



CAPE COD COMMISSION

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BRAC Commission

AUG 01 2005

Received

July 25, 2005

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Gentlemen:

The Cape Cod Commission opposes the Department of Defense's proposed closure of Otis Air National Guard Base. We are very concerned about the effect such a closure would have on the viability of the Massachusetts Military Reservation (MMR) and on the economy of Cape Cod. Furthermore, the closing of Otis would undermine the effectiveness of homeland defense in New England.

The Air National Guard presence is an important component of the overall master plan for the base and provides vital support for the installation's infrastructure. Were the Air National Guard to leave, it is highly unlikely that the Coast Guard and Army National Guard would be able to absorb the base's maintenance and operational costs. Thus, the viability of the entire base and the carefully crafted master plan is at risk.

Closing Otis would dramatically degrade air fighter coverage for the Boston metropolitan region and would weaken the joint operations of the Army National Guard and Coast Guard at the MMR. Otis also provides hundreds of civilian jobs, which are a very important component of the economic stability of the Upper Cape region.

As the regional land use planning agency for Barnstable County, the Cape Cod Commission headed a community master planning effort for the MMR in the late 1990s. Through this process the Cape community agreed upon an innovative plan for the MMR to ensure that future military activities would both meet modern training needs and respect the Cape's sensitive environmental resources.



A coalition of federal, state, county and town officials, as well as citizens from all walks of life has formed to oppose the base closure recommendation. The Cape Cod Commission (a nineteen member body, made up representatives from all fifteen Cape towns as well as several special appointees) supports that effort, and urges you to carefully weigh the analysis presented by our legislative delegation at your July 6, 2005 hearing in Boston.

The Cape Cod Commission hopes to continue to work for the successful integration of the military training and environmental management that has been the hallmark of activity at Otis. We trust that, through your positive recommendation for the retention of the Otis Air National Guard base, that the proven ability of the military and the local community to work together to ensure military readiness and protection of our environment may continue.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,



Alan Platt, Chairman

cc: Senator Edward Kennedy
Senator John Kerry
Congressman William Delahunt
Governor Mitt Romney
Cape Legislative Delegation
Colonel Paul Worcester
Boards of Selectmen