

STEPHANIE HERSETH
AT LARGE, SOUTH DAKOTA

WASHINGTON, DC
331 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE (202) 225-2801
FAX (202) 225-5823

www.house.gov/herseth



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK AND HORTICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES
AND RISK MANAGEMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION, CREDIT,
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS
AND FOREST HEALTH

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

May 13, 2005

RECEIVED
5/17/05

The Honorable Anthony Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

ORIGINAL

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I want to express my disappointment that the Department of Defense recently recommended that Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota be closed. As the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process continues, I invite you and other members of the BRAC Commission to visit Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) - home of the B-1 Bomber and the 28th Bomb Wing.

Ellsworth AFB and the B-1 Bomber are crucial to the military and the economic livelihood of the Rapid City area. As Lead Wing for the Aerospace Expeditionary Force, the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base played a decisive role in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. As they did in Kosovo and Afghanistan, the B-1 and her crews from Ellsworth AFB performed superbly. They once again demonstrated that they are the backbone of America's bomber fleet and have fulfilled their missions admirably.

It seems very shortsighted to me to now put all of the Air Force's B-1 bombers at one air force base. Ellsworth is strategically located and is not threatened by urban encroachment or congested air space. We must protect our bomber force and ensure that we don't put all our eggs in one basket. Ellsworth AFB has many positive aspects crucial to maintaining a strong military and a formidable long-range bomber fleet. Ellsworth AFB is a premier installation with a proven record. In times of peace and battle, Ellsworth AFB has stood ready to answer the call to duty.

I look forward to working with the BRAC Commission to show that Ellsworth AFB is strategic to our national defense. I encourage you to contact me if I can be of any assistance as you begin to review and consider the Secretary of Defense's recommendations. In addition, again, I invite you and the Commission to personally visit Ellsworth AFB and see what makes Ellsworth AFB a premier and viable military base.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herseth
Member of Congress

SIoux FALLS, SD
326 E. 8TH ST., SUITE 108
SIoux FALLS, SD 57104
PHONE (605) 367-8371
FAX (605) 367-8373

RAPID CITY, SD
1823 W. MAIN ST.
RAPID CITY, SD 57702
PHONE (605) 394-5280
FAX (605) 394-5282

ABERDEEN, SD
10 SIXTH AVENUE SW
ABERDEEN, SD 57401
PHONE (605) 626-3440
FAX (605) 626-3441