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129 Oak Point School Rd.  
Camden-Wyo., DE 19934  
July 19, 2005

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission

JUL 21 2005

Received

Dear Commissioners

I am writing to your BRAC Commission reference to the Greater Wilmington Airport and the Delaware National Guard. My fear is the you will decide to close an airport that is vital not only to northern Delaware, but is equally as important to the greater areas of New Jersey and Pennsylvania and this entire part of the north eastern United States.

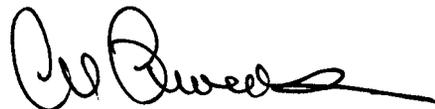
Below Wilmington, Delaware, the land is basically open country. Wilmington Airport is on the cusp of open land making it easily reachable from our neighboring states. It is this proximity that gives the airfield its unique advantage. In case of a natural or a man made calamity affecting any or all of this area, Wilmington Airport and the six Delaware Air National Guard's C-130 cargo planes are now in position to be invaluable assets.

The Medical Evacuation Unit already pre-positioned at the airport is an indication of what service Wilmington's airfield already plays as a staging area for casualties in the event of a crisis situation. The entire airport's environs would be readily available as a casualty staging area and the six cargo planes of the Air Guard providing a life saving means of medical evacuation and bringing in critically needed supplies or delivering same to other northeastern casualty areas.

It is a certainty in the event of a WMD attack on Philadelphia or the middle and southern parts of New Jersey and Delmarva Peninsula, Dover Air Force Base will be quite busy moving disaster response materials and military personnel with equipment to other locations. The tactical airlift capability of the Delaware Air National Guard now placed at the airfield will be sorely needed. These critical factors in favor of not losing the Greater Wilmington Airport and the military airlift capability there should be taken into consideration and the facility be kept open.

I appreciate this opportunity to tell the BRAC commission of my concerns.

Sincerely yours,



Al Owens  
Delaware

Karl H. Kromer  
240 Timber Knoll Drive  
Bear, De 19701

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BRAC Commission Members  
2521 South Clark Street  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear BRAC Commission Members,

As a citizen and an Air National Guardsman, I write this letter to enhance your understanding of the true impacts of the recommended alignment of the Delaware Air National Guard. By now, I believe you fully understand that the Air Force has not considered all the facts in its proposal to realign our wing. Nor has it considered the future implications of dismantling an organization that has added value to the Air Force in the past and will continue to add value to the Air Force in the future. I will address the implications of the negative impact this realignment will have on not only the members of our immediate community but the state's ability to protect itself from terrorism and its ability to conduct homeland defense missions.

The Defense Department is preparing for its next Quadrennial Defense Review. The new force-planning construct will certainly revolve around three central elements: homeland defense, the global war on terrorism and conventional major warfare. It is the ability of the State of Delaware to conduct its homeland defense mission that concerns me the most. The Delaware Air National Guard is located within a ten mile radius of many critical pieces of infrastructure that are particularly suited to terrorist attacks. The Delaware Memorial Bridge is a major link on the eastern seaboard corridor. Should it be damaged or destroyed due to a terrorist attack it could have a devastating effect on commerce between states. Several Oil refineries could also be the object of a terrorist attack, as could the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear power plants. Chlorine plants within our ten mile radius are also tempting targets for terrorists. The Delaware River is a major artery for oil tankers and any major spill from an attack would be devastating not only to our ability to refine oil but to the environment as well.

What is my point. The point is that without the manpower that the Delaware Air National Guard can provide in preventing terrorist attacks, its personnel would be sorely needed to mitigate damages from such an attack. Most major response plans for the state of Delaware include the men and women of the Air National Guard. The ability to handle mass casualties would be severely limited as would be the ability to preserve order in times of chaos. The ability to cope with large numbers of casualties is critical to the state's response plans and to the protection of the citizens of this state.

Secretary Rumsfeld and his deputies continue to have concerns about how to bolster homeland defense, a difficult task indeed given the funding constraints and the continuing challenges in Iraq and around the world. It is always in the minds of our

leadership that the Department of Defense will have to provide a significant share of its resources to support federal, state and local agencies charged with the awesome responsibility of protecting the citizens of our nation. To realign this unit, given these circumstances is without logic. The people of the Delaware Air National have always stood ready and able to respond to any natural or manmade disaster and we have done so in the past.

Defense officials are now in the process of reassessing the Department of Defense's proper roles and missions in homeland security in the Quadrennial Defense Review. The result is highly likely that military personnel available for domestic terrorism response will increase in numbers. It need not be so. The military has enough missions around the world and cannot afford to provide resources for domestic needs. However, the Delaware Air National Guard is ready, willing and able to take on that task. But it can't do that if you take out the heart and soul of our unit, the traditional airman. It is the traditional airmen of this unit that provide a ready pool of citizens at low cost and at a moments notice that will respond to disasters or whatever nature. Realigning five-hundred personnel of the 166<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron is critical error in my judgment. The Delaware Air National Guard is a success story not only in its ability to perform the critical military mission of airlift, it is a success story in its ability to respond to many forms of disaster and provide order in the chaos that would result if any of our critical infrastructure is the target of a terrorist attack.

Members of the Commission, I hope that you see this letter as a statement of fact and not an emotional appeal. As you are aware, we had one of your analysts here two weeks ago and I believe we made a good factual case the "military value" of this wing. I only addressed homeland security issues. If you consider both arguments, I believe you will find that the Delaware Air National Guard is a valuable resource to the Department of Defense and the citizens of this state and nation and should not be realigned as currently envisioned by the Air Force. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Karl H. Kromer

Dear BRAC Commissioners:

I am opposed to the Defense Department's proposal to move tens of thousands of workers from the District and Arlington, VA to Fort Meade and Fort Belvoir, areas lacking the transportation infrastructure to accommodate those workers.

In addition:

DoD should be considering developing  
more on the Pentagon reservation.

The N+S parking lots could be consolidated in garages.

Please find a way to improve security for our offices without subjecting our communities and families to worse traffic, a major disruption of our lives and careers, and high taxes to build new infrastructure when Arlington & DC are already well served by transit, carpools, and walking.

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cc: Sen. Warner, Sen. Allen, Rep. Davis, Rep. Moran

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