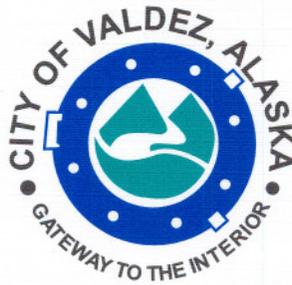


DCN: 2600



June 14, 2005

06202005

Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington VA 22202

Re: Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska

Dear Commission Members:

On behalf of the City of Valdez, I wish to thank you for coming to Alaska to hear first hand issues of concern associated with the proposed changes to Eielson Air Force Base.

For those of you not familiar with the geographic location of Valdez, we are located approximately 365 miles south of Fairbanks. Among other things, we are the terminus of the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline and the recipient of approximately 400 oil supertanker port calls each year, loading crude oil from our community for destinations in the Continental U.S.

We were alarmed to learn that Eielson was on a base realignment list. Our concern evolves from the strategic location of Eielson in association with the 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Approximately one million barrels of oil are transported through TAPS every day. This represents approximately 20% of the U.S. daily consumption of oil. As you may know, approximately one-half of the TAPS 48 inch diameter pipeline is above ground and therefore is particularly vulnerable to attacks by those wishing to disrupt our Nation's crude oil supply.

We firmly believe that having a fully capable air base half way between the oil production facilities in Prudhoe Bay and the crude oil loading facilities in Valdez is extremely beneficial from a national security stand point. We view a fully operational Eielson Air Force Base as a significant deterrent to any potential attack on TAPS.

Eielson Air Force Base
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As you know, Alaska by our sheer size and geographic location, is significantly separated from the continental United States. We recognize that Elmendorf Air Force Base is located in Anchorage, however, we strongly believe that it does not create the presence associated with TAPS that is needed to act as a deterrent for the protection of TAPS. Additionally, we are concerned that if we are left to the resources and availability of one Air Base facility in Alaska to respond, we are exposed to significantly greater risks. It is for this reason that we would feel particularly vulnerable to potential sabotage attacks of TAPS if Eielson Air Force Base is not fully equipped.

Again, we thank you for your time and attention to this very serious matter. If we can provide any input or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bert L. Cottle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bert L. Cottle, Mayor