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Cleveland's Harbor District features exciting attractions including the U.S.S. Cod Submarine Memorial, Steamship William G. Mather Museum, Voinovich Bicentennial Park, Goodtime III cruise ship, Great Lakes Science Center and another museum. This is not an officially licensed product.

Photo © James Blank

July 4, 2005

9459 Fairmount Rd.



9459 Fairmount Rd., OH 44115



Dear Honorable Principe,

Our Defense Finance and Accounting Service pay center here in Cleveland, OH are doing a very fine job. With 1200 people employed answering calls from a soldier on a mountaintop in Afghanistan to servicemen's families that are concerned about creditors repossessing their belongings!

We need to show our gratitude and appreciation and keep them and our Defense Finance and Accounting Service right here in Cleveland, OH.

Honorable G. Principe,
Commissioner (Chair)
RE: 2005 Defense Base Closure

2521 S. Clark St.
Suite 600
Arlington, VA

22202

Non-Vista Plus, P.O. Box 5220, Willowick, Ohio 44095 U.S.A. (440) 943-5377
First-class postage required



Sincerely, Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Harris

It seems to make the
best sense to leave ~~over~~ the
Cleveland Finance Base.

Please do your best
to make this happen.

Thanks,

Rc

Mr. Arthur J. Fusco

RECEIVED

07-04-05

HON. ANTHONY J. PRINCIPALINO 07 07 2005

DEAR SIR:

I HOPE YOU CAN FIND TIME TO
READ THIS ARTICLE.

IT EXPRESSES THE HOPES OF
ALL CLEVELANDERS. ALTHOUGH I
RESIDE IN THE SUBURBS, I STILL
CONSIDER CLEVELAND MY HOMETOWN
HAVING SERVED THERE FOR 25 YEARS
AS A POLICE OFFICER.

THE DEAS BLOG IS VITAL TO
CLEVELAND'S SURVIVAL, IT IS A
DYING CITY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION IN
THIS MATTER.

Arthur J. Fusco



GOD BLESS AMERICA

Ms. Arlene Reffer

RECEIVED

2/29/05

Dear Sir

07012005

I am just an old 81 yr
senior, but my concern
is the possible closing of
our Cleveland DFAS office

Our men + women, &
their families, deserve to
have the best possible
connection (& comfort) to
this office for their
problems + concerns.

Please help them



GOD BLESS AMERICA

RECEIVED



A Note From



MR. Mrs. Charles Mayer

07.05.2005



Dear Mr. Principe



Please read the enclosed article stating how important it is to KEEP DFAS in Cleveland! Cleveland NEEDS DFAS.
Respectfully.



Charles Perry Mayer
24000 LEBERN DR
NORTH AMSTERDAM OH.



Plain Dealer

Wed June 29
2005



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www.cleveland.com/indepth

REGINA BRETT



Cleveland keeps military connected

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In addition - the service men & women will be
deprived of the services of excellent people who have
a commendable history of working for and supporting
our country.

Thank you for your time.

Chris Stevens

CHRISTINE B. STEVENS

June 28 2005
RECEIVED

0705
52005

Dear Mr. Anthony J. Principi,

As Commission Chair of the Defense Base Closure you have an awesome responsibility - facts + figures related to the cost of operation are a priority. The one item that no dollar amount can capture is the human cost - the cost of disruption in service or decrease in service to our men and women serving in the military - and the cost to the local economies where bases must be closed and services must be changed or discontinued.

I beg you to please consider the Northeast Ohio/Cleveland area as a region that provides excellent, competent and compassionate service to military personnel. Closing down service here will have a devastating effect on the local economy - in an area already economically challenged.

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07052005

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7/30/05

The enclosed column clearly
states the wisdom of maintaining
the Cleveland DFAS -

 RECEIVED
07 05 2005

Sincerely

Merle Bender

Plain Dealer

Wed June 29
2005



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0705205

HL
June 30

To whom it may concern.

Why would you want to close the D.F.A.S. office in Cleveland when it has proved to be one of the best operated in your system?

Why would you want to put 1,200 proven workers out of jobs? Especially since the Cleveland area is the poorest city in the U.S.A.

The enclosed article from The Plain Dealer (June 28 '65) states other reasons (good ones) for keeping D.F.A.S. right where it is now in Cleveland.

"If it aint broke dont fix it".

Sincerely,
Sally Burkha

Plain Dealer

Wed June 29
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PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD

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REGINA BRETT



Cleveland keeps military connected

Gary Moore sits in a cubicle all day in downtown Cleveland, talking to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Thank you for calling DFAS Cleveland," he says over and over into a headset. "My name is Gary. How may I help you?"

There are 1,200 reasons not to close the Defense Finance and Accounting Service pay center in Cleveland. Gary Moore is just one of them.

He answers 120 to 150 calls all day. Soldiers call on satellite phones from mountaintops in Afghanistan. Spouses call about creditors ready to repossess cars and trucks. Wives worry about threats to foreclose on a home. Gary makes a few calls and saves the day — and the home.

One soldier called from Iraq about a new household account for his pregnant wife. The soldier had just received an e-mail saying his mother-in-law had taken his wife to the hospital.

"I made a couple calls and found out where she was at," Gary said. "She'd had her baby that morning."

When the hospital put him through to her room, Gary asked her, "Do you want to talk to your husband?"

"Oh, my God, yes," she cried. As soon as they said hello, Gary got off the line

ad about retiree pay and called.

Gary ran the man's name through the computer. The man lived in Cleveland. Gary called, and he will never forget that conversation:

"Your daughter is trying to track you down," he said.

"You're kidding," the man said.

"Would you like to talk to your daughter?" he asked. "I have her on the other line."

"God, yes," the man said.

Gary connected them. Her father whispered her name.

"Daddy?" she asked. "Is that you?"

There was dead silence, then tears.

Gary goes the extra mile because he knows what soldiers go through. He served in the Army for 31 months, 15 in Vietnam.

