



## Economic Development

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The BRAC Commission  
Anthony J. Principi, Chairman  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Re: 179<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing of the Air National Guard in Mansfield, Ohio

Dear Chairman Principi:

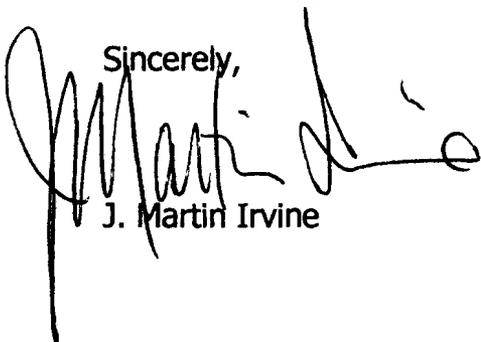
I am writing to express my support for the retention of the 179<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing in Mansfield, Ohio. The base has a very major impact on the economic environment of our region. It contributes 70 million dollars to the annual economy, contributes to more than 1,000 jobs and is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest employer in North Central Ohio. This area has been very focused and dedicated to strengthening our local economy. The closure of this base would present a significant blow to the success of these efforts.

In addition to the economic wounds the closure would have on our local community, I oppose the closure because it will be disadvantageous to the Air National Guard. The 179<sup>th</sup> is one of the premier airlift wings in the Air National Guard. In recent years it has delivered 6,000 tons of cargo and 35,000 troops to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 179<sup>th</sup> guardsmen and women have a crucial experience, an average of 12+ years. Combined with this experience, Ohio Air National Guard has a retention rate of 104%, second in the nation. I feel experience and excellent retention rate are vital during the continuing overseas conflicts and the military's challenges in recruitment and retention. This closure could have a very negative effect on local morale and recruitment efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



J. Martin Irvine