

July 30, 2005

BRAC Commission

2005 Defense Base Closure & Realignment Commission  
2521 South Clark St. #600  
Arlington, VA 22202

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received

Dear Commission:

I have been a life long Alaskan for over 34 years and have always been aware of the uniqueness Alaska provides the United States. Growing up knowing we are the first line of defense for our country built an awareness of the real threats that face our country. Many times we read about scrambles of our fighters towards foreign countries heading towards our airspace. This vital mission would now have to be conducted by a single squadron from Elmendorf if Eielson is closed. This is quite a feat considering how often the Elmendorf squadron is deployed to other parts of the world for extended periods of time.

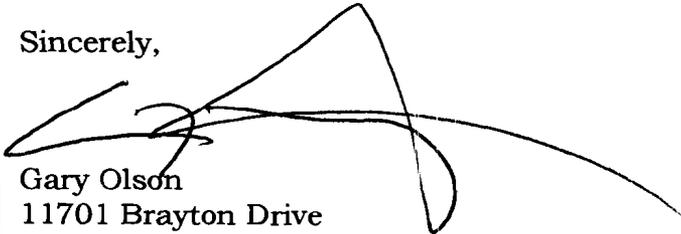
Now we read about being within missile range of North Korea. Though an increased awareness of terrorism is forcing change within our military, the old opponents remain, especially with the growth of China. This is what makes me wonder why Eielson AFB is now being considered to be shut down.

I have worked in construction both on Eielson and on the ridges well behind the base. The infrastructure both within and directly adjacent to the base is incredible with most equipment aimed west towards Russia. With the importance of Alaska both strategically in military aspects as well as natural resources for our country, this is not the time to think of reducing the protection that exists up here.

To reiterate the importance of this matter to myself, my family as well as the country, the strategic importance of this post cannot be ignored. I strongly encourage you to reconsider the bottom line and determine if the operations of this remote base could be performed from any other locations. The answer is no.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the importance of this decision. Many think of only employment with these issues. I am asking you to consider much, much more.

Sincerely,



Gary Olson  
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