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June 29, 2005



Metrowest
Chamber of
Commerce



The Honorable Anthony Principi, Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Polk Building, Suite 600
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202-3920

Dear Chairman Principi:

I am writing in support of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations to expand Hanscom Air Force Base and preserve the Soldier Systems Center – Natick. Mass Defense Technology Initiative, co-chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy and Governor Mitt Romney, has led the public-private partnership to preserve and expand the missions of these two unique technical facilities.

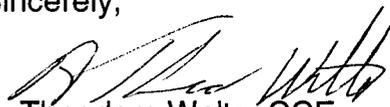
For decades, Hanscom and Natick have made significant contributions to the technological advancement that drives our nation's warfighting capabilities. The command and control technologies developed at Hanscom and the soldier systems advancements from Natick help give the U.S. military a technological advantage over every other military force in the world.

SSC-Natick has a 50 plus year tradition of serving all branches of the military and was ranked number one in military value for both Human Systems Research and Human Systems Development & Acquisition by the Pentagon's Technical Joint Cross Service Group. Both Natick and Hanscom ranked in the top ten of several other categories in the TJCSG ratings.

The successful track record of these bases can be attributed in large part to their proximity to the nation's top defense technology cluster that stretches from Southeastern Massachusetts into Southern New Hampshire. This region possesses the critical mass of skilled workforce, experienced institutional and academic partners and research and development base to enable these facilities to thrive now and into the future. As this BRAC process has proven, the Pentagon has a willing partner in Massachusetts to help create the future vision for these facilities.

By recommending the addition of more than 1100 new direct jobs to Hanscom and retaining the core technology mission at Natick, the Pentagon has made a tremendous commitment to Massachusetts and its technological capabilities. We recognize that commitment and will do our part to enhance the collaboration between the academic/high tech/medical sectors and these facilities so that they can continue their critical work in defense of our nation and grow for the future.

Sincerely,


A. Theodore Welte, CCE
President & CEO

cc: Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative



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