

Master Schedule and Script (as of 11 am)
South Dakota Presentation to Base Realignment and Closure Commission
June 21, 2005
Rapid City, South Dakota

MC: Jim McKeon

Welcome the Audience

House Announcements

Announce the Entrance of Local, State and Federal Officials and Advocates

Announce the Entrance of Commissioners

National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance

Commission's Regional Chairman Opening Statement --- Commissioner
Skinner

Swearing In of Witnesses --- Commission Counsel

Commissioner Skinner, Commissioner Bilbray and Commissioner Coyle,
I am Jim McKeon, President and CEO of the Rapid City Area Chamber of
Commerce. On behalf of our community, I welcome you the Black Hills of
South Dakota and the home of Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Before we begin, we would like to express our sincerest appreciation for
accepting the monumental task placed before you. We know it will
challenge your endurance and skills as credentialed public servants, but as
you go thorough the remainder of the summer and find that you are asking
yourself not only what town am I waking-up in but why did I not listen to
that little voice that cautioned me about "what I was getting into" ... know
that we admire you for your service to our country.

Today, it is our pleasure to be able to meet with you to hear from us. You
have now seen Ellsworth firsthand ... a modern platform from which the
"bomber of choice" in our ongoing Global War of Terror engages our

nation's enemies. Hopefully, your brief visit to the base and discussions with its airmen and civilians accurately depicted that it began its transformation and modernization long before the concepts became widely accepted.

And ... as a community ... so long tied to the defense of our nation, I am sure that the audience assembled here, although adamantly opposed to your approval of the Secretary of Defense's recommendation to close Ellsworth Air Force Base, appreciates your service to our nation.

In a like manner, we are all fully aware that you are seated as an independent body of examiners and were not involved in the formulation of the Secretary's recommendation. As such, we believe you will find our preliminary analysis of the limited information the Secretary released in the weeks after his recommendations were forwarded to you and the bodies of data, minutes and decisions released in the past week will establish that there is substantial deviation from the criteria approved for this round of closures and realignments. We believe you will insure this is a fair process and the credibility of data used in your determinations must be above reproach if the American public is to believe in the integrity of the BRAC process.

Commissioners, at this time, I would like to direct your attention to the video screens for a specially produced introduction to the fabric of life that bonds our greater military-civilian community in the defense of our nation. Without reservation, I can tell you "there is no us and them" in the community we have built over the past six decades of war and peace --- Ellsworth has been and must be here at the foot of Mount Rushmore, our nation's Shrine of Democracy...

Show video --- South Dakota Video

From what you just saw in that video, I believe you should have an understanding of who we are and the values in which we believe.

Now that you know a little about our community and the values by which we live, at this time, let us "get down to facts" about our reaction to the Secretary's recommendation." In addition to being adamantly opposed to your approval of the Secretary of Defense's recommendation to close Ellsworth Air Force Base, we are deeply disappointed in the Department of Defense's management of the release of the data, records of discussions and decision processes that were used in formulating the recommendations

presented to you. We believe you likewise share our sense of frustration and the presentation of such unnecessary challenges to communities such as ours and for that matter to the Commission. The last several weeks have been like working with a kaleidoscope of ever emerging pictures. While such may be an amusing adventure in some circumstances, we have found it to be inconsistent with the gravity of the national security decisions being made in this process. As late as last Friday, data was being released ... and, as such, we sincerely believe that your offer to communities to be able to present new information to you over the next several weeks will help compensate for the Department's actions.

Here to open our message is a former commander of Air Combat Command, General Mike Loh. General Loh is an Air Force visionary, who told us when Ellsworth became an Air Combat Command base in the 1990's that the Air Force will need Ellsworth, a base with great expanses of open skies and uncongested airspace in 2020 and beyond, but the Air Force needs the vision to get it there. I would offer that nothing could be more appropriate to you today, as you decide whether Ellsworth will be here in 2020 and beyond. Although General Loh was unable to join us in person due to a medical condition, he has provided this video for us. A copy of his written testimony along with his sworn affirmation is also being provided for your consideration.

Commissioners, General Loh.

John Michael Loh
General USAF Retired
125 Captaine Graves
Williamsburg, Virginia
June 15, 2005

To the Chairman and Commissioners of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC),

Whereas, I desire to submit a Statement and Videotape to the BRAC Commissioners meeting in public session at Rapid City, South Dakota on June 21, 2005, and

Whereas, due to a medical condition preventing extensive travel, I am unable to appear in person at the public hearing in Rapid City, South Dakota on June 21, 2005, and

Whereas, I am providing this Statement voluntarily, at my own request, and without any compensation whatsoever for this testimony, and

Whereas, I am attaching as enclosures to this document the Statement and Videotape for presentation as testimony at the public hearing in Rapid City, South Dakota, therefore,

I do solemnly swear that the testimony I so provide is the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth, and is accurate to the best of my knowledge, so help me God.


John Michael Loh

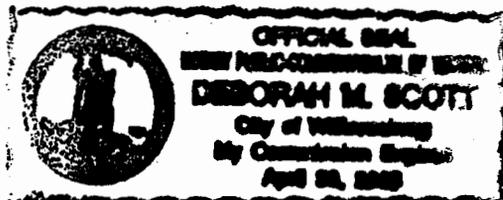
2 Enclosures:

- 1. Statement of John Michael Loh, General, USAF Retired, to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) for the Public Hearing of the Commission in Rapid City, South Dakota on June 21, 2005.**
- 2. Videotape containing the Statement in Attachment 1.**

Sworn at Williamsburg, Virginia on the 15th day of June, 2005, by John Michael Loh, 125 Captaine Graves, Williamsburg, Virginia.

In the presence of, and notarized by Deborah M. Scott, on the 15th day of June, 2005.

My commission expires April 30, 2008



Statement of John Michael Loh, General, USAF Retired, to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) for the public hearing of the Commission in Rapid City, South Dakota on June 21, 2005.

I thank the Commission for this opportunity to present this statement to the BRAC Commissioners in Rapid City, South Dakota, supporting Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Please allow me to introduce myself.

I am John Michael Loh, a retired Air Force four-star general. I served as commander of Air Combat Command from its inception in June 1992 until my retirement from the Air Force in July 1995. Prior to that, I was the Air Force Vice Chief of Staff during the first Gulf War, and commander of Tactical Air Command from March 1991 until June 1992.

As commander of Air Combat Command I controlled all of the Air Force's bombers and bomber bases including Ellsworth Air Force Base. I was responsible for training, equipping, and maintaining combat readiness for our bomber aircraft and crews for combat operations worldwide. This included all of the B-1 bombers and B-1 bases.

I speak today to urge the Commissioners to retain Ellsworth Air Force Base as a B-1 operational base vital to our nation's security and defense preparedness.

(By the way, and just for the record, I submit this statement voluntarily, at my own request, and I am not being compensated in any way for this testimony.)

I believe the Pentagon deviated significantly from six of the eight BRAC criteria in its recommendation to close Ellsworth and move all of its B-1 bombers to another B-1 base. I will explain why in a minute.

First, we must understand how valuable our fleet of 67 B-1s is to our current warfighting needs. The B-1 bomber is the backbone of the bomber force. In both Afghanistan and Iraq, the B-1s delivered more weapons, and struck more targets, than any other bomber or fighter, by far.

In Afghanistan, the B-1 accounted for 40%, by weight, of the weapons delivered. In Iraq, 34%. No other weapon system came close.

So, whatever decisions you make regarding B-1s, please do so carefully because you are dealing with the Air Force's number one offensive weapon system in terms of its impact on the global war on terror.

Enclosure 1

Now, when the Air Force created Air Combat Command in 1992 it had four large B-1 bases each with about 24 B-1s. These bases were Ellsworth AFB South Dakota, Grand Forks AFB North Dakota, McConnell AFB Kansas, and Dyess AFB Texas. Subsequent BRACs and Air Force decisions reduced the number of B-1s to its current number, 67, and the number of B-1 bases to two bases, Ellsworth and Dyess.

I mention this brief history because when the Air Force consolidated to two bases in 2001, it violated one of the guiding principles I consistently and scrupulously followed for long range bomber operations; that is, do not operate more than 36 heavy, long range bombers from a single base.

This long-standing principle has a sound basis. In the case of the B-1, putting more than 36 bombers at one base results in a very inefficient operation.

Operational readiness suffers because too many crews must share too few training ranges and training airspace.

Logistics suffers because there is too little support infrastructure to handle greatly expanded maintenance, supply and transportation needs,

Quality of life suffers because one base cannot provide adequately for all the medical, housing and other needs of our people.

