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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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May 17, 2005

Chairman Anthony Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Washington, D.C.
FAX: (703) 699-2735



Dear Chairman Principi:

Last week's announcement of the 2005 Department of Defense recommended BRAC closure list has inappropriately targeted the Cleveland area with over 1,100 jobs cuts. Cleveland currently suffers from a severe economic recession. Therefore I find the inclusion of these Cleveland facilities to be a substantial deviation from the selection criteria. These job losses are outrageous, unjust, and unfair.

Specifically, the BRAC list included the following cuts that directly affect the immediate Cleveland area:

- The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Cleveland is scheduled to lose 1,028 jobs with approximately 175 jobs being spared, to protect the recent Lockheed Martin A76 privatization of the Military and Retired Annuitant Pay Services contract function. The jobs are being moved to DFAS facilities in Columbus, OH, Denver, CO, and Indianapolis, IN.¹
- The Glenn Research Center is also scheduled to lose 50 civilian military research jobs. The Army Research Laboratory at Glenn is losing the Vehicle Technology Directorate to the Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.²
- The Navy Reserve Center in Cleveland is scheduled to close and 25 jobs will be lost.³

As you know, the BRAC Commission has the authority to change the Department's recommendations, if it determines that the Secretary deviated substantially from the force structure plan and/or selection criteria.⁴ I believe the Department of Defense has clearly deviated from the selection criteria.

¹ BRAC Report: Volume 1, Part 2 H&SA 37-39

² BRAC Report: Volume 1, Part 2 Tech - 22

³ BRAC Report: Volume 1, Part 2 DoN - 29

⁴ Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005: Title XXVIII-General Provisions: Subtitle C--Base Closure and Realignment: Sec. 2832. Specification of final selection criteria for 2005 base closure round.

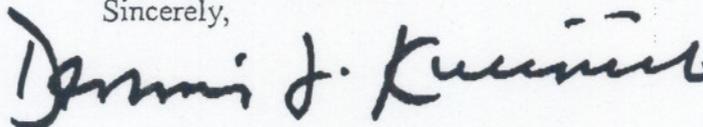
The Secretary is required to consider the economic impact on existing communities in the vicinity of military installations⁵. The Department of Defense erroneously states that a 0.1% job loss within the Cleveland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has minimal economic impact.

However, the Department of Defense failed to take into account the current economic position of the Cleveland area. Cleveland has been labeled as the poorest city in the country today. Its poverty rate of 31.3% is the highest in the nation, according to the most recent Census Bureau data from 2003.⁶ Cleveland's #1 ranking in poverty rate results from the significant job losses in the steel and manufacturing industries over the past several decades. Those job losses continue. For example, the current 2006 budget recently passed by Congress would slash up to 700 high paying federal jobs at the NASA Glenn Research Center. The economy around Cleveland is stagnating.

Clearly, a 0.1% job loss for Cleveland is far more damaging than such a loss in another city with a better economic base. For example, the three cities scheduled to gain additional jobs from Cleveland's BRAC losses have poverty rates that are half to a third of Cleveland's. The poverty rates (and rankings) are 16.5% (35th), 13.6% (49th), and 12.6% (55th) for Columbus, Denver, and Indianapolis respectively.⁷ This BRAC round will secure for the foreseeable future Cleveland's #1 poverty ranking.

This is clear evidence that closures of these facilities in the Cleveland area fall outside the criteria of the BRAC process. I therefore request the BRAC Commission to reverse the job losses in the Cleveland area.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress

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⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ Places within United States: Percent of People Below Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months: 2003 American Community Survey Summary Tables: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GRTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US0820000&-_box_head_nbr=R01&-ds_name=ACS_2003_EST_G00_&-_lang=en&-format=US-32&-_sse=on

⁷ *Ibid*