One of the worst calls he ever got came from a retiree who called about his pay.

"I served with him," Gary said. "He suffered from Agent Orange."

Before the agency could get everything finalized for the man's compensation, his wife called to report his death.

"That's one day I didn't go on to the very next call," Gary said.

Some soldiers frustrated with military red tape complain, "Do you know what it's like?"

"Yeah," Gary answers.

"These guys are out there on the front line," he said. "You don't know how long they're gonna be there or if they're gonna make it back or not."

On good days, returning soldiers call and he gets to say, "Welcome home." On bad days, he hears from widows.

He worries about the disruption it will cause them if the Cleveland office is closed, if the government has to train new people to handle the calls.

He worries about the ripple effect on restaurants and businesses if 1,200 jobs disappear.

To save the DFAS Cleveland jobs, contact www.brac.gov/feedback.aspx or write The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chair, 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, 2521 S. Clark St. Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22202.

Tell him that our men and women at war and their families deserve the best. Tell him they're already getting it in Cleveland, from people like Gary.



To reach this Plain Dealer columnist:
rbrett@plaind.com, 216-999-6328

RECEIVED July 1st
07 05 2005

Honorable Anthony J.
Principi:

I worked at the Finance
Center for a number of
years in the forties.
I am please that they
are still trying to
help the servicemen
and women.

Sincerely
Adele Schmidt
1036 Leaside Rd
Lundhurst

17124

07052005

6/29/05



RECEIVED

Dear Sir -

Please do not
close the DFAS Base
in Cleveland, Ohio -

Thank You,

Beth Terry

Stratigolli

2409 Hudson Avenue Rd

Hudson, Ohio
44136

RECEIVED

07052005

Honorable Anthony Principi,

As a Cleveland resident
I hope you will leave
us the DFAS jobs
in our city. Our people
do a good job

Always

Sandra Vodanoff
20605 Alameda
Cleveland, OH

44128

6/28



RECEIVED

Betty Horn

07052005

July 1, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi,
2005 Defense Base Closure & Realignment
2521 S. Clark St. Comm.
Suite 600
Arlington, Va. 22202

Dear Mr. Principi,

Reading Regina Bretts article about the possible closing of the D7AS Cleveland office, it seems they are doing a very efficient job and service in Cleveland.

The calls Gary Moore receives are worthy of keeping this organization in Cleveland as we have many service people who deserve their attention.

Please do not close this office as we need and feel Gary is doing a superb job

Sincerely,

Betty (Elizabeth) Horn



Mary C. Faraci
 34200 Ridge Rd #321
 Willoughby, OH 44094-29

07052005

RECEIVED

June 30, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi,
 Arlington, VA 22202

Our service men and women
 at war, and their families,
 deserve the very best, especially
 during these trying times.

The Cleveland office has
 been doing a remarkable job
 for many years. Let us keep
it that way!!

My husband, WILLIAM A.
 FARACI, retired from the
 Navy Finance Center in
 Cleveland in 1974 and was
 proud of his contributions in
 helping the military men and
 women.

Respectfully yours,
 Mary C. Faraci

SAVE DFAS
CLEVELAND

Mrs Thomas Emery
4402 Buechner Ave
Cleveland OH 44109-5039

July 5, 2005 RECEIVED

Honorable Anthony J. Principi, 07092005

Writing to ask you to save
over 1200 jobs in Cleveland by keeping
the Defense Finance and Accounting
Service open.

We need these jobs.

Thank you for your consideration
of my request - and the thousands
of others I believe you are, or will
be, receiving

Sincerely
Jeannette Emery

07052005



RECEIVED

6-29-05

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

Dear Sir;

I hope you can take 10 minutes
to read the enclosed. It is power-
ful reading.

I have no family or friends
who work at DFAS.

Thank you,
Michael J. Brennan
1467 E. 250th St.
Euclid, Ohio 44117
216-261-6983

June 27, 08

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Lorain and Cleveland are struggling
industrial cities in search of a new
economic future, for us every job counts.

07012005

RECEIVED

While the picture is bleak, loss
of the job is not a done deal.

Gov. Taft has pledged to fight the
move and the state supported
Cleveland's Defense Industry Alliance
is putting up a fight.

So I wanted to tell the commisioner
how valuable the Cleveland defense
jobs are, please keep a good thing
going here in Cleveland because loss
of jobs and also hurt
Lorain, Ohio.



Thank you,
Dandra L. Kingshott
Elmer E. Quigley

July 1, 2005

Sir,

RECEIVED

07072005

Please - do not wipe out our D&S facility. Cleveland is trying very hard to make it back now and if these jobs are gone it will do irreparable damage to the downtown area!

I know that Cleveland paper is mostly Democrat but many of us who live in the suburbs are Republican. And this will affect all of us.

I shall pray to the good Lord that you make the right decision. And please read this article.

Thank you.

Rosmary C. Herendeen

941 Pollis Plunge

Brookview Hts, Ohio 44147-1845



GOD BLESS AMERICA

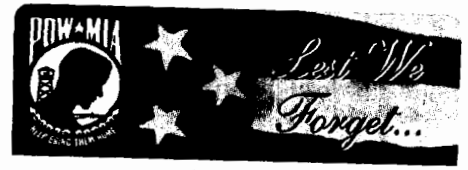


07 07 2005

RECEIVED

I agree with
Regina Brett's article
in the Plain Dealer.
And I do feel the
ones serving our country
& their family deserve
the best.

Jo Anne Klinger



Jo Anne Klinger
238 Chelsea Dr. • Willoughby, OH 44094

7-12-05

BRAC Commission

Dear Sir:

JUL 20 2005

I hope you keep the ^{Received} DFAS
Jobs in Cleveland.

The men and women in
the war and their families
deserve the best and I believe
they are getting it in Cleveland
now.

