

**STATE OF TENNESSEE****PHIL BREDESEN**
GOVERNOR

5 August 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman, Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission

AUG 11 2005

Received

Dear Chairman Principi:

I thank you for your outstanding service to our country by Chairing the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), and for this opportunity to provide input on behalf of the citizens of the State of Tennessee. I am concerned about the Air Force's recommendation to remove the C-130's from the Nashville 118th Airlift Wing (AW). I am also concerned with the errors and the methodology used by the Air Force to select the Nashville unit for realignment. See attached concerns.

As the Governor of the State of Tennessee, I do not consent to the realignment of the 118th AW in Nashville. I agree with the Governors of many other states, the National Guard Association of the United States, and the BRAC General Counsel concerning the significant legal issues with the Air National Guard BRAC recommendations. It is my opinion the Air Force recommendation for the realignment of the Nashville unit and elimination of their flying Wing substantially deviate from the Congressional criteria used to evaluate military bases.

In summary, the Volunteers of Tennessee stand ready to continue our long history of providing military men and women to defend our nation and way of life. The 118th Airlift Wing has outstanding facilities, a viable and relevant airlift mission, and this unit has answered the call of our nation for over 85 years. The current C-130 mission will remain in high demand for many years to come.

I respectfully ask for a careful examination of the military value, cost details, and legal concerns of the recommendation to realign the Nashville unit and move its aircraft to other Air National Guard locations. Commissioner Bilbray has seen first hand the military value of the base and strong support the surrounding area provides to the military.

Sincerely,

Phil Bredeesen

Attachment: Concerns for Realignment of the 118th Airlift Wing

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cc: The Honorable James H. Bilbray
The Honorable Philip Coyle
Admiral Harold W. (Hal) Gehman, Jr., (USN, Ret)
The Honorable James V. Hansen
General James T. Hill (USA, Ret)
General Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton (USAF, Ret)
The Honorable Samuel K. Skinner
Brigadier General Sue E. Turner (USAF, Ret)

BRAC Concerns for Realignment of the 118th Airlift Wing, Nashville TN

Below is a list of concerns that relate to the Air Force's recommendation to remove the C-130's from the Nashville 118th Airlift Wing (AW). This includes errors with Military Value data and flaws in the methodology used by the Air Force to select the Nashville unit for realignment:

1. The 118th AW military value score has several errors in Military Value data collection and calculation. For example, the "Installation Pavement Quality" of the Nashville runways received 0 (zero) points; however when properly calculated, the Nashville runways will receive the maximum of 5.98 points for this important item. Once corrected, this single item will substantially improve the Military Value ranking of the Nashville unit. This is only one example of the errors that have been formally submitted to the BRAC staff for correction of the Military Value score.
2. It appears the Air Force used the BRAC process to rebalance ANG Aircraft among the states, i.e., states with more ANG units should absorb more aircraft losses. If the number of ANG units in a state is a BRAC consideration, then the DOD should try to re-balance the number of active duty bases among the states, or the number of total military among the states, or the number of reserve members in each state. Tennessee ranks very low in each of the above comparisons and is under represented with military assets. When you compare active duty personnel numbers in Tennessee to those in other states, Tennessee is ranked number 41 in the nation, with only 2,700 active duty members. Also, on a Total Military (Active Duty and Reserve) Per Capita basis, Tennessee is ranked number 37 in the nation. So how do you justify moving a highly trained and combat seasoned Flying Wing out of Tennessee to other states with a larger military presence?
3. There are six C-130 ANG units with lower military value than Nashville that are keeping or gaining Aircraft. One of these lower military value locations will receive Nashville C-130's and will need \$4.3M of Military Construction (MILCON) to beddown the additional aircraft and would need \$34M of MILCON for this unit to robust to 16 C-130's. The Nashville unit previously operated 16 C-130's at this location for 14 years and stands ready to robust back to 12 or 16 aircraft at Zero Cost (As noted in the USAF BRAC data). Given the restrictions on MILCON funding and retraining cost, the realignment of the Nashville unit is not justified.
4. If the realignment occurs, many of the unit's combat experienced and well-trained aircrews and maintenance staff will leave the military, because these members will not be able to leave their hometown and move to another base. This will have a negative impact on the Homeland Defense and state emergency response mission. The C-130 is a "best fit" for the above missions and to support **Military First Responders**. In addition to providing combat airlift support during recent wars (including the Iraq War), the Nashville unit has provided support for forest fires, storm damage, drug interdiction, medical rescue operations, and other FEMA region support.
5. The 118th AW has very low cost and efficient facilities: the real property lease is one dollar until 2045; most of their facilities are less than 5 years old and in outstanding condition (in fact the 118th AW just received a Design Award from the Air Force for a \$24M Aircraft Hangar Complex); and use of four Nashville runways cost the federal government only \$36,000/year.

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In summary, it appears the Air Force recommendation for the realignment of the Nashville unit and elimination of their flying Wing substantially deviate from the Congressional criteria used to evaluate military bases. These concerns have also been expressed by the Tennessee Air National Guards leadership during Commissioner Bilbray's June 05 visit, by members of our congressional delegation, by our Adjutant General, Gus Hargett, testimony to the Commission Regional Hearing in Atlanta, and others who have submitted formal input for the record.