

BRAC Commission

AUG 11 2005

Received

Dear distinguished members
of the BRAC Commission,

I know you have had a rough summer with the job put before you. I have watched you on C-span. I was very respectful of the way you handled each bases situation.

I once again would like for you to please give consideration for the 188th AR ANG fighter wing in Ft Smith, Arkansas. We feel they were rated incorrectly on the BRAC list.

These people passed all their inspections with the highest marks.

We are a training center with excellent air space for day and night maneuvers. We are in close proximity to Ft Chaffee.

Our firefighting training center is one of few in the U.S. It has been used

more than the other four
in the last year. They
can simulate any combustible
agent to train the firefighters
in smoky conditions, fireman's
safety, whereas, the others only
use propane.

Hopefully, in September
the last of our troops
will be home from Iraq.
They have not only took
care of homeland security
but for the freedom of
the Iraq people.

Please make it a happy
home coming.

Please keep our unit flying.
We can do the task.

Thank you for your attention
to this matter. We appreciate
your efforts, on-site visits
and teleconferences.

God Bless you and sustain
you during this time. We are
counting on you.

Brenda GABBARD

1521 NORTH 43rd, Ft Smith AR
72904

Dear Sirs,

AUG 11 2005 30 July 2005-

This little unneeded base and the jobs you ~~needed~~ cut feed me through the recession. This little part-time job continues to feed me because the training I received led me to civilian jobs usually closed to women, as was my military position until I stepped up. Training I received throughout my career gave me the confidence to accomplish all I set my mind to because we were taught "No Excuses."

I have no personal affection for the F-16 - that belonged to the F-4's. But I do have affection, respect, admiration, pride and a need for this base to continue. Do not close us. Give us an alternate mission. We are not ignorant Southerners - we have accomplished better rates than alot of the regulars and we did and do it with older equipment. That's because we aren't kids. You may get quicksilver from the regulars but you get long lasting steel from the Guard. Our troops come from Texas + Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, all over to belong to the 188th F.W. And when we gather we bring ~~an~~ unbelievable payload of experience, intelligence and skills from our varied "real jobs." And in doing so we teach others. Even in the lowest regarded job of ours in weapons we produced about ten officers in the last ten years. We have business owners, corporate supervisors from Walmart and Biedler, Nurses, Therapists, paramedics, cops and teachers to name a few. And we bring all that information and those skills with us to complete our mission. We don't do this for the money - alot of us lose alot of money doing our duty. And we do this voluntarily - and we do it till our bodies break down ~~and~~ our age forces ~~us~~ out.

We also aren't so stupid as to believe that if you cut the jobs related to the planes that there will be any need for those jobs left over. As at any base half the personnel are blue collar - the other half are white collar. The white collar's job is to care for the blue collar's needs. You cut the blue collar you've eliminated the need for the white collar as well. That's the part that, so far, the media has failed to realize.

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Arkansas has a nuclear power plant. I'd rather not wait for Texas or Tulsa (whose radar failed to pick up on F4 tornado that killed three people and did millions of dollars of damage to our city a few years ago) to rescue us in case of a terrorist attack. Of course we could get Little Rock's C130s to fly over and kick luggage out to protect us.

You sure felt we were viable after 9-11. Shortly after 8pm, that night hundreds of people I work with heard the same sounds I heard. Panic, fear, and uncertainty covered their faces as that noise broke through the silence that had held for much of that day. All breathed a sigh of relief and gratitude when I let them know that our F116s had begun their new mission. They knew they were being protected. And that 24-7 protection lasted till you told us to return to our normal mission.

If you continue to have the recruiting problems the services are experiencing now why in the world would you work so hard to further cut the numbers in uniform? And if we are so 'outdated' why in the Sam Hill are we in Iraq now? The Guards involvement in this war is staggering considering we were designed to step up and take the places of those regulars deployed. They are the ones whose families get base housing, C.E. help in household equipment failures, dental and medical provided. The regulars get those perks because they are expected to be gone. We don't get them, and yet we are going. And yet we are told we are not needed? Do you not see the freaking irony in all this?

Let me tell you, my troops have volunteered and gone to Israel, Arabia, Turkey - you name it - we're gone. Usually we never even have to tell someone they have to go - the best of volunteers fill the spaces available. That's what we are - That's what we do. We accomplish whatever you need us to do.

So for pity's sake give us a viable mission. Do not cut off your service noses by effectively killing the careers of hundreds of people who sacrifice time and time again to walk twice as hard to be thought of as only half as good.

The resource service men we have is almost unusable.

Do not cut the strongest arm you've got - your volunteers.

Respectfully,

Kitty J. Holahan MSGT, Ret.

188th FW AR ANG

Ft. Smith AR