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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02193-1054

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July 5, 2005

Dear Chairman Anthony J. Principi and honorable BRAC commissioners,

I am writing to strongly recommend that the closure of Otis Air National Guard Base be removed from consideration by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC). BRAC cost savings need to be reviewed to factor in costs to the Coast Guard and the need of our Coast Guard to protect the seacoast communities in New England.

The proposed closure of Otis Air National Guard Base affects the entire Mass Military Reservation including the **transfer of cost to the U.S. Coast Guard**. Otis plays a major role in protecting our national security. The 102d Fighter Wing was the first air defense unit to respond to the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. In addition to the Fighter Wings, Otis hosts the Coast Guard Air Wing that provides vital protections to our northeastern communities.

I am concerned that Homeland Security will be adversely impacted, leaving Boston with only 2 airplanes to patrol and protect a 175 mile radius. In comparison, New York and Washington D.C. will have a combined 101 airplanes to patrol their respected areas. The ability to intercept threats on our security in one of the world's busiest air routes would be seriously jeopardized. In particular, intercepting a threat crossing from Canadian borders would be minimal at best.

All of the elected members of the Cape Cod Delegation in the House of Representatives are concerned about the economic impact of the BRAC decision on Cape Cod. The closing of Otis Air Base will not only weaken the security of our northeast, it will have a negative impact on the economy of Cape Cod and the Island Communities.

Sincerely,

 Shirley Gomes
 State Representative
 4th Barnstable District