

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

August 31, 2005

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**Bredesen Files Motion To Block BRAC Decision**

The Chattanooga (Chattanooga, TN)  
August 30, 2005

Gov. Phil Bredesen on Tuesday filed a motion in federal court to block the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) from recommending in its report that Tennessee's 118th Air Lift Wing be dismantled to President Bush.

Upon review of a similar lawsuit filed by Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell, a Pennsylvania District Court ruled Friday that the delivery of the BRAC report to the president would impede a judicial review of Gov. Rendell's lawsuit. Bredesen said he wants to ensure his own lawsuit to challenge the Department of Defense's recommendation to realign the 118th is reviewed before the BRAC report is delivered to the President.

"The 118th Air Lift Wing is vital to our state's ability to ensure a quick response in case of emergency, and the BRAC's decision undermines our ability to protect the citizens of

this state," said Bredesen. "I intend to continue fighting to keep the 118th in Tennessee, and based on the recent judicial action in Pennsylvania I am hopeful that our motion today will be successful in keeping this recommendation from being delivered and that our lawsuit will be reviewed."

The motion, filed in Judge Robert Echols' court, follows a lawsuit filed by Bredesen on Aug. 19 in a Nashville federal court to enforce the rights of the Governor as commander-in-chief of the Tennessee National Guard and to challenge the relocation of the 118th Air Lift Wing. Bredesen's lawsuit is based on federal law which states that an Air National Guard unit cannot be relocated or withdrawn from a state without the consent or approval of the governor.

Bredesen was notified in May that the federal Department of Defense had recommended to the BRAC that major elements of the 118th Air Lift Wing to be relocated to Kentucky, Illinois and Texas. The BRAC met on Friday, August 26, and voted to move forward with the realignment of the 118th. This move would cause the state to lose 702 personnel and eight C130 aircraft, including the Aero Med Squadron, which is the only deployable medical unit in the Tennessee Air National Guard.

The 118th Air Lift Wing was assigned to the U.S. Army's 30th Division in 1921. Throughout its history, the 118th has logged millions of miles of international, as well as stateside, missions in direct support of the U.S. Military and at times, provided assistance in times of natural disaster, it was stated. In 2004, the 118th Air Lift Wing transported 50 public health nurses to Florida to assist in response to Hurricane Ivan. Most recently, the 118th has volunteered personnel and C-130 aircraft to assist Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

In Pennsylvania, a federal judge ruled that the portion of the BRAC/Department of Defense Report that recommended the deactivation of the 11th Fighter Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard was null and void, and that the commission could not consider a

recommendation that was declared null and void by the Court. The State of Connecticut obtained a temporary restraining order against the BRAC recommendation against a Connecticut National Guard unit on Tuesday.

### **Illinois still hopes its base closure will be reversed**

#### **Loss of its 183rd Fighter Wing means transfer of jets, jobs to Fort Wayne.**

The Ft, Wayne News-Sentinel

Ryan Keith

August 30, 2005

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The fallout in Illinois from losing the 183rd Fighter Wing will be felt on a number of fronts, from a hefty chunk out of the local economy to slower emergency response times around the Midwest, officials said.

The federal Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted 8-1 Friday for the Pentagon's recommendation to move the Air National Guard wing's 15 jets and more than 160 jobs to a base in Fort Wayne. The group's recommendation now goes to President Bush and Congress for approval.

Officials say the move is damaging both for the military and central Illinois, but they are holding out hope it will be stopped.

"This is the wrong recommendation at the wrong time for the wrong reason," said Andrew Ross, a spokesman for Gov. Rod Blagojevich's administration, on Monday.

Economically, the fighter wing's relocation will create swift, strong ripples, officials say.

The Air National Guard has an annual budget of about \$44 million and employs more than 1,000 people, most of them part-time. Officials dispute the BRAC figure of 163 jobs leaving, saying it's more likely to top 600 when part-timers are included.

That would be a \$60 million hit on the local economy, including salaries and spending, Ross said.

The loss of the guard's firefighting unit likely will cost Capitol Airport \$500,000 a year to pick up those duties, airport executive director Eric Frankl said. The airport has an annual operating budget of \$3.5 million.

But even more daunting, officials say, is the homeland security hole left behind by the F-16s.

The governor's office says the jets provide essential protection for the state's 11 reactors at six nuclear power plants and 28 locks and dams on three major rivers. While the jets will be slightly closer to Chicago in their new Indiana home, officials say their Springfield departure puts St. Louis, Kansas City and other Midwest cities much more at risk. Local officials say the move will reduce Illinois to the same protection levels as several much smaller states.

"I think everybody in central Illinois needs to realize that at some point in time when these planes go away, we're not going to have near the safety factor that we have today," Springfield Mayor Tim Davlin said. "There's going to be a certain amount of vulnerability that we don't see today."

Blagojevich and Attorney General Lisa Madigan have filed a lawsuit to block the move, saying the Pentagon can't move ahead with the plan under federal law without the governor's approval. Blagojevich said he was encouraged by the ruling from a federal judge in Pennsylvania on Friday siding with the governor there on similar grounds.

"The 183rd is critical to Illinois and to our nation, and it needs to be ready at a moment's notice if any homeland security issues arise," Madigan spokeswoman Melissa Merz said. "We will continue fighting this."

But local officials say they're resigned to the move and ready to help the base adjust to its new missions, which include the maintenance of jet engines.

"We all knew the F-16s weren't going to be here forever," Davlin said. "We just have to work with a different direction now, and it's one more challenge."

### **Judge blocks BRAC plans on Bradley Air National Guard base**

The Associated Press  
August 30, 2005

HARTFORD (AP) -- A federal judge has issued a temporary restraining order to prevent the national base closings commission from recommending a realignment of a Connecticut Air National Guard Base until he can conduct a hearing.

U.S. District Judge Alfred V. Covello scheduled a hearing Sept. 7 on the Base Closure and Realignment Commission's recommendation to remove planes from Bradley International Airport, Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to forward its recommendations to President Bush.

"This order assures that the BRAC commission will not be sent to the president before the court rules on our lawsuit's request for a hearing," Blumenthal said. "Our reason for seeking this order was to assure that the court has a full opportunity to consider our arguments before Connecticut may be threatened with the very substantial irreparable harm of this realignment."

Calls were left seeking comment with the BRAC commission and Gov. M. Jodi Rell. The national base closure commission last week approved a Pentagon plan to move nine of the 17 A-10 Thunderbolts from the 103rd Fighter Wing located at Bradley and retire the rest.

The realignment is part of the Pentagon's proposal to shut or consolidate 62 major U.S. military bases and hundreds of smaller facilities. Rell filed a lawsuit on Monday against the move, saying that as the Connecticut Guard's

commander in chief, she must consent to any realignment of the case.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court, names the base closure commission and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as defendants.

Last week, a federal judge ruled in favor of Pennsylvania's governor, who argued the Defense Department needs his approval to dissolve an Air National Guard division there. Rell is the lead plaintiff in the Connecticut case.

She is joined by Democratic U.S. Sens. Christopher Dodd and Joseph Lieberman, and U.S. Rep. John Larson, D-Conn.

### **Judge Stalls Base Closing Recommendation**

The Washington Post  
Susan Haigh  
August 30, 2005

HARTFORD, Conn. -- A federal judge temporarily halted the national base closings commission from recommending a realignment of a Connecticut Air National Guard base, which the governor contends cannot be done without her approval.

U.S. District Judge Alfred V. Covello issued a temporary restraining order and scheduled a hearing Sept. 7 on the Base Closure and Realignment Commission's recommendation to remove planes from Bradley International Airport.

The commission approved the plan last week and has until Sept. 8 to forward its recommendations to President Bush.

"This order assures that the BRAC commission will not be sent to the president before the court rules on our lawsuit's request for a hearing," Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said. "Our reason for seeking this order was to assure that the court has a full opportunity to consider our arguments before Connecticut may be threatened with the very substantial irreparable harm of this realignment."

Gov. M. Jodi Rell has argued that the Pentagon needs her approval before moving or altering the guard unit.