Now, putting all 67 B-1s at one base, the current plan under BRAC, almost doubles the maximum size for a bomber base and will greatly aggravate these adverse operational, logistical, and security problems. It's a recipe for unmanageable congestion and never-ending chaos that spells inefficiency, waste and degraded operational readiness for the B-1s.

Moreover, having the entire B-1 fleet at one base with only a single runway presents an unacceptable security risk. This situation provides an inviting target to an enemy that could render the entire B-1 fleet inoperable with a single weapon.

In addition, having two B-1 bases allows the Air Force the option of adding back more B-1s from inactive status as it did just recently, and allows for the introduction of additional missions at both bases, an important BRAC criterion not available if Ellsworth is closed.

So, as I read the eight BRAC criteria, I find that the Pentagon deviated significantly from six of them in its recommendation on Ellsworth.

Criteria one concerns the impact on operational readiness. Closing Ellsworth will decrease the operational readiness of the B-1 fleet as I explained earlier.

Enclosure 1

Criteria two concerns facilities and airspace at receiving and existing bases. Closing Ellsworth shuts down forever valuable training airspace in the northwest U.S. and aggravates the available training ranges and airspace at the receiving base.

Criteria three concerns the ability to accommodate future requirements. Closing Ellsworth will deny the Pentagon a valuable base for future missions in an area that will offer ideal, unencroached land and airspace for generations to come.

Criteria four concerns cost and manpower. Closing Ellsworth will not reduce cost or manpower. In the long run, trying to operate 67 B-1s from a single base will cost more than operating two B-1 bases at peak efficiency for each.

Criteria six concerns the economic impact on the community. Closing Ellsworth will be devastating to the regional economy. Others can speak to this impact better than I.

Criteria seven concerns the ability of the receiving infrastructure to support the mission. Closing Ellsworth will cause enormous, long-term infrastructure problems at the receiving base that will adversely impact operational readiness of the B-1 fleet.

So, in my opinion, the Pentagon, in its zeal to consolidate and reach some perceived quota for base closures, picked the wrong base by putting Ellsworth on the list. There are many other options that do not involve this questionable move of all B-1s to a single operating location while closing the one base, Ellsworth, that is located in a region of the country having the capacity for unencroached military operations as far as the eye can see.

Mr. Chairman, I have served as the senior commander of bomber operations for our nation. I sincerely feel that tinkering with our most productive bomber fleet in this way is a misguided and risky application of the BRAC process.

I urge you to retain Ellsworth Air Force Base as an urgently needed B-1 base, and remove it from the closure list.

Thank you.



John Michael Loh
General, USAF Retired
125 Captaine Graves
Williamsburg, Virginia

June 21, 2005

Enclosure 1

Commissioners, to bring another personal face to the powerful testimony General Loh has provide to you, I would like to present to you Air Force Lieutenant General Thad Wolfe (Retired). General Wolfe commanded the 509th Bomb Wing's and its FB-111s, commanded Ellsworth's Strategic Warfare Center from 1990 to 1992 with its three wings of B-1B, KC-135, EC-135, B-52, T-38 and UH-1 flying missions and the 44th Strategic Missile Wing as an associate unit. General Wolfe concluded his career as Vice Commander of Air Combat Command from 1993 to 1996 with a vast variety of bases and weapons systems assigned.

General Wolfe.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THIS STATEMENT REGARDING THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE.

I AM JOINING YOU TODAY BECAUSE I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THAT TENTATIVE DECISION. I SERVED AT ELLSWORTH IN 1990 AS THE COMMANDER OF WHAT WAS THEN CALLED THE STRATEGIC WARFARE CENTER AND I WAS THE SENIOR COMMANDER AT THE BASE. THEN FROM 1992 THROUGH 1995, I WAS THE VICE COMMANDER OF AIR COMBAT COMMAND OVERSEEING THE OPERATIONS OF ELLSWORTH ALONG WITH ABOUT 30 OTHER BASES. I WORKED DIRECTLY FOR GENERAL MIKE LOH WHOSE STATEMENT YOU'VE JUST HEARD. HE IS WIDELY RESPECTED FOR HIS INTELLECT, PRAGMATISM, AND HIS ADVOCACY FOR GOOD ANALYSIS. HIS THOUGHTFUL RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE HELPFUL TO YOU.

MY SOLE PURPOSE TODAY IS TO PROVIDE THIS PANEL WITH INFORMATION AND INSIGHTS THAT MAY ALSO HELP YOU REACH SOME DIFFICULT DECISIONS.

IN THE END, I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE COMMISSION SHOULD RECOMMEND RETAINING ELLSWORTH AS A B-1 OPERATIONAL BASE FOR ITS CURRENT AND FUTURE MILITARY VALUE, FOR SECURITY REASONS WHICH WEIGH AGAINST CONSOLIDATION OF ALL B-1 ASSETS AT ONE PLACE, AND AS A UNIQUE HEDGE AGAINST EVOLVING NEW MISSION REQUIREMENTS.

I WILL SUPPORT THE CASE IN TERMS OF MY DOUBTS ABOUT THE OSD CLOSURE RECOMMENDATION.

FIRST, MOST EVERYONE AGREES ON THE VIABILITY OF THE B-1. THAT VIABILITY WAS APPARENTLY NOT A FACTOR IN DECIDING TO RECOMMEND CLOSING ELLSWORTH. THE B-1 WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BEAT ITS LIFE EXPECTANCY AND WILL HAVE NEW TECHNOLOGY INSERTED TO EXTEND ITS SERVICE LIFE AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS AS A WEAPON SYSTEM.

BUT, MILITARY VALUE TAKES MORE THAN JUST THE WEAPON SYSTEM. WHAT ADDS TO THE B-1 OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS MAY BE UNIQUE TO THIS REGION BECAUSE OF ELLSWORTH'S REMARKABLE PROXIMITY TO

UNCROWDED, QUICKLY ACCESSIBLE AIRSPACE AND RANGES, SPARSELY POPULATED AND DIVERSE TERRAIN, PROXIMITY TO OTHER TRAINING AREAS NEARBY FOR JOINT AND COMBINED OPERATIONS; AND FINALLY, TO MODERNIZED INFRASTRUCTURE—ELLSWORTH IS LITERALLY A “NEW” BASE.

SO, HOW DID ELLSWORTH END UP ON THE CLOSURE LIST? FOR CONTEXT, ELLSWORTH HAS BEEN A WELL KEPT SECRET—PERHAPS TOO WELL KEPT. AS THE AIR FORCE, ITS MAJOR AIR COMMANDS, AND OUR UNIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDS HAVE CHANGED, INCLUDING RE-SUBORDINATION OF UNITS, FEWER PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING ROLES HAVE LONG-TERM, DIRECT INSIGHT INTO SOME UNIQUE AND VALUABLE ASPECTS OF ELLSWORTH. WHAT I AM REFERRING TO IS THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RAPID CITY, THE STATE, THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, AND TRIBAL ENTITIES IN THE AREA. I SAY THIS TO UNDERSCORE MY CONCERN THAT WHEN IT COMES TIME TO MAKE JUDGEMENTS ABOUT ELLSWORTH—THE FORCED DECISION BETWEEN CLOSING ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE B-1 BASES--THE “JUDGES” LACKED THE MORE ROUNDED INSIGHT REQUIRED TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS COMBINING OBJECTIVE DATA WITH SUBJECTIVE JUDGMENTS.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE SPENT EVEN A DAY HERE, YOU MAY ALSO SHARE MY CONCERN AS A FORMER COMMANDER HERE AND LATER OVERSEEING ACC BASES, THAT THE AIR FORCE AND OSD DECISION LACKS AN APPRECIATION OF JUST WHAT THIS ENDURING CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BASE AND COMMUNITY HAS PROVIDED TO THE MILITARY SUCCESS OF ELLSWORTH AND THE AIR FORCE AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BRING IN THE FUTURE--AN ASPECT NOT QUANTIFIABLE WITHIN DOD DATA CALLS. WHILE YOU'LL HEAR MORE ABOUT THIS IN A MOMENT, AS SOMEONE WHO LED THE AIRMEN AT ELLSWORTH, I URGE YOU TO CONSIDER WHAT THAT RELATIONSHIP HAS MEANT IN TERMS OF QUALITY OF LIFE AND QUALITY OF SERVICE— UNQUESTIONABLY SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF MILITARY VALUE DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY AT ELLSWORTH. AS YOU NOTICED TODAY, ELLSWORTH IS ONE OF THE BEST EQUIPPED AND MOST UPDATED IN THE AIR FORCE INVENTORY. FOR INSTANCE,

- OVER A THOUSAND HOUSING UNITS, INCLUDING MANY UNDER CONSTRUCTION TODAY IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR YOUNG AIRMEN, OFFICERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THOSE WERE A RESULT OF THE COMBINED COMMITMENT OF THE BASE, THE AIR FORCE, THE TOWNSPEOPLE, THE GOVERNOR, AND THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION.**
- THE SAME IS TRUE FOR VAST INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS. IN FACT, THE INFRASTRUCE IS**

NEWER, MORE MODERN AND IN BETTER SHAPE THAN MOST BASES NOT ON THE CLOSURE LIST.

