July 12, 2005

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

Dr. Mr. Principi,

As a retired (15 year) veteran of the 911th TAW at Pittsburgh, I'm sure you've already heard about the "surplus" of land available. I'm not sure if anyone remembers the history. During WW II the Pittsburgh International Airport was an Army Air Corps Base, the land was transferred to Allegheny County in the 1950's to build the Airport, but my understanding was that the Defense Department retained the rights to reclaim the land (thousands of acres) if needed for military use.

I also believe that the quality of the unit and facilities that already exist; the proximity of a major medical center, and the strategic location of the unit (½ way between the East Coast + the Mid-West) make it an ideal site for the regions' major Air Reserve Center (in fact, it should also be an active duty station).

Thank-you for your consideration.

Arthur R. Merrell
606 S. Main St, Pgh PA 15220
412-922-3844