The National Guard system, according to the lawsuit, is the successor to the original state militias. The state's right to maintain and direct that militia, the lawsuit contends, is deeply rooted in both the U.S. and Connecticut constitutions.

"The governor is pleased that Judge Covello has issued this order and she remains optimistic that Connecticut will prevail," said Rell spokesman Judd Everhart. "The governor is confident that the facts are on our side."

Calls left with the BRAC commission seeking comment were not immediately returned Tuesday.

The governor and three congressmen sued the base closings commission and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Monday, saying that as the Connecticut Guard's commander in chief, Rell must consent to any realignment of the case.

The Pentagon plans to move nine of the 17 A-10 Thunderbolts from the 103rd Fighter Wing located at Bradley and retire the rest. The realignment is part of the Pentagon's proposal to shut or consolidate 62 major U.S. military bases and hundreds of smaller facilities.

Last week, a federal judge ruled in favor of Pennsylvania's governor, who argued the Defense Department needs his approval to dissolve an Air National Guard division there.

Rell is the lead plaintiff in the Connecticut case. She is joined by Democratic U.S. Sens. Christopher Dodd and Joseph Lieberman, and U.S. Rep. John Larson, D-Conn.

## **Lawsuits Pile Up Over Air National Guard Cuts**

The New York Times  
August 30, 2005

WASHINGTON - Tennessee's governor filed a motion on Tuesday to block the final report of a U.S. military base-closing commission, adding to a pile of lawsuits the panel faces over Air National Guard cutbacks.

Hot on the heels of new legal challenges by Connecticut and Missouri, Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen sought a federal-court injunction barring the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission from recommending the dismantling of the Tennessee National Guard's 118th Air Lift Wing in Nashville.

The commission last Friday completed its review of the Defense Department's first round of base closings in a decade. The panel spared some facilities marked for shutdown and altered cutbacks at others, but supported dismantling the Tennessee wing.

It is due to submit its final report on September 8 to President Bush, who will either ask the commission for changes or send it on to Congress for final approval.

In the Tennessee action, part of an earlier suit which named Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as a defendant, the state argued that it could lose its chance for judicial relief if the commission's decision to move eight C-130 planes advances.

States argue that federal laws -- rooted in Constitutional clauses allowing states to maintain militias -- require a governor's consent for deactivations, moves or other substantial changes to National Guard units.

Pennsylvania won a victory on Friday when a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the Pentagon had no authority to deactivate the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's 111th Fighter Wing without Gov. Ed Rendell's consent.

But the commission still voted to move the 111th's A-10 attack jets to other locations and close the base housing the unit, the Willow Grove Joint Reserve Base near Philadelphia.

It voted to strip aircraft from dozens of Air Guard bases, redistributing them to other bases and retiring older planes as part of an overall plan to shrink the number of flying Air Guard and reserve squadrons.

On Monday, Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell sued the commission and the Defense Department to halt A-10s from being removed from an Air Guard wing near Hartford.

Just days before, she jumped for joy in Groton as the commission voted to reverse Pentagon plans to close the New London Submarine Base, sparing 8,460 jobs.

"I am going to court to protect my authority, and that of future governors, as Commander in Chief," Rell said in a statement.

In Missouri, Gov. Matt Blunt filed suit to halt the commission's decision to strip F-15 fighters from an Air Guard unit in St. Louis. The complaint argues that the commission violated the federal law that authorizes the base closings by engaging in "micromanagement" of aircraft.

Illinois also is waging a similar court challenge.

A spokesman for the commission was not immediately available for comment. Commission chairman Anthony Principi said on Saturday that such challenges would be handled by the Department of Justice, and the panel's report would proceed.

### Local News Articles

#### **Santorum, Specter Urge Aircraft At 911th Base**

**Panel kept facility open, without planes**  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Jack Kelly  
August 31, 2005

Pennsylvania Republican Sens. Rick Santorum and Arlen Specter have urged the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to add a provision to its report for President Bush recommending that aircraft be permanently

assigned to the 911th Military Airlift Wing at Pittsburgh International Airport.

The BRAC Commission voted Friday to reject the Pentagon recommendation that the 911th's base be closed, but it also decided to transfer the eight C-130H aircraft currently assigned there to the Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas and Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina.

In the draft of its report to the president, the commission directs the Defense Department to turn the 911th's base into an "enclave" that would be capable of supporting flight operations. It also directs the Pentagon to establish within that enclave a Regional Joint Readiness Center to integrate military operations with homeland security and community-based medical support.

"The enclave and [readiness center] will be staffed at the current manning level of the [Air Reserve station]," the report says.

The readiness center concept was proposed to the BRAC commission by the Pit-BRAC Task Force, a group of community leaders who fought successfully to keep open the 911th's base. It will be the first such center in the nation.

The commission has until Sept. 8, when its report to the president is due, to fine tune the wording of its report.

In a letter yesterday to BRAC Commission Chairman Anthony Principi, Santorum and Specter urged his panel to add to its report a paragraph proposed by a Santorum aide that would read: "The commission recommends that [the Defense Department] take affirmative action to permanently locate and operate an optimum number of C-130H (or equivalent) aircraft as a detachment to the Pittsburgh (Air Reserve Station) enclave to support the mission of the Joint Readiness Center as well as current [Air Force Reserve] missions."

A member of the Pit-BRAC Task Force said the Air Force considers the "optimum number" for a C-130 squadron to be 12 to 16 aircraft.

A BRAC commission spokeswoman acknowledged receipt of the letter from the Pennsylvania senators, but had no comment on it.

### **Nothing like the facts;**

Cleveland made its persuasive case. The base-closure commission listened  
Akron Beacon Journal (Akron, OH)  
August 30, 2005

The federal government knows how to close military bases. A process fraught with political elements, deep emotions and powerful economics has been elevated in the past three rounds. It was again last week in the fourth.

Ask Cleveland. The city groaned loudly when the Pentagon first proposed the revamping of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, eliminating 1,100 local jobs, reducing tax revenues by \$6.4 million a year. Cleveland pledged to fight back. It did, blending telling facts with cogent analysis in a way that proved persuasive to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. On Thursday, the commission recommended that the Cleveland office remain open and, better still, add 400 jobs.

The strength of the process stems from the independence of the commission. Cleveland had a credible avenue of appeal, and the effort was ably led by Fred Nance, a prominent attorney, Carol Caruso of the Greater Cleveland Partnership and the offices of U.S. Reps. Steve LaTourette and Stephanie Tubbs Jones. The city punctured decisive holes in the Pentagon case for closure, citing, in particular, flawed assessments of the office's costs and the likely economic impact on the nation's poorest large city.

The expectation is that cities, large and small, will howl when the Pentagon moves to shut down facilities in their communities. Local politicians will leap into the fray, ready to micromanage defense strategy. The almost certain result? Few bases would close. Thus, the commission makes its assessment, providing an oasis of calm deliberation. The

recommendations go to the president (by Sept. 8 in this instance), who can either accept the entire list or or sent it back for one revision. Once the president says yes, Congress has 45 days to vote up or down on the whole.

As it is, the commission usually accepts 80 percent or so of the Pentagon proposals. It did so in this round, closing five major Army bases, two large Navy installations and the historic Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Indeed, the Department of Defense has had sound objectives in mind, initially revamping its base structure in the wake of the Cold War and now retooling in the era of global terrorism.

On a handful of counts, Pentagon planners have reason to shake their heads, the commission, for instance, rejecting the closing of the 205-year-old Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine and, more curiously, leaving open Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico, even though the F-16 fighter jets will be removed. What mission will Cannon serve? The Pentagon has until 2010 to find one.

Might the commission have buckled to political pressure? That would be the rare episode. Anthony Principi, the panel chairman, has often noted that the job involves weighing a complex of factors. All in all, the commission performed most effectively, bringing confidence and resolution to a testing process, allowing relevant facts to drive decision-making, opening the door to the compelling arguments of Cleveland.