- **THE PARTNERSHIP EXTENDS TO SUCH VITAL ELEMENTS AS:**
 - **CONTINUED COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR COMBAT COMPETITIONS THAT ENHANCE MILITARY VALUE; AND SUPPORT FOR OUR PEOPLE INCREASINGLY PLACED IN HARMS WAY IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.**
 - **OPEN INFORMATION FLOW BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE AND ELLSWORTH WHEN PLANS, POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES WOULD AFFECT THE OTHER.**
 - **SHARING INSIGHTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY VALUABLE TO STATE AND BASE.**
 - **REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES TO EXCHANGE CULTURAL INSIGHTS WITH THE LAKOTA SOUIX.**
 - **EFFICIENCIES IN MEDICAL CARE THROUGH EXCHANGE OF PATIENTS AND EQUIPMENT BETWEEN THE ELLSWORTH HOSPITAL AND THE VA HOSPITALS IN THE AREA.**
 - **AN OPEN AND RATIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNION REPRESENTING MANY ELLSWORTH EMPLOYEES.**
 - **A STRONG PROGRAM TO SUPPORT THE HIRING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL CHALLENGES.**

- **AND, ACCESS TO THE MOST ACCESSIBLE FORESTS, MOUNTAINS AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS THAT DRAW VAST NUMBERS TO THE BLACK HILLS AND SURROUNDING AREA. YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SERVE HERE WANT TO STAY OR RETURN.**

THIS LIST COULD GO ON BUT THE REAL POINT IS THAT THERE IS A FLAW IN THE BRAC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PROCESS THAT FAILS TO CAPTURE AND CONSIDER VITAL SUBJECTIVE FACTORS SUCH AS THESE THAT CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR AIR CREWS AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL. SO, THE COMMISSION MUST OVERLAY THAT JUDGEMENT ONTO THE ANALYSIS.

I HAVE ADDITIONAL CONCERNS WITH CLOSING ELLSWORTH—WITH ITS ADVERSE EFFECT ON OUR NATION'S SECURITY AND FUTURE FLEXIBILITY OF OUR AIR FORCE. I SHARE GENERAL LOH'S VIEW THAT CONSOLIDATION OF B-1S AT ONE BASE WILL HAVE A MEASURABLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON READINESS AND MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS OF THE B-1 FLEET. FOR INSTANCE, ELLSWORTH'S B-1S REGULARLY OUTSCORE THEIR PEERS IN READINESS MEASUREMENTS, IN LARGE PART DUE TO FACTORS UNIQUE TO THIS REGION AND THIS BASE—NOT UNLIKE THE PARTNERSHIP I SPOKE OF MOMENTS AGO. DUE TO THE VAST UNCROWDED AIRSPACE, SPARSELY POPULATED AND DIVERSE TERRAIN, VARIETY OF WEATHER AND OTHER

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS, AND PROXIMITY TO OTHER TRAINING AREAS FOR JOINT AND COMBINED OPERATIONS, ELLSWORTH HAS PROVEN TO BE THE IDEAL LOCATION FOR B-1 BED-DOWN AND CREW TRAINING. I URGE YOU TO REVIEW READINESS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE B-1 BASES.

OF FURTHER CONCERN ABOUT THE DATA USED TO JUSTIFY CLOSING ELLSWORTH, I BELIEVE THAT THE ASSESSORS ERRED WHEN COMPARING THE LANCER MILITARY OPERATING AREA WITH THE POWDER RIVER COMPLEX LITERALLY OVERHEAD THIS IMMEDIATE AREA. IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT THEY LOOKED AT THE QUALITATIVE VALUE OF THE TRAINING AVAILABLE BUT APPEARED TO SCORE PRIMARILY THE DISTANCE TO AND NUMBER OF ENTRY POINTS OF EACH RANGE COMPLEX. THOSE ARE INTERESTING BUT NOT COMPELLING WHEN LOOKING AT OVERALL TRAINING VALUE.

I ALSO BELIEVE BRAC IS DEALING WITH AN INCOMPLETE VIEW OF FUTURE MISSIONS AND ELLSWORTH'S ROLE AND VALUE THEREIN. IMPORTANT COMMAND MISSIONS ARE CHANGING RAPIDLY WHILE THIS BRAC PROCESS IS UNDERWAY. NEW MISSIONS LIKE GLOBAL STRIKE, INFORMATION OPERATIONS, INTELLIGENCE/SURVEILANCE/AND RECONNAISSANCE, MISSILE DEFENSE, SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITY, AND BROADENED HOMELAND DEFENSE TO INCLUDE MARITIME

AND LAND SURVEILLANCE ARE RAPIDLY EMERGING. FOR CONTEXT, AGAIN:

- **YOU RECOGNIZE THAT ELLSWORTH IS SUBORDINATE TO AIR COMBAT COMMAND... AIR COMBAT COMMAND, IN TURN, IS A COMPONENT TO SEVERAL COMBATANT COMMANDS THAT RELY ON CAPABILITIES AT ELLSWORTH. ACC ALSO PROVIDES FORCES TO STRATEGIC COMMAND [HEADQUARTERED IN OMAHA], USNORTHERN COMMAND [HEADQUARTERED IN COLORADO SPRINGS], JOINT FORCES COMMAND [...NORFOLK]; AND ALSO THROUGH JOINT FORCES COMMAND TO OTHER REGIONAL COMBATANT COMMANDS AROUND THE WORLD.**
- **THE POINT IS THAT EACH OF THESE SUPPORTED COMMANDS HAS EVOLVING MISSIONS THAT WOULD USE THE KIND OF CAPABILITIES RESIDENT AT OR POTENTIALLY RESIDENT AT ELLSWORTH—IF IT WERE TASKED. THERE IS NO BASE IN THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION BETTER POSITIONED TO DO THAT.**

ALL OF THOSE EVOLVING MISSIONS WILL REQUIRE FORCES, SYNCHRONIZATION, TRAINING, EXERCISES AND EDUCATION. FURTHER, DOD IS TRANSFORMING TO JOINT FUNCTIONAL COMPONENT COMMANDS WHEREIN SERVICE FORCES CAN WORK FOR ANYBODY, ANYPLACE, AT ANYTIME. THIS IS OCCURRING AS THE U.S. IS PULLING BACK FROM OVERSEAS STATIONS, REDUCING FORWARD BASED

FORCES. THAT PUTS AN ADDITIONAL PREMIUM ON BASES IN THE U.S.

TO DATE, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THE BRAC PROCESS HAS BEEN CAPABLE OF GIVING THIS ADEQUATE AIRING BECAUSE THE CHANGES ARE ONGOING.

SO WITH THESE EVOLVING MISSIONS, FACTORS WHICH SHOULD BE FURTHER CONSIDERED INCLUDE ELLSWORTH'S POTENTIAL VALUE IN:

- NEAR SPACE ACTIVITY AND THE ESSENTIAL USE OF THE AIRSPACE IN THIS REGION IN SUPPORT OF MISSILE DEFENSE**
- THE NEED TO MAINTAIN FORCES AT DIFFERENT LOCATIONS TO PLACE STRESS ON THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND NET-CENTRIC NATURE OF FUTURE CONFLICT. DOD IS CHANGING TO THIS MODEL TODAY WHICH APPEARS TO RUN COUNTER TO CLOSING OF HIGH VALUE BASES LIKE ELLSWORTH.**
- OUR RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM SHOULD CONSIDER ELLSWORTH FOR CONVENTIONAL ICBMS, UNMANNED AIR VEHICLES, AND UNMANNED COMBAT AIR VEHICLES TAKING ADVANTAGE AGAIN OF THE AIR SPACE AND RANGES, SPARSE POPULATION AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE.**
- FROM NORAD AND U.S. NORTHERN COMMAND THERE IS CERTAINLY A POTENTIAL FOR ELLSWORTH IN**

