



June 30, 2005

The Honorable Anthony Principi, Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Polk Building
Suite 600
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202



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Dear Chairman Principi:

As a member of the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative (MassDTI), I am writing in support of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations to expand Hanscom Air Force Base and preserve the Soldier Systems Center – Natick. MassDTI, co-chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy and Governor Mitt Romney, is a public-private partnership created to preserve and expand the missions of these two unique technical facilities.

The University of Massachusetts is proud of its strong and dynamic collaboration with Hanscom Air Force Base and the Natick Soldier Systems Center. For example, the partnership between the University and the Soldier Systems Center, formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding to pursue areas of mutual interest in research, education and training, has strengthened both the University and the Armed Forces. From working with the UMass Dartmouth Textile Sciences Department to develop "intelligent, multifunctional textiles", to collaborating with professors at UMass Lowell in areas of biodegradable plastics and processing, new ballistic eyewear, and novel photovoltaic materials for solar collection, UMass and Natick SSC are working together to develop the technologies of both the military and civilian future. This is a relationship that thrives on proximity, creativity, and cooperation.

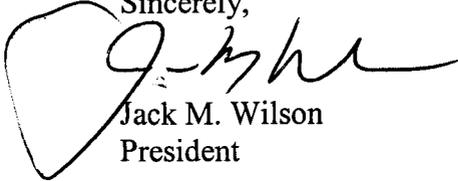
For decades, Hanscom and Natick have made significant contributions to the technological advancement that drives our nation's warfighting capabilities. The command and control technologies developed at Hanscom and the soldier systems advancements from Natick help give the US military a technological advantage over every other military force in the world.

The successful track record of these bases can be attributed in large part to their proximity to the nation's top defense technology cluster that stretches from Southeastern Massachusetts into Southern New Hampshire. This region possesses the critical mass of skilled workforce, experienced institutional and academic partners and research and development base to enable these facilities to thrive now and into the future. As this BRAC process has proven, the Pentagon has a willing partner in Massachusetts to help create the future vision for these facilities.

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By recommending the addition of more than 1100 new direct jobs to Hanscom and retaining the core technology mission at Natick, the Pentagon has made a tremendous commitment to Massachusetts and its technological capabilities. The University of Massachusetts recognizes that commitment and we will do our part to help these facilities continue their critical work and grow for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Wilson', written over the printed name and title.

Jack M. Wilson
President