### **New Talks About Cannon Urged; Governor, congressional delegation pursue idea of another mission for base**

Albuquerque Journal (Albuquerque, NM)  
Miguel Navrot  
August 30, 2005

Buoyed with hope that Cannon Air Force Base will remain a military property through 2009, the state's governor and congressional delegation want to begin talks with the Pentagon about finding a new mission for the eastern New Mexico base.

"The communities surrounding Cannon have a long history of supporting the Department of Defense," Gov. Bill Richardson wrote Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Monday.

"We remain committed and eager to continue this tradition of service in support of our great nation," the letter says.

The letter asks acting deputy secretary Gordon England to visit Cannon.

The base, an economic mainstay for nearby Clovis, was listed to close under the Defense Department's streamlining plans made public in May.

The potential reprieve for Cannon came Friday when the independent panel reviewing the closure list voted to have the 70,000-acre property become an "enclave."

Under the panel's recommendation, Cannon's 27th Fighter Wing would dissolve and its F-16 Falcon fighter jets would be redistributed to other units. Base backers would then have until 2010 to attract a new military mission to Cannon.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission's votes last week can still be altered. The White House will receive the panel's report by Sept. 8, and President Bush can return it for further alterations. Congress must give final approval.

Officials at the Pentagon will begin reviewing the commission's revised list and make its own recommendations to President Bush.

"We expected some changes," said Pentagon spokesman Glenn Flood said of the commission's work.

Monday's letter was the first action since the panel voted on Cannon. Congressional staffers have mentioned Army interest in using it to station some of its soldiers, now in Europe, who are being returned home.

Sens. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., have also suggested bringing one of the Air Force's newest jets, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, to Cannon.

Retired Brig. Gen. Hanson Scott, appointed by Richardson to guide the state through the base-closure process, said further strategy talks among elected officials and civic leaders in Clovis are planned for this week.

### **Panel's lack of specifics on base at Jacksonville puzzles state delegates**

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR)  
C.S. Murphy  
August 30, 2005

Three days after the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission adjourned, Arkansas leaders remain frustrated with the lack of specifics coming out of Washington, D.C., about how the group's decisions will affect Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville.

Under the proposal announced in May by the Department of Defense, the base stood to gain dozens of planes and thousands of personnel. However, a vote last week to keep open Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota assured the base that it would not receive some planes that it expected. And, the commission's deliberations and votes on other bases left the overall impact on the Arkansas base up in the air.

"We don't even have a broad outline of some of these things, and when we don't have that, it makes you apprehensive about did they have all these ramifications at the time that they voted," U.S. Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., said Monday afternoon.

Snyder visited the base earlier in the day and said that the personnel he talked to were also in the dark.

"[The committee] made some complicated decisions, and I assume they're trying to put together information about exactly what the ramifications are," Snyder said. "These are like

falling dominos and the dominos can fall in different ways."

The realignment and closure process began in the 1980s to transform the military by cutting excess facilities and combining others to create a more efficient fighting force. In the most recent round, the Defense Department developed an initial list of proposed changes, which were evaluated by the nine-member BRAC commission. The commission visited bases and held public hearings before finalizing its own recommendations last week.

The commission's report will be forwarded to President Bush, who can accept it, reject it or send it back for additional work. Once complete, the recommendations are sent to Congress, which can only veto the plan in its entirety or allow it to take effect.

Snyder said he and his staff are learning about how the commission operates as they go, not having gone through such a process since he joined Congress in 1996.

"I don't know how they're operating or what's normal," he said. "I'm sure it will all come clear soon."

Rodell Mollineau, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., said Pryor's office was also digging for information about the base.

"The BRAC commission has been very open and very clear about their intentions so we're not sure what's caused this failure of communication," he said.

For many communities, military installations provide thousands of jobs for residents. Decisions by the commission affect the economic vitality of those communities.

Jacksonville Mayor Tommy Swaim waited by the phone Monday for word on how his home town base may change in the coming months.

"There's a lot of speculation about what may or may not happen," he said. "Some people say we will get the planes from Pope [Air Force Base in

North Carolina] and others are saying we won't get all the planes. I feel comfortable that we'll get some additional planes, but I don't know how many."

The commission's deliberations regarding Pope left central Arkansas leaders wondering what would move to Little Rock and what wouldn't.

Early Friday afternoon, it seemed Pope would stay open and 25 more planes would not land at the Jacksonville base. But by 5 p.m., reports indicated only some planes would be moved from North Carolina to Arkansas.

Capt. Kristine Munn, a spokesman for the Arkansas National Guard, said in a release Friday night that the Arkansas Air National Guard's 189th Airlift Wing would receive nine C-130H model planes from Pope. Additionally, the commission voted later Friday to close General Mitchell Air Reserve Station in Wisconsin, potentially sending four C-130 Hs to Jacksonville.

Lt. Jon Quinlan, a Little Rock Air Force spokesman, didn't return calls made to his office Monday.

The commission did make several other decisions that had an impact on Arkansas.

On Wednesday, it voted to keep the Red River Army Depot near Texarkana open - but recommended a cut of about 350 of its 2,500 jobs - while deciding that the nearby Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant should be shuttered.

On Friday, the commission voted to move or retire F-16's of the Arkansas Air National Guard's 188th Fighter Wing based at Fort Smith and replace them with 18 A-10 Warthogs.

Also Wednesday, the commission recommended restructuring selected Army Reserve centers throughout Arkansas and realigning the Camp Pike Reserve Complex in North Little Rock.

### **Arkansas officials assessing base-closing recommendations**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Little Rock, AR)  
August 30, 2005

A federal panel on military base closings decided its recommendations last week but Arkansas officials are still trying to figure out how the changes will affect the Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville.

"We don't even have a broad outline of some of these things, and when we don't have that, it makes you apprehensive about did they have all these ramifications at the time that they voted," U.S. Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., said.

Snyder visited the base Monday and said the personnel he talked to were unclear about how recommendations by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission would affect operations there.

"(The commission) made some complicated decisions, and I assume they're trying to put together information about exactly what the ramifications are," Snyder said. "These are like falling dominos and the dominos can fall in different ways."

Originally, the Defense Department recommended adding C-130s and nearly 4,000 people to the base in Jacksonville, north of Little Rock. Last week, BRAC approved some of the recommendations and forwarded them to President Bush for his consideration.

Rodell Mollineau, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., said Pryor's office also is trying to get information about the base. And Jacksonville Mayor Tommy Swaim waited by the phone for word on how the base would be affected.

"There's a lot of speculation about what may or may not happen," he said.

### **After military closings, political skirmish begins in Missouri**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Washington DC)

Sam Hananel  
August 30, 2005

The federal base closing process is supposed to be insulated from politics, with decisions made by an independent panel to protect elected officials from blame.

Yet it took all of 20 minutes for the political finger-pointing to start last week after a federal panel approved the first of several major military closings in Missouri.

Gov. Matt Blunt, a Republican, fired off a press release blaming "earlier failures to address these important issues," a none-too-subtle dig at former Democratic Gov. Bob Holden.

Democratic Party spokesman Jack Cardetti fired back, faulting Blunt for closing the state's lobbying office in Washington this year and relying on the state's congressional delegation to defend Missouri's bases.

With the state set to lose more than 3,000 jobs if Congress approves the recommendations of the Base Closing and Realignment Commission, the issue could play a role in next year's U.S. Senate race.

Democrats believe the BRAC closures can be used against Republican Sen. Jim Talent, who will face Missouri State Auditor Claire McCaskill in his bid for re-election. McCaskill raised the issue Tuesday when she announced her campaign.

"It's one thing to aggressively try to save these bases and fail to do so," Cardetti said. "It's another when people like Senator Jim Talent frankly did not put the effort in."

Cardetti points to the success of Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., in saving Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota after the Pentagon slated it for closure. He said Talent's position as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee should have helped the state avoid major losses.

Talent spokesman Rich Chrismer said the senator worked with Republicans and Democrats in the Missouri delegation to make a strong case to the base-closing commission.

"It's unfortunate that anyone would attempt to use this issue for political purposes, especially when there are men and women whose jobs are on the line," Chrismer said.

Once the Pentagon released its hit list in May, the state and its congressional delegation - led by Republican Sen. Kit Bond - scrambled to save three major military offices in St. Louis and Kansas City and the 131st Air National Guard unit in St. Louis.

Buzz Hefti, a professional consultant the state hired after the list came out to lobby the base-closing commission, said the late start was hard to overcome.

"Once you get on the list it's very difficult to prove your case because the Department of Defense has already made their case," Hefti said.

"If you want to make a difference, you need to have somebody on board up to two years in advance," Hefti said. "You would have found out by having people inside the Pentagon working the issue that these kinds of facilities were being considered."

George Connor, associate professor of political science at Southwest Missouri State University, said the loss of office jobs in fairly prosperous suburbs of St. Louis and Kansas City may not resonate as much as closure of one of the state's major military bases.

"Given all the other issues, I can't see this gaining enough traction to make a difference," Connor said. "In a close election, maybe that will be the deciding factor, but it seems unlikely."

Indeed, Greg Prestemon, president of the Economic Development Council of St. Charles County, Mo., where many employees of the Human Resources Command live, said the

bustling economy there has been able to absorb people who lose jobs into good paying positions.

"Because we're blessed with a very diverse regional economy, we're better equipped to handle job losses than a place like Ellsworth, where a base is the sole employer," Prestemon said.

But Max Skidmore, a political science professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, said Democrats would be "asleep at the wheel" if they didn't try to make BRAC a campaign issue.

"Talent could be portrayed as out of touch or ineffective or unable to protect the state even if the consequence may be less severe to the state than the consequences in South Dakota would have been," Skidmore said.

### **State to consider distribution of aircraft at guard bases**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Washington DC)  
Ken Thomas  
August 30, 2005

Michigan has survived the latest base-closing round without any massive job losses, but the federal panel's decisions have touched off a new lobbying campaign over two dozen military aircraft.

In a move that avoided the closing of Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, the base-closing commission last week gave Michigan the power to distribute 24 A-10 aircraft between the Battle Creek facility and Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Macomb County.

Supporters of Battle Creek have suggested an even split of the A-10s, which are used for close air support of ground forces. But backers of Selfridge are seeking all, or at least a greater portion of the aircraft, hoping to avoid job losses and maintain facilities.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the Michigan National Guard will consider how to distribute the aircraft, but a decision is not likely for

several months. The base-closing plan will be reviewed by President Bush and Congress this fall and many of the military shifts would not be made for several years.

"We believe that the concept of a 12-12 split with the A-10s has some merit. But it's really too soon to say if that will happen," said Granholm spokeswoman Liz Boyd. The administration will consult with the state's congressional delegation and military officials, Boyd said.

Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler, who leads the Michigan National Guard, will enter the process "with the thought that it needs to be what makes the most sense for everybody involved," said Maj. Dawn Dancer, a Guard spokeswoman.

Michigan is expected to gain several hundred jobs as a result of the base-closing commission's decisions. The largest gains will be found at the Detroit Arsenal, which is scheduled to receive 1,100 more workers. The most significant losses would stem from the closing of the U.S. Army Garrison at Selfridge, a reduction of about 300 jobs.

Rep. Candice Miller, a Republican who lives near the Harrison Township base, said she would push for all 24 of the A-10s to be stationed at Selfridge. She hopes it would help offset the loss of other aircraft and bolster her argument to keep open the commissary and base exchange at the garrison.

A Pentagon plan had outlined the shift of four additional aerial refueling tankers, called KC-135s, to Selfridge, but it was abandoned by the commission. The panel's plan would retire aging C-130 and F-16 aircraft at Selfridge, and Miller noted that adding the 24 A-10s would leave the base with one additional aircraft overall.

"I am unabashedly an advocate of Selfridge and going to do all that I can do to get all those airplanes at Selfridge," Miller asked.

Rep. Joe Schwarz, R-Battle Creek, said the commission reached "almost a Solomon-like decision" and an even split would keep the Guard combat-ready. Pilots based at Selfridge,

who have never flown the A-10, would need more than two years of training while those at Battle Creek could be deployed immediately.

"They can leave Battle Creek and go virtually anywhere in the world and have bombs on target within a matter of a week," Schwarz said.

The differences of opinion underscore the state's progress in the base-closing process. Heading into last week's meetings, state officials were concerned that closing the Battle Creek installation would have a devastating effect on the state's Air National Guard and eliminate a modern facility.

### **Governor, general ponder future of forces as Guard hits 150 years**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Topeka, KS)  
John Milburn  
August 30, 2005

States are likely to be engaged in more battles with the Department of Defense over the future of National Guard units and their role in the nation's defense, Kansas officials said Tuesday.

Several states have filed lawsuits to stop the Department of Defense from removing units from the Air National Guard, arguing that the airmen have a dual federal-state mission and governors must be consulted on any substantive changes.

Last week, a federal judge sided with Pennsylvania, declaring the elimination of a wing of A-10 Thunderbolt fighter-bombers "null and void." On Tuesday, a federal judge temporarily halted a recommendation to remove A-10s from a Connecticut Air National Guard base.

Kansas officials, celebrating the National Guard's 150 birthday Tuesday, said the state hasn't been immune to such battles with active duty military officials.

In 2001, the Air Force announced it was moving B-1 bombers from the 184th Bomb Wing based

at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita, eliminating the unit and hundreds of personnel. The state fought the decision, ultimately saving the unit and landing new refueling and information missions.

"I do see more fights like this coming. A line has to be drawn," said Brig. Gen. Ed McIlhenny, commander of the Kansas Air National Guard and former vice commander of the 184th.

McIlhenny said the Pentagon needs to inform states about its plans long before they are announced. Letting governors know what the changes are and why they are being made can avoid unnecessary surprises.

"That's not to say that even more communication can't solve these problems," he said.

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, state adjutant general, said disputes over National Guard units reflect that the Guard is a collaboration of 50 states and four territories.

"You really need to have the governors' involvement in these decisions," Bunting said.

The 184th Refueling Wing is slated for another change. The Base Closure and Realignment Commission signed off on a Pentagon proposal to move the unit's aircraft to the 190th Air Refueling Wing at Topeka's Forbes Field. The Wichita unit likely will see expanded missions in the future, but no aircraft.

In addition, two Kansas Army National Guard battalions currently in Iraq will be combined in the coming year to form one integrated infantry and armor unit, with a company of engineers.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said the future of National Guard units was a frequent topic of National Governors Association meetings. States want to know what forces they can rely upon for duty at home and how extensive deployments will be for overseas missions.

"We really can't get clear answers," Sebelius said. "If we have a natural disaster, we have far less people available than we had a year ago."

About 2,200 soldiers and airmen are deployed to Iraq and other nations on active duty, including nearly 40 percent of the Kansas Army National Guard.

While the Pentagon may have a say over the types of units assigned to a state, Bunting said governors have the authority to decide where to place those units to best serve residents after disasters. Unlike active-duty soldiers, who can pick up and move to another base if an air wing is reassigned, traditional Guard members live and work in their communities.

For example, infantry units typically are in urban areas such as Wichita and Kansas City, where they can provide equipment or security.

"No one disputes the A-10 decision, but to stand-down the unit is the governor's decision," Bunting said.

In Connecticut, a federal judge plans to have a hearing on removing A-10s on Sept. 7, a day before the BRAC recommendations are to be forwarded to President Bush.

"This nation was founded on the militia heritage," Bunting said. "We'll get through this."

### **BNAS closing won't affect Great Pond**

Bangor Daily News (Bangor, ME))

Aimee Dolloff

August 30, 2005

A recreation facility linked to Brunswick Naval Air Station is not expected to be affected by the Base Realignment and Closure commission's recent decision to close the Navy base.

The Great Pond Outdoor Adventure Center, formerly known as Dow Pines, is located in Great Pond Township about 35 miles east of Bangor.

The Brunswick base has been managing the center since 2003, recreation supervisor Mark Verhey at the base's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Department, said Monday.

"It was a DOD [Department of Defense] asset, and it was transferred from the Air Force to the Navy," he said.