**MAINTAINING, TRAINING WITH, AND OPERATING UAVS
FOR SURVEILLANCE OF OUR BORDERS.**

**AGAIN, THIS LIST COULD GO ON BUT IT IS ILLUSTRATIVE
AND NOT EXHAUSTIVE. BUT IT POINTS OUT THAT
DISSOLVING ELLSWORTH'S CAPABILITIES DUE TO A
QUESTIONABLE A PRIORI DECISION TO CONSOLIDATE THE
FLEET SEEMS A RISKY PROPOSITION TO SAY THE LEAST.
OUR AIR FORCE ITSELF RECOGNIZED THIS WHEN IT
REVIEWED ITS DECISION REGARDING KEEPING A
STRATEGIC PRESENCE IN THE UPPER MID-WEST.
COINCIDENTALLY, ELLSWORTH'S MILITARY VALUE SCORES
ARE FIRST IN SIX OF THE EIGHT MISSION AREAS AND
SECOND IN THE OTHER TWO. THE SOLUTION TO BOTH OF
THESE IS TO RECOGNIZE THAT STRATEGIC REDUNDANCY
AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ARE TOO IMPORTANT
TO SACRIFICE ON THE ALTAR OF CONSOLIDATION AND
BUDGET CUTS. BOTH ARE SOLVED BY REMOVING
ELLSWORTH FROM THE LIST, PRESERVING THE DUAL B-1
BEDDOWN, AND WORKING WITH DUE DILIGENCE TO
EXPAND THE ELLSWORTH MISSIONS.**

**IN CLOSING, NAPOLEAN SAID ESSENTIALLY THAT THE
"MORAL IS TO THE PHYSICAL, AS THREE IS TO ONE". WELL,
THE COMBINATION OF THE SUPERIOR TRAINING
ENVIRONMENT, YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WANT TO SERVE
HERE, AND THE ENDURING POSITIVE CIVIL-MILITARY**

RELATIONSHIP HAVE ADDED UNIQUELY TO THE DOMINANT VALUE OF THE “MORAL” COMPONENT OF MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS AT ELLSWORTH—AND IT PROMISES TO DO SO EVEN MORE DRAMMATICALLY IN THE FUTURE. WE ARE COUNTING ON YOUR ROLE AS COMMISSIONERS TO BE THE ADEQUATELY EMPOWERED AUTHORITY CAPABLE OF “JUDGING SOME OF THE JUDGMENTS” THAT HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE PROCESS TO DATE. THAT IS WHAT I RESPECTFULLY ASK OF YOU IN REMOVING ELLSWORTH FROM THE BRAC CLOSURE LIST.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TODAY.

Thank you General Wolfe.

Now, before I move on to more specifics of our preliminary analysis, I would like to provide you a little more information about my Air Force career experiences ...

from 1987 to 1989 I was the commander of Flying Operations at RAF Fairford and the European Tanker Task Force. In 1989, I stood up the 99th Strategic Wing here at Ellsworth. A wing unique in that from Ellsworth it trained B-52s, B-1Bs, FB -111 and KC-135 aircraft.

As to some of our specific analysis to date ...

A close examination of the Comparative Military Value Rankings among the three bases in the north central U.S., where the Air Force has stated they plan to maintain a strategic presence, Ellsworth ranked first in 6 of the 8 functional categories --- Ellsworth is clearly “a base” to be retained.

As used for their Ellsworth recommendation, Air Force Basing Principle Number Ten directing consolidated operations violates Air Force Basing Principle Number Seven that directs Long Range Strike Basing to provide flexible strategic response. Consolidating all B-1B aircraft on one base with one runway violates that principle.

The information on Ellsworth's infrastructure is not accurately characterized in the data used in the recommendation to close Ellsworth --- clear examples are the total square footage of facilities and aircraft parking capacity.

Ellsworth's rating on Current and Future Mission Capability is undervalued by a misconstrued metric measuring access and use of the primary aerial training range managed by Ellsworth.

Consistent with General Loh's assessment of the ability of a single B-1B base to maintain a satisfactory or higher aircraft mission capable rate, the Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #1 in recommending the consolidation of Ellsworth's consistently higher rated B-1B operations at a base that maintains a lesser operational readiness rate; thereby impacting training, readiness and warfighting.

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #2 in that the recommended closure of Ellsworth will relocate the B-1B aircraft, which constitute 82% of the use of the immediately adjacent air space (Powder River MOA) to a base at least two hours flight time away; thereby, either increasing operational cost or reducing mission effectiveness.

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #3 in that the reduced use of the Powder River MOA will either increase the cost of operations per mission flown from out of the area or cause it to be abandoned for use by future total force requirements.

If the Secretary's recommended closure of Ellsworth is approved, General Loh's assessment of the loss of valuable training airspace constitutes substantial deviation from Military Value Criteria #3 regarding use of the Powder River MOA.

If on the other hand, the Powder River MOA is not to be closed, it is difficult, if not impossible to understand how Ellsworth scored low with respect to access to the Powder River MOA.

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #4 in that the cost to operate the entire B-1B fleet will exceed the cost of maintaining two bases, each of which has the capacity to accept future force beddowns.

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #6 in that of the three bases in the north central U.S., considered for strategic presence retention, the recommended closure of Ellsworth will eliminate the most highly rated base for realigning tanker aircraft or the beddown of future force missions such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, C2ISR or emerging missions such as the Airborne Laser.

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #6 in that of the three bases in the north central U.S. considered for strategic presence retention, the recommended closure of Ellsworth will more severely impact the existing communities in its vicinity than the one being recommended for retention for an “emerging mission.”

The Air Force substantially deviated from Military Value Criteria #7 in that the recommended closure of Ellsworth will relocate B-1B assets to base that has a lesser current Plant Replacement Value and will have a lesser infrastructure and overall capacity even after the more than \$100 million required facility projects are constructed.

Commissioners, I would now like to introduce to you Air Force Colonel Pat McElgunn (Retired). Pat served at Ellsworth from 1989 to 1994 and commanded the largest Security Group in Strategic Air Command. After 27 years of service, he joined us in 1994 as Director of our Ellsworth Task Force.

Pat McElgunn's Testimony

Commissioner Skinner, Commissioner Bilbray and Commissioner Coyle, on behalf of our Ellsworth Task Force, I welcome you the military support community that is the proud host of Ellsworth Air Force Base.

As we began to analyze the data, minutes and decisions the Secretary used in preparing the recommendations, we became concerned about the integrity and clarity of the information. We were also concerned about the unprecedented withholding of information used in determining which bases should close. I testify here today with the conviction that from what we have seen to date, the Air Force's recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding Ellsworth are not based on accurate information and substantially deviate from the BRAC 2005 criteria. You have heard a number of specific citations to that effect and I am convinced that the Air Force process took a basing imperative to consolidate legacy aircraft out of the context and applied it to B-1B weapon system thereby violating the basing principle of insuring the flexibility of the its Long Range Strike Force. In addition, from what limited information and time we have been afforded, Ellsworth's modernized facilities and base operations support cost were not properly considered in head to heads competition with like bases in the north central U.S. and in similar evaluations among this regions bases capable of handling heavy aircraft.

Examples of Ellsworth's Military Value in terms of operational advantages are as follows:

Easy/quick access to multiple training ranges from the Upper Great Plains/Midwest to the Rocky Mountain/Western region.

Low air traffic density, unconstrained airspace, and excellent flying weather provide ideal operational conditions for DOD multiple/joint mission basing.

Ellsworth's location in the geographical center of the nation has advantages of Central CONUS location ideal for Global Strike and Response missions equidistant from Atlantic and Pacific Theaters.

Shorter Polar Routes into the most likely theaters of operations.

Security advantages of distances from East and West Coast and well within protective envelope of National Missile Defenses.

Low-density population, incremental growth, no aggressive urban sprawl and encroachment which severely impact many DOD installations.

State and region is not projected for any acceleration of population growth.

Bottom line --- Operational advantages of EAFB make it an ideal 21st Century installation for manned and unmanned platforms supporting current national security and homeland defense and those operations of 2025 and beyond.

Examples of Ellsworth's Military Value in terms of Joint Missions Capabilities.

Ellsworth has a 65-year history of supporting multiple aircraft weapon systems including Bombers, Tankers, Command and Control, Jet Trainers, Helicopters and Ground and Flight Training missions.

As recently as 1990, EAFB housed the Strategic Warfare Center and four wings with over 7,300 military personnel.

Ellsworth is even better positioned today to support multiple missions and joint-service basing options due to its comprehensive facilities modernization and ideal operational conditions.

- Available/existing or readily modified facilities for operations, maintenance and support:
 - 230,000 sq. yd. of ramp space.
 - 200,000 sq. ft. in 8 large aircraft docks.
 - 100,000 sq. ft. in a single arched structure for oversized aircraft.
 - 99,000 sq. ft. of administrative space.
 - 20,000 sq. ft. of maintenance or support space.

Flight line dock space can support multiple joint basing options for current and future manned/unmanned atmospheric platforms.

Ellsworth has over 1,800 acres of undeveloped and suitable on-base property to beddown new missions or missions relocating from CONUS or overseas theaters.

Ellsworth's Military Construction and Airfield Infrastructure do not present major funding requirements in the Air Force's FY06 Unfunded Priority List.

Specific examples of Ellsworth's "Future Total Force" Basing.

Ellsworth's existing physical plant and airspace can accommodate future missions such as airborne laser, near-space vehicles, DOD Joint Service and Service specific missions and 21st Century missions identified in the Air Force's Transformation Flight Plan.

Ellsworth's infrastructure and operational advantages make it an ideal base for collocation of Active Duty, National Guard and/or Reserve missions.

Ellsworth can support the National Guard Initiatives to reduce Reserve Component "footprints" within continental regions and consolidate operations at primary or active duty installations.

Considering Reserve Component operations within the region,

Ellsworth provides an excellent opportunity for units to take advantage of Ellsworth's excellent infrastructure, secure operating location and training opportunities.

Consolidations at Ellsworth also provide excellent opportunities to conduct joint training operations and more effectively support annual joint training exercises and war fighting deployments.

Specific examples of Ellsworth's Military Value in terms of Transformation.

Ellsworth has "in-place" the modern and cost-efficient infrastructure DOD needs for 21st Century basing requirements.

Proven basing facility for B-1B platforms and crews in Global Power Operations.

Repeated AEF cycles of heavy lifting and precision weapons deliveries in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Projected “weapons of choice” and chosen as CENTCOM’s roving linebacker.

In 2001, Ellsworth was rated as one of the top five AF bases for beddown of the Global Hawk Mission; subsequent infrastructure improvements have enhanced its competitiveness for future manned or RPV capabilities.

Air Force has invested over \$150 million to replace, consolidate or upgrade major operations, maintenance, support and quality of life facilities over the past 15 years.

Infrastructure modernization prior to and after mid-1980’s beddown of the B-1B has positioned EAFB as a showcase of consolidated operations in multi-purpose or joint-use facilities --- in many instances one facility has replaced two or more outdated units.

A majority of the workforce occupies facilities built after 1985. Disposal of over 100 outdated and inefficient facilities has reduced unnecessary infrastructure and lower operations/maintenance costs.

With approval of \$14.4M in the FY07 budget, the aggressive management of EAFB’s Military Family Housing will have produced a total EAFB housing inventory less than 20 years old.

Specific examples of Ellsworth’s Business Operations and Cost Efficiencies.

Ellsworth has the lowest utility rates in Air Combat Command:

Access to extremely reliable and very affordable federally generated electrical power purchased at 50% of the commercial rate (\$.02/kw).

The base upgraded its internal electrical power distribution system in the 1990’s.

Similar savings are being realized for its natural gas requirements with very favorable rates and an upgraded distribution system.

With strong community support, Ellsworth has long-term water

reservoir rights and a favorable long-term water purification contract with Rapid City.

Ellsworth's aggressive water conservation measures have enabled the installation to consume only 55% of its nearly 600 million-gallon annual allocation.

Ellsworth recently upgraded its wastewater facility and can double its treatment and discharge flow.

Bottom line --- Ellsworth is a modern installation with cost-efficient operations that provides the taxpayer maximum combat power for minimum cost.

Thank you Pat.

Commissioners, I would like to now like you to hear from Rapid City Mayor Jim Shaw, who will speak on behalf of our local government leaders.

Mayor Shaw.

Commissioner Skinner, Commissioner Bilbray and Commissioner Coyle, Rapid City and the other Greater Black Hills area cities and counties have a well established history of both supporting and embracing our nation's military services.

For over 60 years, we have supported Ellsworth's many and varied missions throughout WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, the Cold War and Gulf Wars including a 12,000 sq. mi. Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Field.

Since 9-11, we have supported Ellsworth's base and family needs during their repeated deployments in support of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and in a similar manner, we have seen our area's National Guard units mobilized with many still serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As someone who has the privilege of associating with Ellsworth's B-1B crew members, I can tell you those who train to fight from Ellsworth absolutely rave about our uncongested skies and immediate access to the Powder River Military Operating Area.

The inherent military utility Ellsworth offers air crews, maintainers and support personnel is being continually demonstrated by the B-1B squadron's skilled crews delivering precision weapons and tremendous firepower for Central Command's missions over Afghanistan and Iraq.

In another area of base support, as a community, we addressed the issue of encroaching development near Ellsworth in the 1990's and took an unprecedented multimillion dollar initiative to relocate an interstate highway interchange and build a new five lane base access road. As a result, development has been drawn away from the area and property and acreages have been purchased in that Accident Potential Zone.

In that same area of concern, I can assure you that we have few, if any prospects, of suffering the congestion and urban sprawl that is limiting the operational utility of many other bases within cities and in the high to explosive growth areas of our nation.

As to another important factor in the overall management and retention of military personnel, our community pays close attention to the Quality of Life afforded them and most importantly their families.

In fact, a 2004 survey by Expansion Management Magazine rated the overall Quality of Life afforded those who live in the Rapid City Community to be in the top 25% of 60 military support communities evaluated.

Such categories as Best Public Schools, Spousal Employment Opportunities, and Middle Class Living Standard stood out from the rest and when combined with the quality housing and access to National and State Parks, military families flourish here.

Further evidence of the sustained Quality of Life we and the rest of South Dakota enjoys is a 15 year record of being nationally recognized as one of the "Top Ten Most Livable States" in terms of 44 evaluation categories.

Commissioners, we are convinced that Ellsworth offers the Air Force and DOD an opportunity to both realize Ellsworth's military value and expand on its operational advantages and expansion capability.

Further, we can assure you that the base and its missions will be supported by the public policy decision within our community; we will continue to

embrace its people as integral members of our community and our Congressional Delegation will be similarly supportive.

In closing, please allow me to commend you on behalf of the citizens of Rapid City and our Greater Black Hills Area. We appreciate the challenges you face and believe when you have evaluated the Secretary's recommendation to close Ellsworth you will find the counter points offered in the testimony of our experienced military leaders to prevail.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you.

Commissioners, I would like to introduce to you our senior United States Senator, Tim Johnson.

Senator Johnson.

I would like to welcome Commissioner Skinner, Commissioner Bilbray, and Commissioner Coyle to South Dakota and to thank them for their service to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. I know each of you will give careful and thoughtful consideration to the arguments presented today in defense of Ellsworth Air Force Base.

I would also like to recognize the Ellsworth Task Force, the Rapid City and Box Elder communities, and the men and women stationed at Ellsworth. Your steadfast dedication, patriotism, and support for Ellsworth has strengthened America.

This morning, I had the opportunity to join the Commissioners in touring Ellsworth Air Force Base and we saw first hand that it is an unparalleled and world-class military installation that is uniquely qualified to beddown the B-1 bomber fleet. Ellsworth is physically not the same air force base that it was a decade ago. In an age of ever-changing and emerging threats, it was imperative to upgrade the facilities at Ellsworth in order to confront the new enemies of the 21st century. Without question, we have succeeded.

The challenge to transform Ellsworth was necessary given our military's growing reliance on the B-1 bomber in defending our country. The B-1 bomber was first used in combat during Operation Desert Fox in December 1998. In recent years, B-1 bombers and their crews proved their combat value in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In fact, in Operation Iraqi Freedom,

B-1s flew fewer than 2% of the combat sorties, but dropped more than half the satellite guided munitions. They showed great flexibility and were assigned a broad range of targets in Iraq, including command and control facilities, bunkers, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and surface-to-air missile sites. They also demonstrated the ability to linger for many hours over the battlefield and to provide close air support for U.S. forces engaged in the field.

Clearly, the B-1 bomber has proven it is the backbone of our bomber fleet. To ensure that its mission was not compromised, and to maintain operational efficiencies and readiness, the South Dakota Congressional delegation secured funding necessary for substantial upgrades to the base's infrastructure. As a result, Ellsworth is a top-notch, modern facility without equal among military installations.

In the past decade, we have secured nearly \$140 million dollars that has been invested in Ellsworth's infrastructure. This includes funding for a new flight-simulator facility for B-1 crews to replace the outdated facility, allowing aviators access to improved training methods. A new operations center for the 37th Bomb Squadron was built to consolidate operations that had previously been housed in three separate locations. Erected in close proximity to the new headquarters of the 77th Bomb Squadron and to the flight line, it has enhanced mission responsiveness and productivity.

While servicemembers must have access to the most advance training systems available, it is equally important to provide a good quality of life to the men and women who serve Ellsworth. The dilapidated family housing units have been replaced with military housing that ranks amongst the best in the country. In addition, a new library and education center have been built, while the McRaven Child Development Center has been remodeled and expanded. These improvements have made Ellsworth one of the most family friendly and desirable bases for military personnel and their loved ones.

Finally, Ellsworth is strategically located with good access to training ranges and potential for growth. Ellsworth has strong community support and does not face the urban encroachment issues that confront many other military installations. Rather than closing, Ellsworth has without a doubt demonstrated it is our nation's premier bomber base, and is well positioned to receive additional missions.

The entire state of South Dakota is proud of Ellsworth and the men and women stationed there for their role in keeping America safe. The B-1s that call Ellsworth home are integral to our nation's defense, and Ellsworth is uniquely qualified to maintain the B-1 mission. Closing Ellsworth and stationing all our bombers at one installation without carefully considering the long term consequences will impair our ability to protect against threats at home and abroad.

Thank you.

Commissioners, I would like to introduce to you our newest United States Senator, John Thune.

Senator Thune.

Thank you for coming today, and welcome to Rapid City and the Black Hills.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I know that you and your fellow commissioners will bear a great responsibility over the coming months. As Commissioners, your decisions will directly impact the safety and security of all Americans.

The B-1 Bomber, as the backbone of our nation's bomber force, plays a critical role in our War on Terror. The question for this Commission is this: Does it make military sense to house the entire B-1 fleet in a single location?

Members of the BRAC Commission, we believe the answer is clear -- any further consolidation of the B-1s would create an unnecessary and unwise security risk, and the Pentagon's proposal to do so should be rejected by this Commission.

Let's take a look at the risks and dangers of the Pentagon's proposal:

As General Loh explained, putting all our B-1s in a single location would make our B-1 fleet unnecessarily vulnerable.

First, as we have so painfully learned, military installations are not immune from attack. We should never forget about the short-sightedness we had as a nation before Pearl Harbor. We might dismiss that as just some past, distant war from another time and another place, not really applicable to today's threats. But it is.

We were reminded of this on September 11th, when Al Qaeda attacked the Pentagon itself, with tragic results. And there were also reports that the terrorists had targeted other military installations before September 11th.

With the terrorists clearly bent on targeting our military assets and their willingness to use unconventional weapons, we should make it harder, not easier, to take out our fleet of B-1s. But the Pentagon's proposal would create the possibility that a single terrorist attack could wipe out our entire B-1 fleet, or all of the B-1 pilots and flight crews.

Second, the risk of natural disasters is a constant reminder that we shouldn't put all our B-1 assets in a single location, particularly one located in the heart of "tornado alley." We simply cannot afford to risk our nation's security on the whims of a single deadly tornado that could destroy or damage our entire B-1 fleet.

Third, we can't afford to look only at the world as it is now. Instead, we have to look to the emerging threats our nation will face 10 or 20 years from now. This is not as easy as it sounds.

From the abrupt ending of the Cold War to the events of September 11th, it is clear that we live in an uncertain world full of surprises.

We must learn from our history. Although the Soviet Union is gone, countries like China, North Korea, and Iran either have nuclear weapons or are actively developing them. What's more, they are seeking the means to deliver those weapons by long-range ballistic missiles.

The lesson in all this is that the threats we face as a nation will continue to change. And to respond to those threats, we need to maintain or increase our flexibility, not reduce it. If the Pentagon is allowed to close Ellsworth, it will be difficult or impossible to re-open it if we are once again surprised by the unexpected.

General Loh's statement that we should not over-consolidate our B-1 fleet makes perfect sense. It is also supported by sound military principle.

The Department of Defense itself has stated, in its *National Defense Strategy* report issued just three months ago, that we should be guided by the goal of "developing greater flexibility to contend with uncertainty by emphasizing agility and *by not overly concentrating military forces in a few locations.*"

Similarly, the DOD has stated that they need "secure installations . . . that ensure strategic redundancy."

Finally, Ellsworth's military value is clear even under the Pentagon's own analysis, and could easily expand with additional missions. The Pentagon gives Ellsworth one of its highest scores for a tanker mission – a significantly higher ranking than the three bases that will actually be tankers under the Pentagon's plan -- McConnell, Fairchild and McDill.

Among the three bases in North and South Dakota -- Ellsworth, Grand Forks, and Minot -- Ellsworth scored highest in six of the eight Air Force mission evaluation categories, with the other bases scoring first in only one category each. The surge capacity of Ellsworth is unmistakable.

We fully understand that one of the purposes of this BRAC round is to save money. But we should not do so at the expense of our nation's security. With the ever-changing threats we face in this century, we simply cannot take the chance of closing Ellsworth. If we eliminate this base, it cannot be easily replaced later.

Members of the Commission, we are all here today urging you to take Ellsworth off the Pentagon's proposed closure list. Obviously, Ellsworth is critically important to our state. But it is even more important to our country and to our national defense. Ellsworth is a first-class base with a critical mission in our War on Terror, both now and in the future. As a nation, we simply cannot afford to lose it.

Commissioners, I would like to introduce to you our United States Representative, Stephanie Herseth.

Representative Herseth.

As Senator Johnson discussed, and as you undoubtedly noticed in your visit this morning, Ellsworth has been transformed from a base of the past to a modern base of the future. It has, and can continue, to serve the existing B-1 mission extremely well. And as we in Congress work to transform our nation's military, there is no doubt that Ellsworth is uniquely positioned to serve as an exceptional facility for emerging missions.

The transformation of the Air Force is already underway, and while we have some good guesses as to what the Air Force will look like in 2025, there is never any absolute certainty about how the military will look in the future or how the strategic environment for our national security may change. Ellsworth is one of the few bases with the viability to accept the emerging missions currently being developed and deployed, and it is well positioned to operate virtually any defense platform conceived by the military in the future.

Because of Ellsworth's existing infrastructure, the Air Force has already recognized Ellsworth as a base well positioned to handle various emerging missions. And as Senator Thune mentioned briefly, that makes Ellsworth an extremely important asset to our nation's military in the years to come.

For example, the Air Force has already identified Ellsworth as an excellent candidate for an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle mission such as the Predator or Global Hawk. In contrast to the other base in the region recommended by the Pentagon for retention and bed-down, Ellsworth was one of the five continental U.S. bases identified by the Air Force's internal alternative identification and evaluation process and the only north central base considered suitable for the initial bed-down of a Global Hawk UAV mission in 2001. Given the Air Force's own recommendations, I submit that the Air Force deviated from the Military Value Criteria by not designating Ellsworth as a base to be retained in the north central continental United States for a UAV mission.

Additionally, the Air Force's own evaluation of Ellsworth's location and infrastructure positions it as a prime candidate to bed-down new missions such as Command & Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance or "C2ISR"; and Space Operations. Additionally, the Air Force has given Ellsworth a rating for a future tanker mission that exceeds that of the bases recommended for a tanker mission. Importantly, Ellsworth also has been

surveyed for the bed-down of the Airborne Laser, and its arched hanger capable of housing two 747 sized aircraft make it a prime candidate for that mission.

In closing, allow me to reiterate that Ellsworth is the only facility in the region considered suitable for a Global Hawk UAV mission. It is also ready and uniquely capable of accepting the Airborne Laser mission, and has been identified as an excellent location for a tanker mission. Additionally, the base has the flexibility of accepting emerging missions such as C2ISR as well as space operations. I submit that there was a substantial deviation from the Military Value Criteria by not adequately considering the emerging mission capability of Ellsworth. As the commission moves forward, I ask that you review the Air Force's own findings related to the potential of Ellsworth to house both a UAV and airborne laser mission. Those findings reflect what those of us familiar with the base already know – it is a world class, modern facility well positioned to handle emerging missions in the decades to come.

Thank you.

Commissioners, I would now like to move to another area of concern that can be best addressed by an authority on the impact of Ellsworth Air Force Base as a vital component of our state and region. Professor Sidney Goss, Ph.D. of The South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, here in Rapid City will provide you a perspective that might not be readily understood or appreciated in terms of impact on our state and region.

Professor Goss.

Good Afternoon Commissioners.

My name is Sidney Goss.

My focus today is to show the impact of the closure of Ellsworth AFB on our community.

Among the BRAC selection criteria is one which states that the commission is to consider the “impact on existing communities in the vicinity of the military installation.”

Our community is large, cohesive, and may be defined in many ways.

Some would define our community as the entire state of South Dakota, others as the western ½ of SD, others as the 100 mile trade area with 144,000 population, others as the 200 mile trade area, with 459,000 persons, and still others as the Black Hills Region. We live in an area where people think nothing of driving over 100 miles each way to shop. All of these definitions of community are valid.

