

DCN: 3852

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July 1, 2005

Chairman Anthony J. Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

RE: New Castle County Delaware Airport Air Guard Station

Dear Chairman Principi and BRAC Commissioners,

On behalf President Raymond T. Stevens and the Officers and Members of the 61 member departments of the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association we are very concerned about the BRAC Commission's decision to realign the 166th Airlift Wing at the New Castle County Airport, Delaware.

We do not believe the Commission is fully aware of the unique attributes that the 166th Airlift Wing offers to our national defense. These include an abundance of the most experienced and skilled personnel, their homeland defense role, and their commitment to serving this country and state.

This installation is the model of joint use base facilities whose strengths include:

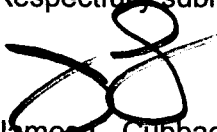
- Many joint operations including all services state and local
- Strategic location near all Northeast Corridor major metropolitan and port areas
- Vital Part of Homeland Defense & Security for the East Coast
- Strong Emergency Preparedness and Operations capability
- Major component in the Strategic National Stockpile Plan

- Vital Medical Needs Shelter will be greatly affected by the loss of 142nd Aero Medical Evacuation Squadron
- Catastrophic Evacuation Plan facility and shelter
- Vital role of the DE Air National Guard Fire Department in the local Mutual Aid Plan providing highly trained personnel and ARFF to the community

As the Delaware's First Responders we know the vital role the men and women of the New Castle County Air Guard Station serve in protecting the citizen's of Delaware and our Nation. If this plan continues the State of Delaware's Security Component will be compromised and our ability & capacity to deal the any catastrophic event will be lowered. The Delaware Air National Guard has always maintained the highest state of readiness and efficiency.

We urge you to reconsider all of the facts before making your final decision.

Respectfully submitted,



James L. Cabbage, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Cc: Governor Ruth Ann Minner
Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Senator Thomas R. Carper
Representative Michael N. Castle
MG Frank Vavala
DVFA Officers
File