



City of Niagara Falls, New York

P.O. Box 69, Niagara Falls, NY 14302-0069

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May 27, 2005

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark St. Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to state the opposition of the Niagara Falls Police Department to the inclusion of the Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve Base on the recently released Department of Defense 'Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) list'.

The Niagara Falls Police Department has enjoyed a long and productive relationship with the Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve Base, and the Reserve and Guard units that are stationed there. This Department has conducted numerous training sessions, both classroom and practical application, at Base facilities. Although there are other facilities that are available – local high schools and colleges – they lack the positive, professional setting that is always found at the Base. Members of the Base Security Forces have been instrumental in the training of our Emergency Response Team and Rapid Entry Team. Because it is a secure site, the Base is often used to plan and stage for clandestine operations. Throughout the years, the various Base commanders have allowed our members to utilize the physical fitness facilities.

Many of our officers are also members of the Reserve and Guard units stationed at the Base. Their military training, often in the security field, carries over into their civilian career, producing a well-rounded professional law enforcement officer. Should these units be relocated, these members may be forced to end their military careers due to the physical and financial burden of travel to a new base for training. This will have a significant impact on their financial situation, both in the immediate loss of military pay and in the long term, with loss of retirement. Several of our members have spouses who are assigned to Reserve or Guard units, or are civilian employees aboard the Base. The closing of the Base and the relocation of these units will cause both financial and emotional hardship for those unable to continue their military/civilian career.

The Base is an integral part of this community and its loss would have a most profound effect for years to come. In the strongest possible terms it is urged that the Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve Base be removed from the 'BRAC' list.

Respectfully,

John R. Chella
Superintendent
Niagara Falls Police Department

