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Chairman Anthony J. Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
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Dear Chairman Principi and BRAC Commissioners:

I am upset by the Defense Department's recommendation to close Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve and Guard base. This recommendation is a not in the nation's best interest and the BRAC Commission should reverse this decision and to remove Niagara Falls from the closure list.

The impact of this decision will be devastating to the New York Air National Guard. More importantly, the proposed closure will put this region at significant risk to potential terrorist activities since we share an international border. Have you forgotten the Lackawanna Six? This region has a historical heritage that echoes some of the same concerns we are dealing with today. During the War of 1812 numerous articles by politicians at that time echoed the importance of securing our international border as a National priority. Our local air base has glorious tradition of helping others world wide in humanitarian efforts.

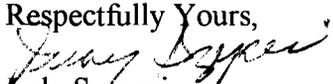
It is hard to understand why the Air Force has decided to take planes, missions and jobs away from so many Air Guard and Air Reserve bases and put them on more costly Active Duty bases. The recommendation to close the base is a terrible mistake and I urge the BRAC Commission reverse this decision and remove them from the list.

I stand with all Western New Yorkers, united in their support for this base, and its retention. **It is imperative that you overturn the Pentagon's recommendation and keep the base open.**

I urge the Commission in the strongest possible terms to remove Niagara Falls AFB from the Pentagon's recommended list of base closures and to stop the continuing retreat of the military from our region of the country.

The move to consolidate bases nation wide is very ill advised! Have you forgotten about Pearl Harbor? Can you not learn anything from our present and past enemies? The "Greatest Generation" didn't fight and sacrifice their lives to see their country's might diminished. **Each base closure represents a victory for our enemies.**

Respectfully Yours,


Judy Szepesi