The center is staffed by about eight civilians, but the Navy owns it and supervises the budget, hiring, firing and day-to-day operations.

"We are the closest facility that supports it, but because Great [Pond] is a regional asset, it will not be closed because of Brunswick's closing," Verhey said.

The site is a popular destination for military retirees of all branches of the service, John James, director of public affairs at Brunswick Naval Air Station, said Monday.

The center encompasses about 380 acres with frontage on three lakes, and includes rental cabins, campsites, year-round outdoor equipment rental, and recreational programming.

The lake and beach are accessible to the general public, but cabins, campsites and rental equipment are reserved for only military personnel and their families.

Its operation represents no cost to the taxpayers, James said.

The center currently is seeking a new manager, as the former director was let go. Verhey said he hopes to fill the position sometime in September.

Once the base closes, oversight for the outdoor center likely will be shifted to regional Navy headquarters in Newport, R.I.

"It's yet to be determined who will oversee [the facility]," Verhey said. "That's five years down the road."

Navy officials at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery may become the managers of the center because it's the closest Navy base to the area, he suggested.

"It's not going to change hands. It's not going to be transferred to GSA [General Services Administration] and turned into condos," Verhey said. "It's going to remain as it is now."

### **Warner To Tap Public, Private Leaders For Base-Closure Fallout**

Daily Press (Newport News, VA)

Hugh Lessig

August 30, 2005

Changes are afoot in Virginia's military economy, and Gov. Mark R. Warner wants a plan. In fact, he wants four of them.

With Fort Monroe slated to close and the future of Oceana Naval Air Station hanging in the balance, Gov. Mark R. Warner on Monday began preparing for the economic aftershock.

He will create four "working groups" of business leaders, politicians and government officials to develop plans for four areas of the state. The groups, whose members have yet to be named, are meant to give the General Assembly a running start when it convenes in January.

The governor disclosed his plans during his traditional summer budget address to the General Assembly's money committees.

After the groups complete their work, Warner said, he plans to submit "concrete proposals" to lawmakers to deal with the massive job shifts that will ripple out to schools, transportation systems, housing and local economies.

Two of the four work groups will concentrate on Hampton Roads. One will focus on the Peninsula.

The federal base-closing commission has voted to close Fort Monroe in Hampton. About two-thirds of the 3,500 jobs lost at that Army base would shift to Fort Eustis in Newport News. Although more steps remain, the vote likely seals the base's fate.

Another work group will concentrate on Oceana, the Virginia Beach airfield for Navy jet fighters

employs nearly 12,000 military and civilian workers and is home to more than 200 warplanes.

In the past, the General Assembly has fractured along regional lines. An issue such as photo enforcement of traffic signals can put urban lawmakers at odds with their rural counterparts.

But moments after Warner announced his plan, a chief Warner critic with no ties to Virginia Beach said he thought rural lawmakers would be receptive.

"Certainly, when we're talking about Oceana, the air base, we're talking as Virginians," said House Republican Leader H. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem. "We're all on the same page. Sometimes you have to step up to the plate to help one region out."

Likewise, Warner said he thought he could do a selling job -- although at the moment, no one knows what any proposal will cost.

"What I've got to do," he said, "is make the case about how important the military presence is to all parts of Virginia, whether you've got a base nearby or not. When you think about 100,000 jobs being moved in, out and around, that pales the kinds of economic development where the state substantially steps up and tries to bring (in) 500, 1,000 jobs."

The state and localities have until March to show they are moving to purchase land and rein in development near Oceana. If they fail to meet the detailed requirements, the station could be shut down. The Navy jet fighters would end up at Cecil Field near Jacksonville, Fla.

Saving Oceana will come with a high price. Among the requirements: finding the money to raze 1,800 homes worth more than \$250 million.

While Oceana ranks high on Warner's list of concerns, he is eyeing the statewide fallout from all decisions of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC. More than 100,000 jobs, not including what could happen at Oceana, either will be moved into Virginia,

moved out of Virginia or transfer within state lines.

The third group will concentrate on Northern Virginia, addressing the movement of more than 20,000 jobs out of leased space in Arlington and Alexandria, and job shifts to Fort Belvoir. The fourth group will study Central Virginia, where several thousand jobs are coming to Fort Lee.

### **How many times will Utah have to fight BRAC battle?**

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City, UT)  
Leigh Dethman  
August 30, 2005

Utah might have to start regularly bracing for a nerve-wracking fight for its economic life.

The state just survived the latest round of base closures, escaping with just six lost jobs on local military installations. But another round could come again in five years, and another five years after that, said Jim Hansen, the former Utah congressman who is currently serving on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

In an interview with the Deseret Morning News on Monday, Hansen said a bill due to the president Sept. 8 will most likely include a recommendation to hold a BRAC every five years. However, Hansen said he didn't support a base closure round every five years and said a 10-year interval is the better option.

The recommendation likely won't fly with Congress. In the past, lawmakers have repeatedly tried to block base closure rounds. In July, the Bush administration threatened to veto a massive defense bill if it included an amendment that would "weaken, delay or repeal" the base closure process.

"Unless they made it easier and smoother than they did this one, I don't think it's going to happen," said Rick Mayfield, executive director of the Utah Defense Alliance, the group charged with protecting the state's military installations. "I just have a hard time thinking Congress would be up for it every five years."

Commission Chairman Anthony Principi recommended that Congress regularly schedule BRAC rounds every five or 10 years during his closing statement last week after final base closure deliberations.

"As difficult as it may be, our nation should regularly re-examine our military infrastructure," Principi said. "Failure to do so will inevitably drag down our defense with the sea anchor of unneeded, obsolete or poorly sited installations."

If Congress agrees and allows another BRAC round in five years, Hansen said you won't see him on the commission. Hansen called his past five months touring the country on military aircraft on little sleep "the toughest job I've ever had."

The constant travel, coupled with the unenviable job of shutting down entire communities, was enough to convince Hansen to never sign up as a BRAC commissioner again.

"If I was called five years from now, if I'm alive, I wouldn't do that job for a million dollars a day -- not even if they offered me Air Force One," Hansen said. "It is the most draining job I've ever done, dealing with people and their lives."

After his appointment, some Utah leaders thought Hansen would use his clout and position as a BRAC member to save Hill Air Force Base.

During his 22 years in the House, Hansen fought to defend the base in prior BRAC rounds. He used his position as senior member of the House Armed Services Committee to go toe-to-toe with President Bill Clinton in a battle during the '95 BRAC round to save Hill from a relocation to California.

But Hansen maintained that was not his job anymore. He said his job was to "do what's best for the United States military."

"People think I'm going there as the protector of Hill -- that's just not true," Hansen said shortly after his appointment to the BRAC Commission.

Hansen recused himself from voting on any BRAC matters that would impact Utah, including a recommendation to close New Mexico's Cannon Air Force Base and ship six of Cannon's Block 40 F-16 fighter jets to Hill Air Force Base.

But when asked point blank if he lobbied for Utah's military installations during back-room conversations, Hansen paused and said, "You can draw your own conclusions."

"In my opinion, Hill Field saved itself by their work ethic, the work that they do and the people that they've got."

### **Community leaders bask in BRAC results**

Grand Forks Herald (Grand Forks, ND)

Elisa L. Rineheart

August 30, 2005

The sighs of relief from base retention leaders Monday were as unanimous as the committee vote Friday that realigned Grand Forks Air Force Base in a less disruptive way.

Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., met with city officials Monday in the Alerus Center to talk about the future of the base - and to bask in the good feelings from a Base Realignment and Closure result that didn't hurt nearly as much as it could have.

"It couldn't have come out any better," Conrad said. "But I don't want to see another BRAC again."

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission unanimously voted to realign the base and relocate most of its tankers and personnel to other bases around the country, but it amended the Pentagon's decision to remove all the tankers by 2009, allowing eight of them to stay through 2010.

The decision bridged the time gap between the departing tankers and the arrival of a new mission: a fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles and possibly a new generation of tankers.

City officials will move forward with the process to obtain nearly \$1 million in federal aid available to BRAC-affected communities, said Grand Forks Mayor Mike Brown.

Conrad said the realignment funds will help counteract possible economic impact to the region.

#### Masterminds

The base retention team said that Jamie Morin, a senior defense analyst with the Senate Budget Committee, of which Conrad is a ranking member, deserves a lot of the credit for orchestrating behind-the-scenes moves to save North Dakota's bases.

Morin, 30, a former Pentagon analyst, is in charge of defense, intelligence and other national security issues.

John Marshall, chairman of the community's base retention committee, and Conrad said that Morin, who holds a doctorate in political science from Yale University, was crucial in saving Minot Air Force Base from the chopping block. But they said they couldn't comment on the details of the negotiation because it involved classified information.

The base retention team thanked a lot of volunteers, among them MariJo Shide and JoAnn Renfrow, who along with Diane Blair, former president of the East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce, led the June 22 welcoming reception for the base closure panel.

Conrad said that Gen. Michael Moseley, who will be sworn in as the next Air Force chief of staff Sep. 2, plans to visit Grand Forks shortly after.

#### Flawed criteria

Conrad said that it was the excellence of the base's facilities and the performance of the men and women of the 319th Air Refueling Wing that helped them persuade the commission to

realign and not close the base, and allow the tankers to stay longer.

He said he'll be "forever thankful" to Commissioner Philip Coyle, former assistant secretary of defense, for recognizing the true value of the base.

Coyle said he made the motion to keep the tankers till 2010 because, in its recommendation to realign the base, the Department of Defense deviated from its own military value criteria.

He pointed out discrepancies in criteria which dealt with the base's "ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization surge and future total force requirements to support operations and training" and its "impact on joint warfighting and training readiness," Coyle said.

Hal Gershman, president of the Grand Forks City Council, said the best decision the city ever made was giving Marshall \$750,000 to hire consultants and coordinate lobbying efforts. Gershman thanked area residents for not questioning the council's judgment.

Marshall said he doesn't expect a one-for-one exchange of personnel and aircraft between today's tankers and the future UAV mission. But he said Grand Forks eventually would be better positioned than many other bases that were not realigned but host aging fleets.

"We got half the future of the Air Force," Marshall said.

#### **Selfridge base in fight for planes and jobs**

Detroit Free Press (Detroit, MI)

John Masson

August 30, 2005

When the fog of the base-closing battle finally began to settle over the weekend, people working to preserve jobs at Selfridge Air National Guard Base discovered that four giant aerial refueling tankers they'd expected to be assigned to the base weren't coming after all.

That lent a new urgency to a tug-of-war between Selfridge and an Air National Guard base in Battle Creek over who gets how many of 24 A10 fighter jets assigned to Michigan on Friday by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The Pentagon's original plan would have closed the Battle Creek facility and moved all 15 of its planes to Selfridge.

So in a big-picture sense, Michigan did well in the process of closing and realigning bases. But because of the four tankers that now aren't coming, Selfridge stands to lose jobs unless it's able to reel in most or all of the Michigan A10s.

One thing is sure: Distributing the planes and the remaining jobs won't be easy.

"While we believe that there is some merit in moving toward a 12-12 split on the A10s, we need to work with our congressional delegation, with the Air Force and with the National Guard Bureau," said Liz Boyd, a spokeswoman for Gov. Jennifer Granholm. As commander-in-chief of the Michigan National Guard, Granholm is ultimately the one who will decide. "There's still a long way to go in the process," Boyd said.

Add in the angst over the four refueling tankers that won't be coming, and the situation at Selfridge looks slightly less rosy than it looked back in May. That's when the Pentagon recommended adding four refueling tankers to the eight already there. Those eight planes will still be transferred from the 927th Air Refueling Wing of the Air Force Reserve to the Michigan Air National Guard, and some jobs will go to Florida.

Officials discovered that BRAC commissioners had done away with those four new tankers during the amendment process.

**Rendell says base will stay active;  
The governor said he would work to keep  
fighter jets stationed at Willow Grove, despite  
plans to relocate them.**

Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA)  
Marc Schogol  
August 30, 2005

Gov. Rendell vowed yesterday to fight to keep the Air National Guard's 15 attack jets flying out of the Willow Grove air base, even though the military says the A-10 "Warthogs" will be moved elsewhere.

Rendell described a plan to turn what has been a naval air station and reserve base into a smaller installation largely composed of state National Guard units.

At a news conference outside the base in Horsham, Rendell repeatedly said that Willow Grove will continue to be a military facility, even though the federal Base Closure and Realignment Commission said Friday that the air base would be closed and voted to relocate the A-10s and other existing Navy and Marine units.

Rendell noted that under the Pentagon recommendation approved by the commission, which still requires presidential and congressional approval, about a half-dozen Army Reserve units from the Philadelphia region will be consolidated at Willow Grove. Rendell said that meant the base was remaining open.

"The good news is that we're here and not going anywhere," he said at an air museum adjacent to the military installation.

Toward that end, Rendell said the state would also move part of its "Stryker Brigade" - one of the Army's new rapid-mobilization units - onto Willow Grove. He also said an Air National Guard engineering squadron stationed at the 1,200-acre base would remain.

So at a minimum, Rendell said, 2,500 personnel would be stationed there, but he did not say how many would be part-time reservists and how many full-time military or civilian workers. Currently, there are 1,200 active-duty personnel and 5,000 reservists.

As to the facility itself, Rendell said state officials were told by BRAC staffers Friday night that the commission's final report would

give Pennsylvania the authority "to make the determination what to do with the base."

Rendell pointed to Fort Indiantown Gap, once a U.S. Army base that was converted to a National Guard base when the state took over in the late 1990s. Rendell said the federal government still provides most of the funding.

Rendell also said he would keep the air strip in operation, even though the fate of the personnel and planes of the 111th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard remains in dispute.

The Pentagon wanted to deactivate the unit, but a federal judge ruled Friday that the 1,000-member unit could not be disbanded under laws governing the part-federal, part-state National Guard. Illinois and Connecticut have filed similar lawsuits to keep bases open.

BRAC struck the 111th Fighter Wing's deactivation from the Pentagon proposal, and then approved a Defense Department plan to transfer three of unit's 15 A-10 "Warthog" attack planes and to scrap the rest.

"This closure of the Joint Reserve Base of Willow Grove... is part of the total air guard" restructuring, commission member Harold Gehman said Friday.

Rendell is going to fight the decision to remove the planes.

He said yesterday that "my belief... is that they had no right to do that" based on U.S. District Judge John R. Padova's decision.

Rendell said he had ordered Gen. Jessica Wright, Pennsylvania's adjutant general and the head of the state National Guard, not to allow the planes to be removed.

Noting that 75 percent of the unit's members had been activated to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq, Rendell said stripping its planes "would be the most ludicrous outcome. It would be like having an Army Reserve unit and taking away its guns and ammunition."

Rendell said state leaders planned to meet with Defense Department officials to work out all the issues involving the 111th and the base to everyone's satisfaction.

Referring to speculation about future residential or commercial development of the site, Rendell said: "Toll Brothers can wait."

### **Softening job loss from 440th**

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (Milwaukee, WI)  
Foster  
August 30, 2005

To the surprise of few and the dismay of many in Wisconsin, a federal commission has accepted the Defense Department's decision to close a Milwaukee Air Reserve facility that houses the 440th Airlift Wing at Mitchell International Airport. While the commission has finished its job of reviewing the Pentagon's decisions to close military facilities it says it no longer needs, the work of Gov. Jim Doyle and other officials in dealing with the impact of these decisions on Wisconsin is far from complete. In fact, now is the time for that work to get a fresh charge of energy and imagination.

In May, with a view to saving money and modernizing the armed forces, the Defense Department recommended closing or consolidating hundreds of military bases. It is hard to quibble with the idea behind this initiative. The job of the Defense Department is to provide for military defense. Using military dollars to support jobs that do not further this objective is a waste of taxpayers' money. And since most military bases, both in this country and overseas, were established to meet a threat that no longer exists - Soviet expansionism - closing some of them makes sense.