I really believe that the
cost savings in this move
of the center is not going
to be what as great as
the numbers that we are being
told.

Thank you for considering
this note

Sincerely
James R Kendal

07052005
RECEIVED

31512 Lettle Dr.
Bay Village OH
44140

Anthony J. Principi
Commission Chairman

June 30, 2005

2005 Defense Base

Closure & Realignment Comm.

2521 S. Clark St.

Suite 600

Arlington Va 22202

Dear Sir,

The American soldiers
deserve the best. They
are already getting it with the
Defense Accounting Service in
Cleveland with Gary Moore
fielding their calls from
Iraq & Afghanistan.

Keep the DFAS in
Cleveland Open !!

Dr. Stephen Smik

Patricia Smik

Lucinda Ann Denney 07 07 2005

RECEIVED

July 4, 05

Dear Honorable Anthony J. Principi,

Please save the DFAS Cleveland jobs. This article really tells it all! Save Cleveland and our men and women at war your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Lucinda Denney

June 29, 2005

Dear Mr. Principe:

Please take time to read these two articles from our Cleveland Plain Dealer today. Both were written by caring and compassionate columnists who realize the toll this war is taking on all Americans. Burying our soldiers has become an all-too-common occurrence in our state of Ohio, where our young men, as all our soldiers, are giving that "last full measure of devotion," as Lincoln said at Gettysburg.

Can't we and shouldn't we also give them our best? One of our "best" things in Ohio and Cleveland is the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. Closing this center would not only cause hardships to our military families BUT also to our local workers and their families. The state of Ohio is struggling to keep the jobs we have. We

can't afford to lose any more. (The President is aware of this, or at least addressed this issue when he campaigned in Ohio.)

I am a high school teacher and each commencement, I see several of my "lambs" enlisting to serve their country. Please let us ALWAYS seek to give our best devotion and care to them.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Scotten
596 Lake Forest Dr.
Bay Village, Ohio
44140

07052005

June 30, 2005 RECEIVED

Dear Mr. Principi:

Please keep the Defense Finance and Accounting Service pay center in Cleveland. Its staff is doing an excellent job. American taxpayers would LOSE, not GAIN, by changing the center's location.

Thanks for your consideration.

Anne B Adamson

ANNE B ADAMSON
3273 Dalesford Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio
44122

July 8, 2005

www.dix-eaton.com

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

Dear Secretary Principi:

I am writing to add my enthusiastic endorsement to the compelling case a bi-partisan group of my fellow Clevelanders recently presented to you in support of the Cleveland Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

While I certainly understand and appreciate the worthy goals and difficult task you seek to accomplish, I trust that you and the BRAC Commission staff will come to understand and appreciate the fact that the jobs of 1,200 of my fellow Clevelanders are unnecessarily in jeopardy because of bad math and questionable or inconsistent application of methodologies by the Pentagon in reaching its recommendation.

As testimony indicated, careful study reaffirms the vital role that the dedicated men and women of Cleveland DFAS play in serving the needs of our active duty troops and military retirees – including 19 unique process application functions, by far the most of any DFAS location. Moreover, it appears that the Pentagon failed to consider the specialized skills these individuals bring to their work or the excellent performance they consistently deliver.

Secretary Principi, Cleveland DFAS has earned its stripes and should remain open.

- As a Clevelander, I ask that you preserve the jobs that are the livelihood of 1,200 families throughout this area.
- As a member of the business community, I hope that you recognize how much Cleveland DFAS means to a city that is working hard to remain vital in the 21st century.
- And as a citizen of this great country, I plea that you will allow Cleveland DFAS to continue its valiant, behind-the-lines efforts in support of our nation's defense.

Thank you for your consideration of our appeal to Keep Cleveland DFAS.

Sincerely,



Scott Chaikin
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

RUTH MARTIN

23931 Russell Road
Bay Village, Ohio 44140
BRAC Commission

JUL 25 2005

July 21, 2005

Received

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

RE: PROPOSED DFAS-CLEVELAND CLOSING, CLEVELAND, OHIO

To The Members of the BRAC Commission:

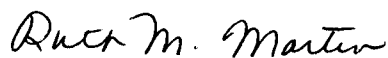
I believe that it would be doing both the Federal Government and our military a disservice if the DFAS-Cleveland facility were to be shut down. This facility day in and day out pays servicemen and women all over the world, including those in combat, and retired service members. It would seem that if, in time of war, a center, which has consistently proven outstanding performance of their duty to both service members and their families, were to be dismantled and the distinct possibility of those functions being delayed or done in error to be ill-advised.

I know in the commission's hearings that it has been emphasized that hard numbers should be the deciding factor in whether a facility stays or goes. Both senators and congressmen from our area have been able to provide evidence which supports the fact that the methodology was both inaccurate and misleading when numbers were generated to support DFAS-Cleveland's closing. It is time to reconsider this decision.

DFAS-Cleveland is both an asset to the country and to the City of Cleveland. The taxes generated by this facility are the lifeblood of the city, which is currently on life support. Should we let another of our major cities become a memory? This is not emotion; it is reality. The fallout from the realignment of this facility would be immense, and recovery, if it occurs at all, would take years.

I hope that you will take these factors into consideration before making a final decision.

Sincerely,



Ruth M. Martin

June 30 2005

RECEIVED

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi 07092005
Commission Chair

2005 Defense Base Closure
and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington VA 22202

Please keep the DFAS jobs in
Cleveland. Our city needs these
jobs and as you can see from
this article the staff goes above
and beyond their specified duties.

Taking these many jobs from that
downtown sector will hurt so
many businesses and their staffs.

Please, please help keep the jobs
here.

Sincerely,

Bill and Nancy Ditz
2055 West 13th Place
Cleveland OH 44115

RECEIVED
06072005

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

The Defense Department is closing 33 major and realigning 29 other bases out of 318 total facilities in total in the United States. Almost twenty (20) percent of DoD facilities are being closed or realigned. DFAS, however, has chosen to close 20 and realign 2 facilities out of a total of 25 locations which means almost ninety (90) percent of DFAS facilities are being closed or realigned. Why is DFAS grossly exceeding DoD's own standard for BRAC?

