



DCN: 1980



77 East Michigan Avenue, Commerce Pointe • Suite 80, Battle Creek, MI 49017 • 269.962.4076 • fax 269.962.6309 • www.battlecreek.org



RECEIVED

06152005

June 13, 2005

Mr. Anthony Principi, Chair
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, along with the two-county Citizens Base Retention Committee, supports the continuing presence and growth of the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base and the 110th Fighter Wing at W.K. Kellogg Airport.

Battle Creek and the Chamber have long supported our military. Over the years, they have become the largest employer in the area; approximately nine percent of the Battle Creek workforce is employed by the military.

Local, highly skilled military installations contribute substantially to deployments around the world. The 110th Fighter Wing is one of only three Air National Guard fighter units mobilized during the past two combat contingency operations. Additionally, we have spacious facilities that contribute to the current military goals of jointness. To replicate these Battle Creek facilities elsewhere in Michigan would be ineffective and costly.

As the largest business advocacy organization in Calhoun County, representing approximately 800 members, we strongly urge the BRAC Commission to keep the 110th Fighter Wing operations in the greater Battle Creek area.

Sincerely,

Kathleen L. Mechem
President and CEO