

Chairman Anthony J. Principi
 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC)
 2521 South Clark Street – Suite 600
 Arlington, Va. 22202

Dear Chairman Principi and BRAC Commissioners:

The Niagara County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) respectfully requests that the **NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION (NFARS)** be removed from the **BRAC** closure list.

The LEPC, amongst other duties, is charged with the responsibility to identify, collect data, coordinate activities and educate the populous. These activities are, in part, addressed in the Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan (CEMP), a joint venture with the Niagara County Emergency Management Office. The **NFARS** is a cosignatory and integral part of the Plan.

We have approximately 140 facilities that fall within the reporting/operating requirements of the Superfund Amendment Reauthorization Act (SARA), OSHA 1910-120 and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Resource Management Plan. They range from tank storage of 100,000+ lbs of chlorine, the manufacture of phosgene gas and derivative products and two very large electrical generating plants.

Our request is based on the following facts:

The Base has many, often one of a kind, resources to assist the County. They include:

24/7 Crash Fire Rescue (CFR) with well trained, certified hazmat/WMD personnel with specialized testing/monitoring equipment and large quantities of fire fighting agents.

A Hazmat trailer with state of the art equipment and quantities of supplies.

The “in kind” services of CFR and runway/taxiway snowplowing. The financial inability of the Airfield Management (Niagara Frontier Transit Authority) to fulfill those duties could result in the loss of this critical asset. Large frame aircraft, bringing needed aid (snowplowing equipment, medical PUSH Package etc.) couldn’t land at the Buffalo airport due to the 8000 ft runway and weight bearing limitations.

Civil Engineering and Medical Response Teams are available.

The Base hosts a variety of training opportunities. Topics have included interoperability of communications and the integration of DOD/Civilian emergency responders. In addition the Base Fire Department conducts training for both Career and Volunteer Fire Departments.

We realize that it’s not a critical concern of the **BRAC** Commission, but there remains the distinct possibility that the County’s largest employer, Delphi Automotive, with 4000+ employees, could be closed in 2007.

In summation, sans the obvious financial impact, the loss of the **NFARS**, with its unique **State** and **Federal** resources, with proven capabilities, will have a gross negative impact on our ability to respond to and effectively/expeditiously mitigate any man made or natural disasters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Norman G. Pearson

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