A major argument presented by DFAS management is that it is cheaper for DFAS to relocate in the Major General Emmett J. Bean Center in Indianapolis (which gains 3,500 positions) versus remaining in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building in Cleveland. Both facilities are owned and operated by the General Services Administration. Given the significant investments GSA has had to and continues to make to rehabilitate the Bean Center following the BRAC closure of Fort Benjamin Harrison, don't those costs have to be recouped by increased rental charges to DFAS? Isn't the trend in downtown Cleveland heading downwards because of the overall office vacancy rate? I believe the rental costs are intersecting very quickly, and the allure of a lower rate will not materialize if DFAS consolidates in the Bean Center as they have avowed.

I'm also very disturbed that the Defense Department contends we need to be on a base for security purposes when those same standards do not apply to other federal agencies which are tenants in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building, which include the Department of Homeland Security. How is DFAS Cleveland any more or less valuable than the Federal Reserve Bank or Federal Courts which are expanding their facilities and operations in downtown Cleveland?

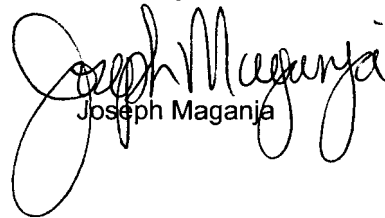
Isn't the Secretary of Defense governed by the same requirements when it comes to property that the other Departments in the Cabinet must follow? Executive Orders 12072 and 13006 (Federal Space Management) state: 1-101: Federal facilities and Federal use of space in urban areas shall give serious consideration to strengthen the Nation's cities and to make them attractive places to live and work: 1-102: Except where such selection is otherwise prohibited, the process for meeting Federal space needs in urban areas shall give first consideration to a centralized community business area and adjacent areas of similar character. The Bean Center lies in the outskirts of metropolitan Indianapolis being at the intersection of two major public roads which is little different from a security standpoint from being located in downtown Cleveland.

Mr. Chairman, DFAS has a poor history of conducting a cost-benefit analysis. A very recent case in point is the extraordinary effort DFAS went to outsource Military Retired and Annuitant Pay via Office of Management and Budget A-76 procedures. Multiple solicitations were made with the first two resulting in no competitive bidders. When the performance work statement was retailored for a third time, only then was the function awarded to a contractor. The DoD Inspector General eventually reviewed the cost comparison and stated DFAS incorrectly applied pricing factors which would have kept the function in house. Bottom line, decisions made by DFAS senior management increased costs to the American taxpayer. I ask that you and your staff carefully review any and all supporting information they provide in support of their current reorganization strategy in the light of past performance.

As employees we were told by our local management in an All Hands briefing on May 16, 2005 that quality of workforce was not an issue. That troubles me, and I hope you feel the same. We have also been told economic impact to local community was a minor consideration. Cleveland's unemployment rate is significantly above that of Denver, Columbus, and Indianapolis where DFAS is intending to increase its workforce.

Mr. Principi, I see no savings but quite the opposite when the costs of Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay, Severance Pay, PCS payments, hiring, and retraining a new workforce are considered. This is not good stewardship of taxpayer money. Centralizing in three very large locations poses more cost and risks than DFAS has been willing to consider.

Sincerely


Joseph Maganja

Copy to:

Mayor Jane Campbell – City of Cleveland
Congressman Dennis Kucinich
Congressman Steve LaTourette
Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs-Jones
Senator George Voinovich
Senator Michael DeWine

06072005



7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

The Honorable James H. Bilbray
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Bilbray:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

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I'm also very disturbed that the Defense Department contends we need to be on a base for security purposes when those same standards do not apply to other federal agencies which are tenants in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building, which include the Department of Homeland Security. How is DFAS Cleveland any more or less valuable than the Federal Reserve Bank or Federal Courts which are expanding their facilities and operations in downtown Cleveland?

Isn't the Secretary of Defense governed by the same requirements when it comes to property that the other Departments in the Cabinet must follow? Executive Orders 12072 and 13006 (Federal Space Management) state: 1-101: Federal facilities and Federal use of space in urban areas shall give serious consideration to strengthen the Nation's cities and to make them attractive places to live and work: 1-102: Except where such selection is otherwise prohibited, the process for meeting Federal space needs in urban areas shall give first consideration to a centralized community business area and adjacent areas of similar character. The Bean Center lies in the outskirts of metropolitan Indianapolis being at the intersection of two major public roads which is little different from a security standpoint from being located in downtown Cleveland.

DFAS has a poor history of conducting a cost-benefit analysis. A very recent case in point is the extraordinary effort DFAS went to outsource Military Retired and Annuitant Pay via Office of Management and Budget A-76 procedures. Multiple solicitations were made with the first two resulting in no competitive bidders. When the performance work statement was retailored for a third time, only then was the function awarded to a contractor. The DoD Inspector General eventually reviewed the cost comparison and stated DFAS incorrectly applied pricing factors which would have kept the function in house. Bottom line, decisions made by DFAS senior management increased costs to the American taxpayer. I ask that you and your staff carefully review any and all supporting information they provide in support of their current reorganization strategy in the light of past performance.

As employees we were told by our local management in an All Hands briefing on May 16, 2005 that quality of workforce was not an issue. That troubles me, and I hope you feel the same. We have also been told economic impact to local community was a minor consideration. Cleveland's unemployment rate is significantly above that of Denver, Columbus, and Indianapolis where DFAS is intending to increase its workforce.

Mr. Bilbray, I see no savings but quite the opposite when the costs of Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay, Severance Pay, PCS payments, hiring, and retraining a new workforce are considered. This is not good stewardship of taxpayer money. Centralizing in three very large locations poses more cost and risks than DFAS has been willing to consider.