But because bases provide jobs, closing them is bound to be controversial, which is chiefly why the Pentagon's decisions were reviewed by an independent commission: the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, led by Anthony Principi.

On Wednesday, BRAC preserved Fort McCoy, in Monroe County, by approving what amounts to a tenant swap there. On Friday, however, the commission voted to shutter the 440th and disperse its aircraft and personnel, as the Pentagon recommended in May.

We have no factual basis on which to challenge the commission's decision to close the 440th. But we do challenge its woefully inadequate explanation of its decision to keep open two New England Navy bases that were on the Pentagon's hit list. And why do two Air Force bases on the list remain open?

Principi said it would be impossible to quickly reinstate the two Navy facilities if China becomes a major naval power. But this is chiefly a military question the Defense Department is best suited to make. The Pentagon makes mistakes, of course, but the commission failed to explain why it believed the Defense Department erred in this case.

Of the commission's decision to keep Ellsworth Air Force Base in his home state open, Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) said, "It had nothing to do with politics."

But Thune defeated Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle for re-election last year, partly on the strength of his claim that, as a Republican, he would have the kind of political influence necessary to save Ellsworth, the second-biggest employer in South Dakota. Yet no politics are involved?

The closing of the 440th and the impact of that decision on the 379 civilians and 1,409 military personnel (most of them reservists) is of much more immediate interest to Wisconsinites.

Public officials need to be creative in their attempts to soften the economic impact of closing the facility on displaced workers, their families and others. Increased traffic at Mitchell might create jobs for some of these people, and closing the 440th may open up space that can be used by airlines that now contribute to heavy congestion at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Job training and other help also should

be made available to workers who lose their jobs.

BRAC has done its job for the armed forces. It's time for Doyle and others to do the same for Wisconsin.

### *Opinions/ Editorials*

#### **In our view Brac-ing for change**

Intelligencer Journal (Lancaster, PA)

August 30, 2005

With no significant military installations within its borders, the people of Lancaster County can look at the ongoing effort to realign or close military installations around the country in an academic, rather than emotional, way. And certainly the actions of the Pentagon and the independent BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) Commission have triggered significant opposition from communities affected by these decisions. The initial Defense Department plan to close the U.S. submarine base at Groton, Conn., for example, brought cries of despair from residents and employees. The BRAC panels decision to keep the facility open triggered equivalent joy. We recognize the pain a military base closing can bring to a community. These facilities offer good-paying jobs and, often more importantly, a sense of importance in a larger scheme. But the nation must have a way to make its military match its needs. Were no longer fighting the enemies of the 20th century. The BRAC process was created to take much of the politics out of this painful process. Under this scheme, the Defense Department makes recommendations; an independent panel reviews and, if it feels necessary, modifies these plans; and the final plan is submitted to Congress for a vote as a whole. That said, politics has not been entirely removed. Lawmakers at the local, state and national level are often the most vocal in criticizing base closure plans. In Pennsylvania, Gov. Ed Rendell, even took the matter to court and won, at least for the moment. Rendell argued and a federal judge agreed that the Pentagon could not remove a National Guard air unit from the naval air station at Willow Grove, near Philadelphia, without the permission of the

governor. Both the Pentagon and the BRAC panel have agreed the Willow Grove facility should be closed. We certainly sympathize with Rendell and the other political leaders involved in this process. But what alternative is there? Until the BRAC process came along military installation decisions were made in smoke-filled rooms where those with the most political clout won. Military needs and economics were barely considerations. The world is changing. The challenges facing the military are changing along with it. The BRAC process may not be perfect. But its clearly better than what came before.

### **Kulis move**

Anchorage Daily News (Anchorage, AK)  
August 30, 2005

Savings may be questionable, but it's a good deal for Anchorage

The base closure commission went ahead and OK'd the move of Kulis Air National Guard Base to Elmendorf Air Force Base, even though the switch will cost \$121 million -- 50 percent more than the Pentagon first estimated.

The big price tag raises a potentially disturbing question: Will the move save any money at all? Should Kulis have stayed put?

Bottom-line bean counters might wonder, but for Anchorage and Alaska, this was a smart move all-around.

Kulis Air Guard's capability remains in the region. More military construction money will come our way to accommodate the shift. Elmendorf gets new aircraft to offset the shift of F-15 fighter jets to the Lower 48. And best of all, the Kulis move frees up valuable space at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport for civilian economic development. The airport is a huge economic engine for the region, but it is hampered by a lack of space for aviation-related business growth.

Gov. Frank Murkowski is taking the right approach to the Kulis move. He says that state

governors retain the authority to veto any move involving the Air Guard, which is technically under state control. His stand has been bolstered by a favorable court ruling in a Pennsylvania Guard realignment case. Gov. Murkowski says he will use his potential veto over the move to make sure the Pentagon adequately funds it.

Talk of base closures and realignments inevitably gives affected communities a serious case of economic anxiety. Here, though, the Pentagon's now-revised plan for Kulis should actually help stimulate Anchorage's economic growth.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The Kulis move, if done right, will help Anchorage in the long run.

BRAC gain?

Bottom line is hard to predict

The impending move of Anchorage's Kulis Air Guard base is not the only one where guard and reserve reshuffling will produce questionable, if any, savings. A Government Accountability Office analysis of the Pentagon's base closure plan found that the proposed guard and reserve changes often took decades to produce any savings. The benefit of those moves was iffy, the GAO found. Sometimes, the weak case for the changes was masked because they were combined with other reshuffling of forces that showed faster payoffs.

The GAO also noted that much of the supposed "savings" from a closure comes from moving out military or civilian personnel. But those personnel aren't being laid off; their salaries just get shifted to a different facility. That argument was a key part of the campaign that helped stave off the drastic cut planned for Fairbanks' Eielson Air Force Base.

Another item not included in the Pentagon's figures is the bill for cleaning up a military site that's closed. That's omitted because the Defense Department is supposed to clean up its messes whether or not it closes a site. It's easier to put off those costs, though, if the military keeps using a facility.

Estimating base closure cost savings is, at best, more an art than science. The GAO report notes that the Pentagon never developed a system to track the supposed savings from previous rounds of base closures. That's a pretty basic tool for managing decisions that involve tens of billions of dollars and have profound impacts on communities across the country. Saving money isn't the only reason to realign U.S. military forces, but if changes are sold as money-savers, we ought to know whether those claims pan out.

This round relies more on restructuring and management changes than outright closures, so the savings are even harder to nail down with confidence. The GAO says the Pentagon needs a real system that can track the payoff from base realignments and closures. The agency is certainly right about that.

### **Seeing the value of state's bases**

Birmingham News (Birmingham, AL)  
August 30, 2005

The issue Alabama can't complain about the decisions the Base Realignment and Closure Commission made.

If Gov. Bob Riley had been assured before the latest round of military base closings that all four of Alabama's major installations would stay open but that's all, he would have been justified in celebrating. As it turns out, Alabama did much better than that in last week's deliberations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

No, the Anniston Army Depot didn't get 1,000 new jobs, because the BRAC commission decided to keep the Red River Army Depot near Texarkana, Texas, operating. Nor did Fort Rucker in southeast Alabama get the Army's Aviation Logistics School from Fort Eustis, Va., which would have meant 2,000 new jobs.

But Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville picked up more than 1,600 jobs, including the relocation of the Army Material Command and the Space and Missile Defense Command from the

Washington, D.C., area. And the BRAC commissioners rejected moving the computer system management program from Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base in Montgomery, saving more than 1,250 jobs.

By any standard, Alabama did well. Riley and other state officials deserve credit for demonstrating to the BRAC commission how important each of the state bases is to national defense.

There's no discounting the economic impact of a military base on a local community. Calhoun County still hasn't recovered from the closing of Fort McClellan several years ago. But the BRAC commissioners cannot consider economics solely as a reason to keep a base open, nor should they. Their top priority must be what's in the best interest of national defense.