For purposes of comparison, I'll also refer to the federally defined, United States Census Bureau area called the Rapid City Metropolitan Statistical Area, or Rapid City MSA. This includes the populations of Pennington and Meade Counties. Coincidentally, EAFB sits on the county line of the counties making up this statistical area. The surrounding area, by any definition, supplies more than sufficient population to support guard or reserve units.

As a state, South Dakota is rural. Our entire state's population is 771,000. That's roughly the size of a small city. In fact, Indianapolis, Indiana or Jacksonville, FL have roughly the same population as the entire state of South Dakota. This satellite night-time image shows the rurality of SD quite well. The upper Midwest area without many lights...that's South Dakota.

On your way here, you drove through the town of Box Elder, SD. Its population is about 3000.

Rapid City, where we are now seated, has a population is about 60,000. The Rapid City MSA, or combined counties population is 116,000.

EAFB contains nearly 4500 military personnel	4491
With	5600 dependents (5640)
Civilian employees	1000 (418 approp, 634 non-approp) (w/o Dep.)
Total	11,000

Indirect jobs 1700 (1698) (w/o Dependents)
EAFB Econ Impact Report, Fiscal 2004

Ellsworth contains nearly 4500 military personnel with 5600 dependents. It also employs over 1000 civilian employees, not counting their dependents, for a total of over 11,000 persons. Ellsworth also creates 1700 indirect jobs.

If we quickly find employment for 1000 of these individuals (a major feat in an area with low unemployment), we'll lose an estimated 10,000 people.

This conservative number of 10,000 represents:

9% of RC MSA --a 2 county population base.

10,000 persons represent, in the Minneapolis MSA area 0.3 %

In Denver's MSA, 0.4%

Of Rapid City MSA, 9%

We are also an area experiencing net out-migration. Over the past census decade, the RC MSA lost 1300 (1279) persons due to net out-migration. In other words, 1300 more persons moved out than in to this area between 1990 and 2000, the last census decade, roughly 130 persons per year, net out migration for our MSA.

We understand that the Department of Defense wishes to move quickly.

If our metro area of 116,000 were to lose 10,000 persons in 1 year, this would be the equivalent of 76 years of out-migration for this area—hitting us all at once. This impact is significant.

Our community has experienced moderate growth, as births outnumber deaths giving us today's 116,000 population.

A decrease of 10,000 persons would put our population back to levels of 1988, a 17-year regression.

Economically, Ellsworth represents \$278,000,000 annually in our economy. This is a large figure in SD terms, and represents, in fact a figure larger than the total annual gross sales of neighboring Sturgis, SD, some 20 miles from here.

Ellsworth Econ Impact Report, Fiscal Year 2004

Simply put, EAFB is SD's 2nd largest employer. The state's largest employer is some 350 miles east of here. I don't know how to state its economic impact more clearly. EAFB is the state's second largest employer. SD Dept of Labor, Phil George

Now, please allow me to be more specific about the integration of the EAFB personnel and our community, state and region.

1st, Schools: Ellsworth is served by area public schools, most notably the Douglas school system. Douglas K12 school contains 2500 students, ½ of whom are Ellsworth dependents.

This school is the 10th largest in South Dakota. Out of SD's 165 school districts, the Douglas school system is larger than 155 of them. It is larger than the smallest 25 school districts combined. The reduction of ½ of this school is equivalent to the closing of 16 of the state's smallest school districts. (DECA figures, SD Dept of Education).

University and Technical school offerings are popular at Ellsworth. We combine our local populations with the military personnel and dependents to create a college student nucleus large enough to support our offerings. A reduction of 10,000 base-related personnel will seriously diminish the educational opportunities of those of us remaining in this community. (BHSU, T. Flickema: 284/977 students are military or dependents, Fall 2004)

Services: The local United Way indicates that their member agencies rely heavily upon Ellsworth and its personnel in many ways. While there are too many examples to cite, at last year's day of caring, a day of community projects, 300 Ellsworth personnel worked on 54 projects in this community. Their volunteerism is an integral part of our community.
Renee Parker, United Way

Medicine: The Rapid City Regional Hospital provides most of the inpatient health care needs of Ellsworth personnel and dependents. 12% of the babies born there are to Ellsworth personnel or dependents. During the past 5 years, this hospital served 27,000 military personnel/ dependent or retiree cases, generating \$50 million in gross charges (\$49,539,610 over 5 years).
RCRH Alan Bares

Our arts community, or symphony, our theaters, our sports teams all receive substantial support from the Ellsworth community. Our community's ability to offer such life enriching experiences will be diminished by the loss of EAFB.

Our places of worship are lead by and contributed to significantly by Ellsworth personnel and dependents.

Our security: I'm not talking about the nation's security, but instead our volunteer firefighters, search and rescue teams, or police reserves. For example, when search and rescue called recently for assistance to find a lost alzheimer's patient, over 50 of those searchers were Ellsworth personnel. As part of the mutual aid fire departments, the EAFB fire department responds regularly to fires throughout the area. The law enforcement divisions of Ellsworth are true partners with the local sheriff and police departments. In the Pennington County Sheriff's Department alone, 50 current employees are former EAFB personnel or spouses, comprising 19% (50/267, Lt. Weber) of the staff. In fact, 12 of the 28 members of the Box Elder volunteer fire department are EAFB personnel.

Penn Co Sheriff's Office, Lt. K. Weber
Box Elder Mayor Haddenham
Park Owen, Emergency Management

Retirees: Our community is enriched by the countless military retirees residing here. They fill much needed rolls in our community and are integral to our economic and cultural well-being. While it is difficult to get an exact count, we know that a minimum over 2700 retirees use medical facilities at Ellsworth. The number of retirees in our community far exceeds this figure.

Quality of Life: The EAFB community, the RC community, has been ranked, not by us, but by independent agencies and organizations as among the top in lifestyle. Morgan Quitno puts SD in the top 10 of the "most livable" states in America. Expansion Magazine ranks us among 60 military communities in its top ¼, ranking 2 in schools, and high in numerous other categories. In short, the military personnel enjoy living here as much as we enjoy having them here.

Commissioners: Ellsworth Air Force Base is a significant part of our community and we are a significant part of theirs. We know that your decision must be based primarily on military value factors. We also know that your criteria include "the impact on existing communities in the vicinity of the military installation." Congress included this provision for a reason.

Commissioners, the impact of the closure of Ellsworth AFB on this community, state and region will be significant and long lasting.

Thank you.

Jim McKeon

As you have heard in the testimonies provided, we have pronounced differences with the Secretary's recommendations and offer to you that Ellsworth Air Force Base should not be closed. Rather, it should be retained for basing the currently assigned B-1B squadrons and that you designate it as the strategic base of presence in the north central U.S. for assignment of the "emerging mission" now identified as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. Further, we recommend you consider Ellsworth for the basing of Tanker missions being realigned from the region or retained for basing of C2ISR or Space missions in which it ranked fifth and tenth, respectively, in MCI scoring. The basis of our recommendations are:

1. The Air Force recommendation to consolidate all B-1B aircraft at one base with one runway violates Air Force Principle #7 as contained in Department of the Air Force Analysis and Recommendations BRAC 2005 (Volume V, part 1 of 2) Air Force Basing Considerations 1.7.1.7 "Insure long range strike bases provide flexible strategic response and strategic force protection."
2. In contrast, the Air Force has not recommended the consolidation of any other Legacy Aircraft Principle.
3. Air Force officials have testified to the Commission that Ellsworth's current bomber mission capability is diminished by training range access; however, the metric on which that measurement is based does not consider the quality of the training available on the range or the average sortie time required to accomplish identical mission requirements.
4. Ellsworth's Powder River MOA is 7 to 8 minutes from Ellsworth's runway, has a ground or surface to unlimited ceiling operations area and allows a training mission to be flown in a duration of 3.8 hrs. versus the same mission flown at the proposed consolidation base which has less vertical space and requires an additional .7 hours of

flight time. The result will be less quality training at an estimated additional 14 thousand dollars per mission.

5. As the aircraft assigned to Ellsworth constituted 82% (686 of 832) of the missions flown in the Powder River MOA in the past year and the Air Force has stated its intent to maintain the Powder River MOA, either it will continue to be used as a primary B-1B MOA or be grossly underutilized. If B-1B missions from the consolidated base use the range in the future, the added cost per mission is estimated at \$100k --- an estimated \$68.6m annually or \$1.3 billion over the next 20 years.

6. The Air Force recommendation to assign the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle mission to a strategic base of presence in the north central U.S. other than Ellsworth Air Force Base is inconsistent with the findings of the Environmental Assessment for Global Hawk Main Operating Base Beddown as determined by the March 2001 Air Combat Command finding that Ellsworth Air Force Base is the only base in the region suited for the mission.