Sincerely


Joseph Maganja

06072005

DEFENSE
FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

The Honorable Philip Coyle
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Coyle:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

The Defense Department is closing 33 major and realigning 29 other bases out of 318 total facilities in total in the United States. Almost twenty (20) percent of DoD facilities are being closed or realigned. DFAS, however, has chosen to close 20 and realign 2 facilities out of a total of 25 locations which means almost ninety (90) percent of DFAS facilities are being closed or realigned. Why is DFAS grossly exceeding DoD's own standard for BRAC?

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I'm also very disturbed that the Defense Department contends we need to be on a base for security purposes when those same standards do not apply to other federal agencies which are tenants in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building, which include the Department of Homeland Security. How is DFAS Cleveland any more or less valuable than the Federal Reserve Bank or Federal Courts which are expanding their facilities and operations in downtown Cleveland?

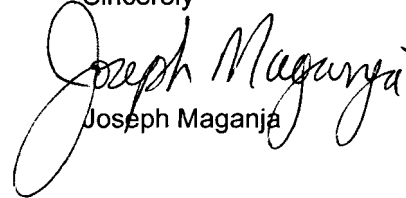
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Mr. Coyle, I see no savings but quite the opposite when the costs of Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay, Severance Pay, PCS payments, hiring, and retraining a new workforce are considered. This is not good stewardship of taxpayer money. Centralizing in three very large locations poses more cost and risks than DFAS has been willing to consider.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Maganja". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Joseph Maganja

06072005

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr. (USN, Retired)
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Admiral Gehman:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

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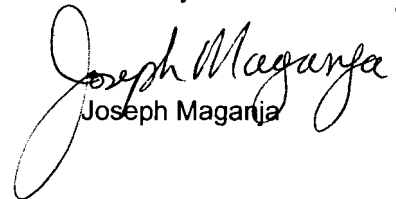
06072005

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Sincerely


Joseph Magarja

06072005

RECEIVED

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

The Honorable James V. Hansen
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Hansen:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

The Defense Department is closing 33 major and realigning 29 other bases out of 318 total facilities in total in the United States. Almost twenty (20) percent of DoD facilities are being closed or realigned. DFAS, however, has chosen to close 20 and realign 2 facilities out of a total of 25 locations which means almost ninety (90) percent of DFAS facilities are being closed or realigned. Why is DFAS grossly exceeding DoD's own standard for BRAC?

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I'm also very disturbed that the Defense Department contends we need to be on a base for security purposes when those same standards do not apply to other federal agencies which are tenants in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building, which include the Department of Homeland Security. How is DFAS Cleveland any more or less valuable than the Federal Reserve Bank or Federal Courts which are expanding their facilities and operations in downtown Cleveland?

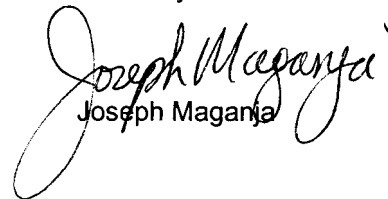
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Joseph Maganja

06072005
RECEIVED

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

General James T. Hill (USA, Retired)
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Hill:

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Sincerely


Joseph Maganja

06072005
RECEIVED

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

General Lloyd W. Newton (USAF, Retired)
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Newton:

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Sincerely


Joseph Maganja

06072005
RECEIVED
MAY 31 2005

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

The Honorable Samuel K. Skinner
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Skinner:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

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06072005
MAY 31 2005

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 31, 2005

Brigadier General Sue E. Turner (USAF, Retired)
Commissioner – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Turner:

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Sincerely


Joseph Maganja

BRAC Commission

Received

6/23/2005

Commissioner Anthony Principi
2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark St., Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Sir:

I am compelled to write to express my grave concern over DFAS in Cleveland being on your closing Hit List. This office has a record of good performance and quality workers. Citing high rent costs seems incongruous when the building is owned by the government.

Impact on the local economy is supposed to be a factor. The loss of that many jobs to Cleveland would continue the downward spiral of a city with one of the highest poverty rates.

Perhaps, despite protestations, this is really politically motivated. Just another way for this vindictive administration to punish a county that had the audacity to not support President Bush.

It will be interesting to see how fairly this situation is reviewed and treated by this commission.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Janet Letman

June 23, 2005



Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance
c/o Edward Howard & Co.
1360 East 9th Street, 7th Floor
Cleveland, OH 44114

KEEP CLEVELAND DFAS

Excellent People
Excellent Performance
Excellent Value

To the Honorable Anthony J. Principi and the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission,

Earlier this week I sent to your attention several letters of support for the Cleveland DFAS office. These letters were written by Mayors of the numerous city councils in the Greater Cleveland area and several local business leaders, all of whom will suffer from the proposed "realignment" of almost 1,200 jobs.

Today, I have included for your review dozens of additional letters of support and resolutions from area municipalities. As you peruse the enclosed stack of materials, remember each document represents countless more concerned citizens who support Cleveland DFAS.

The community involvement has been truly overwhelming. Earlier today, approximately 1,000 DFAS employees, city council members, and Cleveland residents rallied to show their support for this office.

They emphasized the reasons you should remove our office from the projected list of closures. Those reasons echo many of the ones repeatedly highlighted in the enclosed materials: economic devastation to the Cleveland area; a track record of excellent customer service and operational efficiency that doesn't make sense to disrupt; and a history of employees who have pioneered many of the current practices of the larger DFAS organization.

Furthermore, as a result of its history of excellent service, this office was assigned additional accounting responsibilities. It manages the payroll for everyone from President Bush to our armed troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the world.

I urge you to consider the repercussions of closing such a crucial operation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elisa C. Benson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Elisa C. Benson
Colgate University, Class of 2006
Public Relations Intern
Edward Howard & Co.