We can be assured the BRAC commission did that, based on its decision to keep the 117th Air Refueling Wing in Birmingham. The Pentagon wanted to move the Air National Guard tankers to three other states, but that suggestion didn't make sense. The Defense Department's own grading system ranked the military value of the 117th ahead of six other Guard tanker wings that would either get aircraft from Birmingham or stay where they are.

That the BRAC commissioners saw the flaw in the Pentagon's recommendation to move the Birmingham tankers gives credibility to its other decisions. Clearly, the four major military bases in Alabama have distinct missions that make them valuable to the nation's defense.

Still, the BRAC process isn't finished. The commission will send its recommendations to President Bush next week, and Bush must either forward the report to Congress or ask for revisions.

The president may ask for changes because the BRAC commission rejected a number of Pentagon recommendations. Alabama officials mustn't let their guard down yet.

But once the final BRAC report is sent to Congress this fall, it must either be adopted or rejected in its entirety.

With the state's four military bases emerging from the process basically unscathed - so far - and the 117th Air Refueling Wing staying put at Birmingham International Airport where it belongs, nobody can blame Riley and other state officials if they breathe a little easier.

### **Ohio, Pentagon take Guard losses in BRAC**

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)  
August 30, 2005

The BRAC commission apparently decided to remove all F-16s from all Air National Guard bases in all Springfields.

Ohio's Springfield loses its F-16s under the Base Realignment and Closure commission's plan that was approved last week. So does Illinois' Springfield.

Exactly what the commission has against Springfields isn't clear.

In the wake of the commission's many decisions last week, people have been speculating about what motives moved what commissioners. With regard to National Guard bases, the picture seemed particularly murky at first.

The BRAC commission was confronted with a sweeping proposal by the Pentagon to consolidate a lot of guard bases. This caused much consternation across the country, with governors going to court and with several states saying they were being stripped of their defenses.

Just as the commission was about to announce its decisions, one court agreed with the governor of Pennsylvania that the Pentagon can't be closing bases without consulting governors. How that will figure into the future of the Guard nobody knows.

On a separate track, the commission responded to the Pentagon plan not with a general embrace or a general rejection, but with some embraces and some rejections.

This led Illinois' Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich to speculate as to its motives:

"First the Pentagon ignored the law," he said. "Now the BRAC commission has ignored the facts and the criteria it was supposed to follow, and apparently is paying off political debts in states like South Dakota, Florida and Texas."

Meaning, of course, Republican states.

But that theory has no greater credence than the Springfields theory. In truth, plenty of Democratic politicians are claiming victory this week, and plenty of Republicans are nursing wounds.

Still, it was strange how BRAC's big week of decisions went. By the time the decisions about Guard bases came down, the people who had fought for Miami Valley installations were confident. Rep. David Hobson, R-Springfield, the region's leading voice on military matters in the U.S. House of Representatives, says that he had heard that things looked good for Springfield.

Other locals just thought that the commission's embrace of the arguments made by Dayton-area advocates for Wright-Patterson Air Force Base was a good sign.

But the commission apparently wasn't going down the line with anybody. The fact that Ohio lost in Springfield - and Kettering and Mansfield - suggests the commission was taking the issues one at a time, on their merits, as the commission saw the merits.

The people of Springfield are probably not in a state of such shock. They have been warned again and again. The base has been targeted by the Pentagon in previous BRAC rounds.

What now? Well, what BRAC says isn't always the final word. Rep. Hobson has not given up.

But the city has a challenge. Four hundred jobs are involved. That's a chunk for a relatively small city that has taken its share of blows in recent decades.

Moreover, Ohio hasn't been generating as many new jobs as other places in recent years. Nevertheless, in a time when the nation is generating a couple hundred thousand new jobs a month, it's not insurmountable.

Americans have overcome all manner of prejudices. Surely the prejudice against Springfields can be overcome.

### **Many deserve credit for region's big win**

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)  
August 30, 2005

The decision by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission to keep the Air Force Institute of Technology and the Development and Fielding Systems Group at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and to bring substantial new missions here is an important victory for the Dayton region. While we are all disappointed in the loss of the Defense Finance Accounting Service in Kettering and the 178th Fighter Wing from Springfield, we are pleased with the overall success for our community. The number of jobs at stake during the recent series of commission votes is as great as any provided by the region's largest employers.

This success did not happen overnight. It was a result of years of hard work. Contributing to the BRAC commission's decisions was a broad-based community campaign involving federal, state and local government officials, civic leaders, businesses and citizens throughout the Dayton region.

Especially important were the efforts of the congressional delegation. U.S. Sens. Mike DeWine and George Voinovich, and Reps. Dave Hobson, John Boehner and Michael Turner worked aggressively as a team. They were active in both public forums and behind the scenes.

Gov. Bob Taft, Ohio House Speaker Jon Husted and our entire state delegation were a strong presence, and the state provided the largest amount of funding to our effort. Greene and Montgomery counties and Springfield also supported the campaign. Greene County commissioners were unflagging in their energy.

John Nowak, co-chair of the Dayton Development Coalition's Wright-Pat 2010 Committee, volunteered countless hours, while co-chair Frank Perez coordinated work to bring important new medical missions to Wright-Pat. Financial contributions from the local business and academic communities helped provide staff support.

Hundreds of people made the rally at Stebbins High School a success, giving our community an opportunity to impress on members of the BRAC commission our support.

In the end, the most credit for the Dayton region's big win should go to those who work at our military installations and make this area a leader in aerospace research, acquisitions and logistics in the service of our national defense. The quality of their work goes to the heart of the base-closure commission's decision-making.

The Dayton region came out ahead in the base-closure process because the community had an outstanding resource in Wright-Pat and Springfield, and we all worked together as a region in a unified, coordinated effort to make sure that the commission understood how much we had to offer.

### **Willow Grove Base Closing; A confusing 'win'**

Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA)  
August 30, 2005

Give Gov. Rendell credit for pointing out that the U.S. Air Force erred in not consulting him before trying to shut down a Pennsylvania Air National Guard unit.

The success of Rendell's lawsuit on that point hasn't made the fate of Willow Grove Naval Air

Station any clearer. If he continues to fight the closing, he needs to work on dual tracks, also preparing for the possibility that at least part of the installation will be shut down.

Adrian King, who has spearheaded Rendell's efforts to keep Willow Grove open, says the governor hasn't dismissed the idea of other economic development on the site. That's good. Rendell shouldn't wait long to huddle with local officials to consider alternatives.

Willow Grove was on the Pentagon's original May 15 list of military facilities recommended to be shut down through the periodic Base Realignment and Closure process. Several governors, including Rendell, filed suit. They said the Air Force high-handedly ignored a requirement that governors be consulted whenever the federal government wants to deactivate a National Guard unit.

Rendell and the others won in court Friday, but the victory may be pyrrhic. The BRAC Commission promptly announced it would not deactivate the Air National Guard unit based at Willow Grove, the 111th Fighter Wing. It would, however, send the unit's airplanes to other bases. A bizarre result.

Rendell says he may not give up the planes, and will try to persuade the Pentagon to compromise. It's hard to tell how this will play out.

The governor did well by insisting that the BRAC process follow pertinent laws. Now he should take care to work within the framework of BRAC rather than taking steps to undermine it. The system may not be perfect, but it is the best idea yet to minimize the damaging role that pork-barrel politics has long played in military base decisions.

Under BRAC, created in the late 1980s, the Pentagon gives each service's recommendations to an independent commission. The commission then makes its own recommendations, which must be given a blanket thumbs-up or thumbs-down by Congress and the President. No cherry-picking.

Even the BRAC plan won't close all of Willow Grove. Six Army Reserve units are to be transferred there, along with an Air National Guard engineering unit and a new Stryker light-armored vehicle unit.

There is also talk of making Willow Grove an "enclave," a Pentagon term for a facility put in stasis with minimum personnel until a new mission for it is decided.

It's probably best to have Willow Grove's fate decided now, rather than put it in mothballs for a few more years. The landing strip takes up more than half the base. If the jets are headed to new homes, the Pentagon should let the surrounding communities begin planning now how best to use that land - not keep it in limbo for years.

#### *Additional Notes*