



ORANGE COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DCN: 2999

June 20, 2005



Chairman Anthony J. Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

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Dear Chairman Principi and BRAC Commissioners:

I applaud the BRAC Commission's foresight in recognizing the strategic and military importance of maintaining the military presence of the 105th Air National Guard base and Marine installation at Stewart International Airport. However, I have grave concerns about the recommendation to close the Niagara Falls Air Force Reserve and Guard base.

Given the Niagara base's proximity to the Canadian border, major chemical plants, the Niagara Power Project and major cities of Buffalo and Rochester, homeland security issues dictate that the facility be kept open. In addition, our nation's armed forces are facing serious difficulties in recruiting. As the only remaining major military installation in western New York, Niagara Falls has been key to military recruitment. The impact of the decision to close this base will be devastating to the New York Air National Guard and will make the Pentagon's efforts to recruit and retain military personnel even more difficult.

I join with all New Yorkers who stand with the Niagara Falls/Western New York community in supporting retention of this base. I strongly urge the Commission to remove Niagara Falls Air Force Base from the recommended list of base closures.

Sincerely yours,

John A. D'Ambrosio, Ed.D
President

cc: Gen. Dana Demand