RECEIVED

07012005

June 29, 2005

Honorable Anthony J. Principi,

Over the last two weeks or so, there has been a horrible story spread. The Federal Government is talking about removing their offices from Downtown Cleveland. From what I have read and heard this office is very well run, and this where our soldiers make contact with their families.

I don't understand why the government would want to do this. I don't know the jist of what these people do, I do know what it is like to be out of work.

I have been laid off for two months, because the company I worked for wanted to "cost cut". I was a meat cutter (butcher) for 17 years. The company I worked for is Tops. This "cost cutting" not only effected me, it had a ripple effect.

To many people are being put out of work due to "out sourcing" or "cost cutting". If this continues to happen, no one will be working. See our governments, from town to federal, are paid by tax dollars. If jobs keep getting cut no one will be able to pay taxes, and no one in government offices or jobs will be paid.

This is the "land of opportunity" and to many opportunities are being taken away. We need to

June 22, 2005

07012005



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Members of the 2005 BRAC Commission,

I am writing because of the BRAC recommendation to close the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard. I feel that the BRAC process is necessary; however I also believe that the Air Force has not followed the criteria that were set forth to select bases for closure. Had that been done, I whole heartedly believe that the results would have been different. As it stands the process appears to have been implemented to take assets away from the Air Guard, and transfer them to the regular Air Force. Why else were the state Adjutant Generals kept out of the process?

The 179th has always been there when called to duty. The 179th is STILL ON DUTY! Is it right and proper to use a unit for years to fight the war on terrorism, and then discard the people because they are not as valuable as the airplanes that they fly and support? It will be a short few years that Air Force enjoys the spoils of their *theft*.

The reason that the Air Guard is able to do the missions that are required, is because of the experience of the people who fly and maintain the aircraft. Many of the people who serve in the Air Guard have 20-30 years of *hands on* experience on the aircraft that they care for. They know the value of taking care of the limited assets that they have. I know from experience that the active Air Force doesn't care for the equipment that they have in the same way. Nor do they have the anything approaching the experience level of the Air Guard doing the day to day work. An airman in the Air Force may have 4 – 8 years of experience at best, after that they are pretty much supervisors. The Air Guard has a core of full time technicians who work on the same airframes day in and day out for their careers. Who do you think is better equipped to maintain the aircraft and train the future maintainers?

The Chairmen of the Joints Chiefs is mistaken if he believes that the Air Guard personnel will simply "go to another unit". People are not willing to travel hundreds of miles to another unit. They will simply opt out of the military, and their experience will gone. Families that are rooted in the community will not want to leave to be close to a new unit, for the privilege of being sent to another conflict. The support that this community gives to the military and the 179th is phenomenal. Will it still be there the next time?

I urge you to do what you can to save the 179th, as well as any other unit that have been targeted by the Air Force snatch and grab. I would ask you Sirs, to do what is correct and send the Air Force back to the drawing board and to implement the BRAC as it was meant to be done.

Sincerely,

Michael J Ryan
1816 Twp. Rd. 555
Jeromesville, OH 44840-9729
419-368-9267

The Honorable Anthony Principi: June 29, 2005

In reading the ~~Plan~~ ⁰⁷⁰¹²⁰⁰⁵ RECEIVED here
in Cleveland, I read about Gary, who
does so much good for our servicemen.

It would be a shame for you to even
consider closing the DFAS in Cleveland.
Please consider the wonderful job these
people are doing; continue to allow them
to do their job.

Sincerely
Lydia Pittera



07 0 1 2 0 0 5



THE PLAIN DEALER

Cleveland keeps military connected

Wednesday, June 29, 2005

Regina Brett
Plain Dealer Columnist

Gary Moore sits in a cubicle all day in downtown Cleveland, talking to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Thank you for calling DFAS Cleveland," he says over and over into a headset. "My name is Gary. How may I help you?"

There are 1,200 reasons not to close the Defense Finance and Accounting Service pay center in Cleveland. Gary Moore is just one of them.

He answers 120 to 150 calls all day. Soldiers call on satellite phones from mountaintops in Afghanistan. Spouses call about creditors ready to repossess cars and trucks. Wives worry about threats to foreclose on a home. Gary makes a few calls and saves the day - and the home.

One soldier called from Iraq about a new household account for his pregnant wife. The soldier had just received an e-mail saying his mother-in-law had taken his wife to the hospital.

"I made a couple calls and found out where she was at," Gary said. "She'd had her baby that morning."

When the hospital put him through to her room, Gary asked her, "Do you want to talk to your husband?"

"Oh, my God, yes," she cried.

As soon as they said hello, Gary got off the line.

"It was nice," he said.

A few years ago, a girl called from New York City. She was 13 and hadn't seen or heard from her dad in six years. She saw an ad about retiree pay and called.

Gary ran the man's name through the computer. The man lived in Cleveland. Gary called, and he will never forget that conversation:

"Your daughter is trying to track you down," he said.

"You're kidding," the man said.

"Would you like to talk to your daughter?" he asked. "I have her on the other line."

"God, yes," the man said.

Gary connected them. Her father whispered her name.

"Daddy?" she asked. "Is that you?"

There was dead silence, then tears.

Gary goes the extra mile because he knows what soldiers go through. He served in the Army for 31 months, 15 in Vietnam.

One of the worst calls he ever got came from a retiree who called about his pay.

"I served with him," Gary said. "He suffered from Agent Orange."

Before the agency could get everything finalized for the man's compensation, his wife called to report his death.

"That's one day I didn't go on to the very next call," Gary said.

Some soldiers frustrated with military red tape complain, "Do you know what it's like?"

"Yeah," Gary answers.

"These guys are out there on the front line," he said. "You don't know how long they're gonna be there or if they're gonna make it back or not."

On good days, returning soldiers call and he gets to say, "Welcome home." On bad days, he hears from widows.

He worries about the disruption it will cause them if the Cleveland office is closed, if the government has to train new people to handle the calls.

