

KANAWHA COUNTY COMMISSION

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Henry C. Shores
Commissioner

W. Kent Carper
Commissioner
May 31, 2005

David J. "Dave" Hardy
Commissioner

Secretary Anthony Principi
Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Secretary Principi:

On May 13, 2005 the Department of Defense recommended to the Base Realignment and Closure Committee (BRAC); realign the 130th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard by moving the unit's entire eight (8) C-130H Model Hercules aircraft from Yeager Airport in Charleston, West Virginia to Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina.

It is the consensus opinion of our community, its leaders, and the entire State of West Virginia that such a move is wrong-headed and substantially deviates from the eight (8) selection criterion set forth by the Department of Defense's 2005 BRAC recommendations.

For these reasons, I am respectfully requesting an inspection and open public hearing at Yeager Airport to give the 130th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard and our states taxpayers, the opportunity to present the facts, to tell the truth, and to dispel the myths set forth wrongfully by the DOD.

The Department of Defense's recommendations, specifically impacting the realignment of Pope AFB, the 130th Airlift Wing, ANG, and the 99th Airlift Wing are not easily quantified.

The Department of Defense has not established a sufficient benefit cost savings to support such realignment. Neither is this recommendation grounded in accurate information on base support costs, nor is there adequate data to support the DOD's claims of supposed "land constraints," at the Charleston and Pittsburgh bases.



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It remains most certain military value calculations of the 130th Airlift Wing were not determined by readiness, retention, and mission capability, and were entirely absent of the flawed COBRA data simulations submitted Department of Defense.

Fifty Four Adjutant Generals, as a body, have underscored the flaws in the recommended decisions fueled by the exclusion of key information pertaining to the Air National Guard.

If the 2005 BRAC recommendations regarding the Air National Guard are not rejected by the 2005 Commissioners, six states will effectively lose their federal and state missions. Over twenty Air National Guard units will lose their aircraft, critically undermining the Air Guard's homeland defense missions, virtually halting retention and enlistments.

In so undermining the mission of the Air National Guard, we will have weakened our country, not strengthened it, we will have turned our backs on and closed the door to one of America's most reliable and effective military arms forever.

Sincerely,



W. Kent Carper, President
Kanawha County Commission

cc: Senator Robert C. Byrd
Senator John D. Rockefeller, IV
Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito