

7113 W. Leah Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57106
May 20, 2005

Chairman Anthony Princiti
Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Polk Building
2521 S. Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman:

I am writing in reference to the base closings that your commission is in the process of selecting. My special appeal concerns Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City, South Dakota.

Tourism and Ellsworth AF Base are the main economic backbones of the Black Hills Region. If this base were to close, the economy of the region would collapse. There would be nothing to replace the western South Dakota economy.

Ellsworth has long been one of our main defense bases, mainly because of its location. Bomber capabilities would not be improved by relocating them. If the plan is to get rid of the planes, why are we doing this while our nation is more vulnerable than it has been in our history?

Sincerely,



Nyle D. Meeker

Cc to: Senator John Thune
Senator Tim Johnson
Representative Stephanie Herseth

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5/25/05