He worries about the ripple effect on restaurants and businesses if 1,200 jobs disappear.

To save the DFAS Cleveland jobs, contact www.brac.gov/feedback.aspx or write The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chair, 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, 2521 S. Clark St. Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22202.

Tell him that our men and women at war and their families deserve the best. Tell him they're already getting it in Cleveland, from people like Gary.

To reach this Plain Dealer columnist:

rbrett@plaind.com, 216-999-6328

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June 29, 2005

07 0 1 2 0 0 5



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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have lived in Cleveland my entire life and am witness to its decay from neglect and then its brief but remarkable growth spurt with new sports facilities and museums downtown. Still, the slow aging of the community without young people or immigrants moving in, the lack of support from corporations who pull up stakes and leave town, and a governor who is gutting our higher educational institutions, is bleeding this region dry of opportunity.

Two years ago, I was downsized out of a job I had held, with successive raises in income and authority, for more than five years. In the past two years I have sent hundreds of applications for local jobs, often quite less prestigious than the job I held. Time after time, dazed interviewers apologized for the length it took them to respond to my calls. The sheer volume of resumes received was overwhelming. An entry level marketing job posted over the internet received 200 responses in just two days! I seriously began preparing to leave Cleveland, a city I love for its livability, people and institutions (and—most of the time—its weather). It would be easy for me to leave, though. I don't have a family, children, or property to maintain.

I did finally find a job. Out of 50 applications, I was offered a clerical job with medical benefits. I am also receiving less than half the salary I was at my prior position.

Taking 1200 jobs from Cleveland would be like pouring salt in a gaping wound, particularly because the jobs are in Cleveland proper, which is desperate for any tax revenue it can find.

The enclosed article says it more articulately than I can. Don't relocate the DFAS-Cleveland. It does a fine job right where it is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer L. Tucker".

Jennifer L. Tucker

**BRAC Commission
Received**

7/7/2005

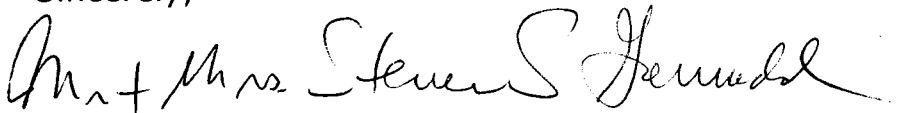
16201 Valleyview Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44135
June 27, 2005

The Hon. Anthony J. Principi, Chair
2005 BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark St., Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

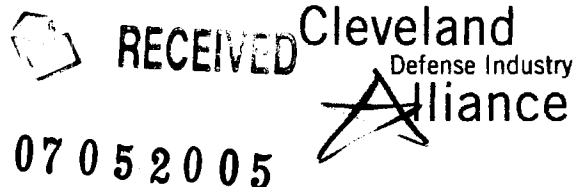
Dear Mr. Principi:

We are writing in support of keeping the full complement of staff for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in the Cleveland, Ohio, office. We hope that you will pay attention to the facts presented by our delegation as to the cost-effectiveness of keeping this high-performing asset in its current location and take a look at its outstanding history.

Sincerely,



Mr. and Mrs. Steven S. Greenwald



June 29, 2005

Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance
c/o Edward Howard & Co.
1360 East 9th Street, 7th Floor
Cleveland, OH 44114

KEEP CLEVELAND DFAS

Excellent People
Excellent Performance
Excellent Value

To the Honorable Anthony J. Principi and the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission,

I am forwarding for your attention an article that ran today in Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*. This article details a Cleveland Defense Finance and Accounting Service employee who has on numerous occasions extended beyond the requirements of his job to truly impact others' lives.

You've heard from the Cleveland DFAS campaign several times now, and every time we have new data to hand over and more performance statistics to cite. Our careful analysis and skillful presentation of this material will be the evidence necessary to preserve the 1,028 jobs of Cleveland DFAS.

But in the midst of all the numbers, we also want you to remember the people of Cleveland DFAS. These employees are not expendable. The experience and care they bring to their jobs is a priceless contribution that cannot be measured in cost savings.

As our soldiers fight in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world, we are posed to deliver into their lives one more risk: the threat that their lines of communication will be disrupted, their homeland ties severed. Why now? And why Cleveland?

Read over the enclosed article. Acquaint yourselves with one of the faces of Cleveland DFAS.

Sincerely,

Elisa C. Benson
Colgate University, Class of 2006
Public Relations Intern
Edward Howard & Co.

REGINA BRETT



Cleveland keeps military connected

Gary Moore sits in a cubicle all day in downtown Cleveland, talking to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Thank you for calling DFAS Cleveland," he says over and over into a headset. "My name is Gary. How may I help you?"

There are 1,200 reasons not to close the Defense Finance and Accounting Service pay center in Cleveland. Gary Moore is just one of them.

He answers 120 to 150 calls all day. Soldiers call on satellite phones from mountaintops in Afghanistan. Spouses call about creditors ready to repossess cars and trucks. Wives worry about threats to foreclose on a home. Gary makes a few calls and saves the day — and the home.

One soldier called from Iraq about a new household account for his pregnant wife. The soldier had just received an e-mail saying his mother-in-law had taken his wife to the hospital.

"I made a couple calls and found out where she was at," Gary said. "She'd had her baby that morning."

When the hospital put him through to her room, Gary asked her, "Do you want to talk to your husband?"

"Oh, my God, yes," she cried.

As soon as they said hello, Gary got off the line.

"It was nice," he said.

A few years ago, a girl called from New York City. She was 13 and hadn't seen or heard from her dad in six years. She saw an ad about retiree pay and called.

Gary ran the man's name through the computer. The man lived in Cleveland. Gary called, and he will never forget that conversation:

"Your daughter is trying to track you down," he said.

"You're kidding," the man said.

"Would you like to talk to your daughter?" he asked. "I have her on the other line."

"God, yes," the man said.