7. The Air Force recommendation to realign Tanker Assets to bases ranked lower than Ellsworth's fifth position in Tanker MCI scoring is inconsistent with the Military Value Criteria Number 1 --- Current and Future Mission capabilities.

8. An analysis of the Air Force MCI ratings of the three bases positioned to be retained as a strategic base of presence in the north central U.S. rated Ellsworth 1st in six of eight categories (Bomber, Airlift, Tanker, Fighter, C2ISR and Space). Each of the other bases only ranked first in one category each. In point-of-fact, Ellsworth ranked no lower than second in the other two categories. Accordingly the recommendation to close Ellsworth Air Force base is inconsistent with Military Value Criteria #1 as relates to Future Mission capabilities.

Before our Governor, Mike Rounds close our testimony, I would like to recap the salient points with which General Mike Loh opened our testimony.

First. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #1 in recommending the consolidation of Ellsworth's consistently higher

rated B-1B operations at a base that maintains a lesser operational readiness rate; thereby impacting training, readiness and warfighting.

Second. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #2 in that the recommended closure of Ellsworth will relocate the aircraft that constitute 82% of the use of the immediately adjacent air space (Powder River MOA) to a base at least two hours flight time away; thereby either increasing operational cost or reducing mission effectiveness.

Third. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #3 in that the reduced use of the Powder River MOA will either increase the cost of operations per mission flown from out of the area or cause it to be abandoned for use by future total force requirements.

Fourth. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #4 in that the cost to operate the entire B-1B fleet will exceed the cost of maintaining two bases, each of which with the capacity to accept future force beddowns.

Fifth. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #6 in that of the three bases in the north central U.S., considered for strategic presence retention, the recommended closure of Ellsworth will eliminate the most highly rated base for realigning tanker aircraft or the beddown of future force missions such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, C2ISR or emerging missions such as the Airborne Laser.

Sixth. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #6 in that of the three bases in the north central U.S., considered for strategic presence retention, the recommended closure of Ellsworth will more severely impact the existing communities in its vicinity than the one being recommended for retention for an "emerging mission."

And

Seventh. The Air Force substantially deviated from Criteria #7 in that the recommended closure of Ellsworth will relocate B-1B assets to base that has a lesser current Plant Replacement Value and will have a lesser infrastructure and overall capacity even after the proposed facility projects identified for construction are completed.

Commissioners, to conclude our testimonies before you, I would like to present to you one of the few Governors who has flown in the front seat of a B-1B bomber as it was put through its paces in our Powder River Training Area. He knows of what he speaks and is as closely associated with our state's National Guard as any Governor can possibly be.

Commissioners, Governor Mike Rounds.

Commissioners Skinner, Bilbray and Coyle... Thank you very much for coming to South Dakota.

We all appreciate your hard work and the extra efforts you are making to thoroughly understand the Defense Department recommendations and the nation's response to them. The time you have spent visiting Ellsworth and listening to us is very, very much appreciated.

As Governor, it has been my privilege to meet the men and women who fly the B-1B bombers and provide all the support that keeps these bombers in top condition to defend our country. I know first-hand how professional and conscientious they are.

There aren't enough words in the dictionary to describe how proud we are of them and what they do for us. We are grateful to have them living and working here in South Dakota. We appreciate them more than anyone can imagine.

With this morning's base visit and the testimony presented to you this afternoon, I believe you have the information you need to conclude that the Air Force and the Secretary of Defense substantially deviated from the military value criteria required to recommend a base for closure.

Internal Air Force evaluations clearly show that Ellsworth Air Force Base has the infrastructure and other qualities needed to be the only B-1B base.

But, the argument should not be one base versus another base. The bottom line is— for the defense of our people, America needs the B-1B on

more than one base so that the B-1B is not vulnerable to a single attack or a natural disaster.

The B-1B dropped over 40% of the munitions in Afghanistan and 34% of the munitions in the initial push in Iraq.

The B-1B's vital mission of defending and protecting Americans should not be placed in jeopardy by deploying it on only one base that has only one usable runway for the B-1B. America needs two bases and two runways.

We also need more than one base and more than one usable runway so that natural disasters, storms, weather and other things that temporarily close a base don't cause a delay in our B-1Bs responding to a call for immediate action.

Hickam Field and battleship row at Pearl Harbor. Clark Field in the Philippines on the same day. They were all concentrations of resources in just one place which allowed the enemy to successfully attack us.

The proposed consolidation of 65 or more B-1B bombers at one base brings into question the entire assessment process that refuses to recognize the need for redundancy in protecting this country.

When the principle of redundancy has not been followed, our nation and other nations have suffered terribly. Therefore, please don't allow this principle to be abandoned.

Looking through the factors that led to the recommendation to put all the B-1Bs at one base, why wasn't the importance of redundancy a factor?

How many points would Ellsworth and other bases have gained if the importance of redundancy for this and other vital weapons systems been recognized and in the scoring system?

I'm not a military planner.

But, if you ask a veteran of Pearl Harbor,
If you ask a commander in the Korean War,

If you ask a helicopter pilot from the Vietnam War,
If you ask any of our soldiers from the Gulf and Iraqi Wars, or
If you ask the moms or dads of those soldiers,
I don't think any one of them would tell you that that is good idea to put
ALL our B-1B bombers in one location instead of two.

The Air Force also erred when it testified on May 17th that Ellsworth could
not handle all B-1B aircraft. In fact, Ellsworth has the space to house
71 large aircraft. The Air Force also underestimated the total square
footage of the available ramp space by 20%.

But, gentlemen, we are not asking for Ellsworth to be the only B-1B base.
America needs two bases, not one, for the B-1B mission.

Even though the Defense Department wants to close Ellsworth, the Air
Force will still continue to use both its ground and airspace presence
in an estimated 320,000 square miles of the Upper Great Plains
extending from Montana to Nebraska.

This airspace is some of the most open and uncluttered airspace in the
United States... and it is only 7 or 8 flight minutes away from
Ellsworth.

In your difficult deliberations, you are evaluating sites for both current and
future missions. Many future missions will include joint active-
reserve component operations as expressed by the Air Force in its
May 17th testimony.

I believe the people of this region can provide the personnel needed for a
blended wing of B-1B aircraft, as well as enough personnel for any
other future missions.

The South Dakota Army National Guard is at 96% of its authorized strength
and has a retention rate of 87%.

The South Dakota Air National Guard is at 102% of its authorized strength
and has a 95% retention rate.

Both of them rank in the top 5 in comparison to the other 54 states and
territories in recruiting, retention and attrition measurements.

We want to participate in joint active-reserve operations.

In summary, the Department of Defense's recommendation to close Ellsworth puts a critical national defense mission into a vulnerable position where all the B-1Bs could be destroyed by a single attack or a natural disaster... or they could be delayed in responding by something as simple as bad weather.

The recommendation also ignores the capacity of both bases to continue the B-1B mission and perform additional future missions.

The Defense Department also ignores the desires of people in this region to serve in joint active-reserve missions.

I strongly recommend that you reject the recommendation to close Ellsworth.

I hope you will also direct that the current B-1Bs remain to provide redundancy in our total B-1B mission.

I would also ask that you consider adding new missions at Ellsworth to fully utilize the base's under-reported capacity.

Nobody's perfect. This Defense Department recommendation to close Ellsworth is a mistake made by good people who were trying to do their best.

But, now, you have the opportunity to correct it. For the defense and protection of the people of America, we hope that the BRAC Commission will correct this mistake.

I'd like to add just one more thing.

As the Commander in Chief of South Dakota's Army and Air National Guards, I am grateful for the B-1B's reliability and effectiveness in killing the enemy and pushing the enemy back to minimize the face-to-face combat that my South Dakota soldiers have encountered overseas.

Our B-1Bs should not be put in a vulnerable position that might allow all of them to be destroyed or delayed in responding to protect our soldiers on the ground.

If that happens, we are less protected here at home and so too are the soldiers we send from our hometowns to fight our enemies in foreign lands.

Thank you.

Closing Comments --- Jim McKeon

Chairman Skinner, Commissioner Bilbray and Commissioner Coyle, as we prepared for this hearing we came to realize that it would be both complex and lengthy. The delayed release of information hampered us in preparing a more concise argument. We would have liked to have more time to do so but we realize you are on an accelerated schedule and believe it was best for you to visit both Ellsworth and with us here in Rapid City.

We deeply appreciate the courtesies you have extended to us, the endurance you have exhibited and your acceptance of the monumental task placed before you.

We will be in contact with your staff members in the coming weeks and available to you as needed,

Again, thank you for your service to our country.

We stand ready for any questions you may have.

After Questions.

This concludes our presentation but since this is a regional meeting, a representative from Wyoming will now make their presentation.