

Friends of the 177<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing  
Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey

Subject: Letter of Support and Endorsement

July 8, 2005

To: The Base Realignment And Closure Commission

1. We, the Friends of the 177<sup>th</sup>, go on record as supporting and endorsing the USAF's BRAC proposal to convert and enhance the strength of the 177<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing of the New Jersey Air National Guard. The proposed conversion from F-16s to F-15s with a growth from 15 Primary Aircraft Assigned (PAA) to 24 PAA can only enhance both our national and homeland security.
2. The Atlantic City IAP based 177<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing has America's best-placed air defense interceptor capability since it is the closest such facility to both New York City and Washington, D.C. It provides the national lead for homeland defense for air defense interceptors and fighter air patrol in America's power corridor. Its F-16s or F-15s can be over New York City in five minutes and over Washington, D.C. in less than 10 minutes, yet it is not in immediate vulnerability area of either power center. It has proven the value of its location and its mission capability continually since 9/11. While several bases can organize to provide routine "cap" over New York City and Washington, only the 177<sup>th</sup> can scramble to respond to crises in these cities in minutes.
3. The 177<sup>th</sup> operates with low overhead being a tenant on commercial airport with a recently re-negotiated, inexpensive lease between the National Guard Bureau and the South Jersey Transportation Authority. It provides unencumbered access to a military exercise area two minutes away for training offshore for supersonic craft for all altitudes of up to 50,000 feet. It has excellent airspace access and close to its own air-to-ground weapons range.
4. The base is jointly partnered with the U.S. Coast Guard aviation unit and New Jersey's Southern Task Force Command Center for Homeland Security, which are also located on the base. It operates a nearby air-to-ground firing range used by Joint forces throughout the East.
5. We strongly urge adoption of this BRAC proposal.

Sincerely,

The Honorable James J. "Sonny" McCullough  
Mayor, Egg Harbor Township and Chairman, Friends of the 177<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing