



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601

July 11, 2005

Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

As you are aware, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has recommended that the fighter mission of 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing at Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport in Springfield, Illinois be realigned to another state. If this recommendation is upheld by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, the 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing will no longer have a flying mission.

The Department of Defense did not coordinate this recommendation with either my office or the Illinois Adjutant General. This lack of consultation compromises the integrity of the process used to develop the BRAC recommendations and disregards my role as Commander-in-Chief of the Illinois National Guard. Further, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. §18238 and 32 U.S.C. §104(c), my consent is necessary for the actions contemplated by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld with regard to the 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing.

In your recent letter to Secretary Rumsfeld, in addition to asking whether we were consulted about this recommendation, you expressed concern about the impact realigning Air National Guard facilities would have on homeland and national security. The Springfield Air National Guard Base is a highly strategic location for homeland security missions for both Illinois and the entire Midwest. Illinois is also home to 11 nuclear power plants that provide 50 percent of our power generation. Further, Illinois has 28 locks and dams on the Illinois, Mississippi and Ohio rivers. If these

recommendations are adopted, these vital assets and many others will be at greater risk without the F-16s in Springfield. On top of all that, this move will cost the taxpayers \$10 million. These are the wrong recommendations, at the wrong time and for the wrong reasons.

By this letter, I wish to formally notify the Commission that I do not consent to the proposed realignment of the 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing. Accordingly, pursuant to the statutory citations referenced above, the actions proposed by Secretary Rumsfeld cannot proceed. I expressed similar sentiments to your fellow commissioners on June 20, 2005, at the BRAC Regional Hearings in St. Louis via both oral and written testimony.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rod Blagojevich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rod Blagojevich  
Governor of Illinois