at this base
here in Fort Smith. Don't
get out of the base. Western
Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma
deserve our skies and our
airport to be safe just as the
large cities.

I thank you for the time
and effort given to the 188th
Fighter Wing. You will never
be sorry you kept the 188th
open. I pray for peace, joy, good
health, liberty, freedom and justice
for all of you and all of America.
All of western Arkansians

and Eastern Oklahoma have
forward to your asset.

A fellow American
and 1884th supporter,

Brenda Gabbard
1521 North 43rd
At Smith AK 99504
479-785-1629

Fort Smith BRAC Task Force

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June 16, 2005

06222005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

The 188th Fighter Wing of the Arkansas Air National Guard is slated for realignment. According to the BRAC Report, the proposed action would only eliminate 78 jobs. We have learned, however, that the impact is much greater. Our Congressional delegation has discovered that realignment would eliminate 680 full-time and drill positions.

We recognize that the loss of jobs is simply one of the errors in the BRAC recommendations by the Secretary of Defense. As such, we have concentrated our focus on the "military value" component of the 188th Fighter Wing. We believe that we can clearly demonstrate that the report overlooks, and in some respects discounts, the military value of the Fort Smith Air Guard Station to the BRAC commission.

In reviewing the Secretary's report, we believe that the errors are of such magnitude in regards to the Fort Smith AGS that the recommendation needs close investigation by the Commission. The most noticeable errors occur in the Current and Future Missions component and the Availability of Land and Airspace component. Additionally, the low weight given to the Cost of Operations distorts the military value given to the Fort Smith AGS, due to fact that one of the key arguments by the DoD for a new BRAC round was the ability to shed unnecessary infrastructure and contain costs. Errors in these components detrimentally affect the perceived military value of the Fort Smith AGS.

The Commander of the 188th Fighter Wing, Col. J.R. Dallas, is currently on active duty in Iraq, along with several of his pilots and support crews. Before the end of June, approximately 300 more airmen and women will be leaving for the desert. We believe their professionalism and training facilities at Razorback Range have and will continue to serve our nation well.

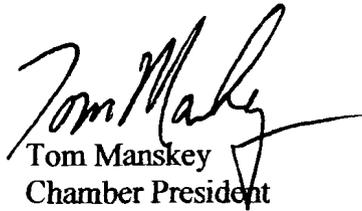
With all of this in mind, the community respectfully requests a site visit by the BRAC Commissioners. Ideally, we would like for the Commissioners to visit our location the week prior to the San Antonio hearing.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Bill Harding
City Administrator
Task Force Chairman



Tom Manskey
Chamber President
Task Force Director



Kent Penney, A.A.E.
Airport Director
Task Force Director

Cc: The Honorable James H Bilbray
The Honorable Philip Coyle
Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr., (USN, Ret)
The Honorable James V. Hansen
General James T. Hill (USA, Ret)
General Lloyd W. Newton (USAF, Ret)
The Honorable Samuel K. Skinner
Brigadier General Sue E. Turner (USAF, Ret)



2005 DOD BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

06282005

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

June 23, 2005

This is a letter in support of the 188th Fighter Wing, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Having been a member of the 188th for many years I feel confident of offering you an overview of the unit's attributes with a great deal of credence.

After having served an enlisted tour in the Air Force during the Korean war, I enlisted in the 188th in 1955. The 188th became a part of my body and soul as we grew up together.

Soon after enlisting, the unit sent me to Air Force pilot training. Fairly soon after returning from pilot training, was hired full-time as an intelligence officer. Progressed through upgrading career fields until retiring as the 188th base commander in mid-1989.

What may have began as a weekend flying club (as perceived by some) quickly became a very professional mission orientated unit that was on the leading edge of an invaluable asset for our nation's defense.

In about mid-1960s while visiting our gaining command, Ninth Air Force @ Shaw AFB, S.C, the new 9th AF commanding general was reviewing with his staff those units assigned to his command. When the 188th was in review, staff members informed him that the 188th was one of his very top units.

The tradition continued, about the mid to late eighties, General Bill Creech, Tactical Air Command Commander, visited our unit. We presented him a comprehensive briefing on how we conducted our business. After departure, he stated to his accompanying staff that the 188th was a "classic unit".

Only last year I was visiting with members of the unit and I announced to them the 188th was the best it had ever been, and not only that, was improving every day.

Consensus of the entire region here is, if the BRAC Committee examines pertinent facts, the 188th will be OK. Furthermore, it is believed qualitative criterion established by DOD/Air Force on the 188th is severely flawed. I absolutely subscribe to that belief.

We all know that many F-16s will eventually go away, but please do not begin with one of the nation's premier F-16 unit.

Respectfully submitted.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Strang".

Colonel Bill Strang, USAF, Retired
Star Route Box 355
Uniontown, AR 72955