



STATE OF ARIZONA

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The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman, 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

On behalf of the State of Arizona, thank you again for the difficult work you have undertaken and the time and effort you have dedicated to the BRAC process. Arizonans are particularly appreciative of the opportunity you extended for me to testify at the BRAC Commission's Regional Hearing in Clovis, New Mexico on June 24, 2005.

As you draft your final recommendations to the President, I respectfully request that those recommendations include reconsideration of the Department of Defense (DoD) recommendation regarding the relocation of the Air Force Research Lab (Lab) in Mesa, Arizona. I ask that you instead consider a recommendation to retain the Lab and its assets at its current location.

The proactive steps taken by Arizona over the last decade have enhanced not only the military value of the Lab, but also its role within the integrated network of military facilities in Arizona. As I stated in my oral testimony, we believe that the reasons that led the 1995 BRAC Commission to reverse the 1991 BRAC recommendation to relocate the Lab are even more accurate and compelling today:

- The Lab was and still is largely a civilian operation well-suited to a stand-alone configuration;
- The Lab's proximity to Luke Air Force Base provided and still provides a ready source of pilots who support research activities as consultants and subjects. That relationship now extends to all US military services in the Southwest as well as allied armed forces in Asia and Europe.
- The Lab's facilities were and are consolidated, secure and well-suited to research activities. Today, those facilities remain secure but now constitute the centerpiece for new, adjacent facilities allowing close R&D activities with Arizona State University and private sector.
- The Lab's activities were and are consistent with the community's plans for redevelopment, which included a university and research park in place of Williams Air Force Base, which was closed in the 1991 BRAC round. Not only have these plans become reality but have created additional, unforeseen opportunities including an enhanced ASU technical focus and private sector investments complimentary to both the lab and ASU.

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- The relocation and new facilities costs seriously exceeded original estimates. We estimate the current, physical relocation cost to be in excess of \$50 million.

More important than the high relocation dollar costs, moving the Lab will result in an extreme and significant loss of intellectual capital, including a loss of technical and engineering expertise that would cripple the Lab's current and mid term military value. An informal survey indicates that eighty percent of the Lab's employees would not relocate.

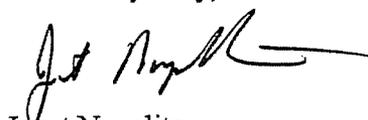
Therefore, as I continue to pursue a reversal of the DoD recommendation, I am even more convinced that it is in the best interests of DoD, the State of Arizona and our local communities to retain the Lab at its current location so that its function can continue unabated, its manpower and intellectual capital can be preserved, and significant relocation costs can be avoided.

However, we understand that an objective of the BRAC process is to reduce property holdings. Consequently, I reiterate my offer to the Commission to facilitate discussions between the Air Force and Arizona State University. Your recommendation to privatize the lab in place would enable this dialogue. I remain confident that we can craft a business plan between the two entities that satisfies DoD needs and precludes the degradation of the critical training and research work conducted at the Lab with their partners. I firmly believe that the demonstrated ability of the lab to translate research activity into mature training programs and equipment promises even greater military value in the future. The scientific and operational leverage opportunities such as Lab expertise in software development, night vision devices and human engineering coupled with ASU's contract with the US Army for the Flex Panel Display is but one example of the future potential of a US Air Force Lab/ASU merger.

The State of Arizona has been, is, and will continue to set a high standard of support for the military facilities in our State, and the men and women and their families who work at those installations. Arizonans are proud of our long and demonstrable history of providing DoD with unparalleled resources and an unwavering commitment to its missions and operations, and are eager to maintain that commitment through retention of the Lab at its current location.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to work with you on our request.

Yours very truly,



Janet Napolitano
Governor