

29 July 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Chairman  
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission  
2521 S. Clark St., Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

BRAC Commission

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Received

Dear Chairman Principi:

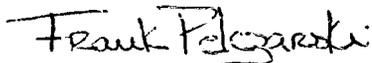
I am writing to urge you to reject the Air Force plan to ground a third of the Air National Guard (ANG) under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. The recommendations made by the Air Force affecting ANG bases are outside the scope of the BRAC process. As hearings held by the Commission and by the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) have proved, these recommendations substantially deviate from published BRAC selection criteria.

I am also concerned about the effects of proposed base closures, both active and reserve component, on my access to health care, commissary, and MWR benefits. DOD did not consider retiree and reserve component populations surrounding military bases in their evaluation and selection of sites for closure. These closures will have a significant impact on my ability to use those benefits that I have earned.

The men and women of our National Guard are playing an increasingly integral role in military operations both domestically and around the world. There is a crisis in recruiting and the potential for one in retention. Closing these facilities would not only force National Guard members to drive farther to drill, it will also, in many cases, take away the missions they have been trained to do and enjoy doing. This will cause yet another drop in morale that the services cannot tolerate at this time.

Please consider these issues carefully as you finalize your recommendations for base closure. I ask that you remove the Air National Guard facilities from the list and make changes to reduce the impact of potential loss of installation-based benefits for National Guard members and retirees. If you have any questions, please contact me or my representative at the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, 1-800-234-3264.

Sincerely,



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