

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 6, 2005

ORIGINAL

Anthony Principi
Chairman, the BRAC Commission
The Polk Building, Suite 600 & 625
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202

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5/9/05

Dear Chairman Principi:

We are writing to express our support for Oregon's military installations. These installations play a crucial role in securing the nation's borders and protecting the United States from terrorist and non-conventional threats.

The 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, Oregon, protects the homeland with the F-15 Eagle jet fighter. The 142nd is currently positioned in a geographically strategic location, providing both continuous air defense and air superiority capabilities on 24-hour alert as part of the North American Air Defense system. The range of the 142nd Fighter Wing allows it to patrol the airspace north to the Canadian border and south to the California border. No other base in the Pacific Northwest can cover this range. Due to current threats against the United States, the 142nd Fighter Wing's "Operation Noble Eagle" homeland defense mission is more critical than ever to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

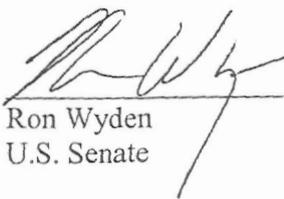
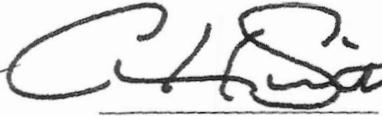
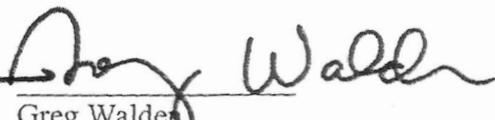
Also, the 173rd Fighter Wing, stationed at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon, is the nation's premier flying training unit, producing over 40 exceptionally qualified F-15 pilots each year. With significant airspace available for training and a large amount of on-site real estate, Kingsley Field is uniquely poised to facilitate the changing needs of our nation's air defenses. Kingsley Field is the largest employer in Klamath County with nearly 800 military positions, including 472 full-time employees. Strategically positioned in Southern Oregon, Kingsley Field also provides the State of Oregon with critical manpower and equipment capabilities to respond to homeland security emergencies and natural disasters.

The 939th Air Refueling Wing, which shares facilities with the 142nd Fighter Wing at Portland International Airport, provides air refueling, airlift, and emergency aeromedical evacuation in support of Air Mobility Command's worldwide operational commitments. The 939th is favorably positioned to provide essential support to the homeland security mission of Operation Noble Eagle. In addition, the 939th participated in Operation Enduring Freedom and continues to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Umatilla Chemical Depot, a member of the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program, is actively destroying the nation's chemical weapons arsenal and serves a vital role in helping the United States achieve the terms set out for it in the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty. Umatilla has seven soldiers assigned to protect the facility. We support continued funding for Umatilla and the continued deployment of these soldiers to protect the facility.

Oregon is also home to many other vital National Guard and Reserves facilities. All of these facilities consistently provide excellent security for the Pacific Northwest, and maintain the capacity to grow and continue to serve the changing needs of the nation. As such, we strongly support the current role of all Oregon military facilities. Should you need more information, please feel free to contact our offices.

Sincerely,

		
Ron Wyden U.S. Senate	Gordon H. Smith U.S. Senate	Greg Walden U.S. House of Representatives