

THE LINCOLN ELECTRIC COMPANY
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JUL 13 2005

Received

JOHN M. STROPKI
CHAIRMAN and
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

July 8, 2005

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

Subject: Keep Cleveland DFAS

Dear Chairman Principi:

I am writing on behalf of the 2,800 Cleveland-area employees of Lincoln Electric and as the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of our great Company. We urge you to keep the Cleveland DFAS and its 1,200 men and women here in our city, because that is the most cost-effective and high-quality course of action for our nation.

Lincoln is a 110-year-old Cleveland-based manufacturing company and the global leader in the design and manufacture of arc welding products. We have long been a supplier to our country's Armed Forces and are proud to serve in that role. We are equally proud to be a long-time employer and good corporate citizen of the Greater Cleveland area.

Unfortunately, our region has seen many businesses close or move elsewhere, eliminating the livelihood for thousands of men and women. Manufacturing, which once dominated the region, has been especially rocked by job losses. Moving DFSA out of our city would do further harm to the area's economy and to the men and women at Cleveland DFAS, workers who put forth their best efforts daily to serve both active-duty and retired military men and women and their families.

You have heard from Fred Nance, chairman of the Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance and vice chairman of the Greater Cleveland Partnership, as well as from a number of our citizens, business leaders and elected officials. In his presentation to you at the BRAC Commission hearing in Buffalo a few weeks ago, Mr. Nance said that the employees of Cleveland DFAS personify excellence in performance and military value. We heartily agree with that assessment.

No doubt, the commission faces a difficult task. But we believe the decision regarding DFAS should be an easy choice. As CEO of a business, I understand that you must weigh the economics/costs of a business with performance and investment. The investment and performance of the Cleveland DFAS based on information Mr. Nance presented points to the Cleveland office as a benchmark organization for excellence. In this case, economy and excellence win out. And that means Cleveland DFAS should stay.

Yours truly,


John M. Stropki
Chairman and
Chief Executive Officer