Gary connected them. Her father whispered her name.

"Daddy?" she asked. "Is that you?"

There was dead silence, then tears.

Gary goes the extra mile because he knows what soldiers go through. He served in the Army for 31 months, 15 in Vietnam.

One of the worst calls he ever got came from a retiree who called about his pay.

"I served with him," Gary said. "He suffered from Agent Orange."

Before the agency could get everything finalized for the man's compensation, his wife called to report his death.

"That's one day I didn't go on to the very next call," Gary said.

Some soldiers frustrated with military red tape complain, "Do you know what it's like?"

"Yeah," Gary answers.

"These guys are out there on the front line," he said. "You don't know how long they're gonna be there or if they're gonna make it back or not."

On good days, returning soldiers call and he gets to say, "Welcome home." On bad days, he hears from widows.

He worries about the disruption it will cause them if the Cleveland office is closed, if the government has to train new people to handle the calls.

He worries about the ripple effect on restaurants and businesses if 1,200 jobs disappear.

To save the DFAS Cleveland jobs, contact www.brac.gov/feedback.aspx or write The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chair, 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, 2521 S. Clark St. Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22202.

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Online city news
www.cleveland.com/news
Special reports
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Joann Rogers
9932 Gardenside Dr
Waite Hill OH 44094-6949

7661 Sunflower Court
Mentor, OH 44060
May 16, 2005-05-16

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman – Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 S. Clark Street (Suite 600)
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

As an employee of Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland Center and the former Navy Finance Center for over twenty years, I have a vested interest in the outcome of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's review of the Defense Department's nominations. DFAS Cleveland is identified for the elimination of over 1,000 permanent jobs while leaving a small contract oversight and garnishment function in place.

The Defense Department is closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 other bases out of 318 total facilities in total in the United States. Almost twenty (20) percent of DoD facilities are being closed or realigned. DFAS, however, has chosen to close 20 and realign 2 facilities out of a total of 25 locations which means almost ninety (90) percent of DFAS facilities are being closed or realigned. Why is DFAS grossly exceeding DoD's own standard for BRAC?

A major argument for presented by DFAS management is that it is cheaper for DFAS to relocate in the Major General Emmett J. Bean Center in Indianapolis (which gains 3,500 positions) versus remaining in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building in Cleveland. Both facilities are owned and operated by the General Services Administration. Given the significant investments GSA has had to and continues to make to rehabilitate the Bean Center following the BRAC closure of Fort Benjamin Harrison, don't those costs have to be recouped by increased rental charges to DFAS? Isn't the trend in downtown Cleveland heading downwards because of the overall office vacancy rate? I believe the rental costs are intersecting very quickly, and the allure of a lower rate will not materialize if DFAS consolidates in the Bean Center as they have avowed.

I'm also very disturbed that the Defense Department contends we need to be on a base for security purposes when those same standards do not apply to other federal agencies which are tenants in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building which include the Department of Homeland Security. How is DFAS Cleveland any more or less valuable than the Federal Reserve Bank or Federal Courts which are expanding their facilities and operations in downtown Cleveland?

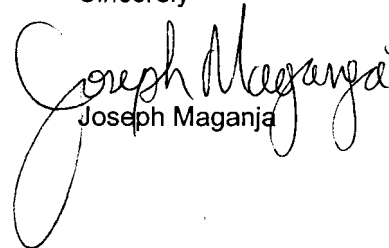
Isn't the Secretary of Defense governed by the same requirements when it comes to property that the other Departments in the Cabinet must follow? Executive Orders 12072 and 13006 (Federal Space Management) state: 1-101: Federal facilities and Federal use of space in urban areas shall give serious consideration to strengthen the Nation's cities and to make them attractive places to live and work: 1-102: Except where such selection is otherwise prohibited, the process for meeting Federal space needs in urban areas shall give first consideration to a centralized community business area and adjacent areas of similar character. The Bean Center lies in the outskirts of metropolitan Indianapolis while still at the intersection of two major public roads.

Mr. Chairman, DFAS has a poor history of conducting a cost-benefit analysis. A very recent case in point is the extraordinary effort DFAS went to outsource Military Retired and Annuitant Pay. Three separate solicitations were made with the first two resulting in no competitive bidders. Only when the performance work statement was again retailored did the function get awarded to a contractor. The DoD Inspector General eventually reviewed the cost comparison and stated DFAS incorrectly applied pricing factors which would have kept the function in house. Bottom line, decisions made by DFAS senior management increased costs to the American taxpayer. I ask that you and your staff carefully review any and all supporting information they provide in support of their current reorganization strategy.

As employees we were told by our local management in an All Hands briefing on May 16, 2005 that quality of workforce was not an issue. That troubles me, and I hope you feel the same. We have also been told economic impact to local community was a minor consideration. Cleveland unemployment rate is significantly above Denver, Columbus, and Indianapolis where DFAS is intending to increase its workforce.

Mr. Principi, I see no savings but quite the opposite when the costs of Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay, Severance Pay, PCS payments, hiring, and retraining a new workforce are considered. This is not good stewardship of taxpayer money. Centralizing in three very large locations poses more risks than DFAS has been willing to consider.

Sincerely



Joseph Maganja

Copy to:

Mayor Jane Campbell – City of Cleveland
Congressman Dennis Kucinich
Congressman Steve LaTourette
Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs-Jones
Senator George Voinovich
Senator Michael DeWine

JUNE 29, 2005

THE HONORABLE ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI

I AM WRITING TO ASK YOU TO SAVE DFAS CLEVELAND JOBS. IT HAS BEEN HERE FOR A LONG TIME, AND IT WOULD CAUSE A LOT OF DISRUPTION IF THE CLEVELAND OFFICE WAS CLOSED, AND NEW PEOPLE HAVE TO BE TRAINED.

OUR MEN AND WOMEN ARE AT WAR, AND THEIR FAMILIES DESERVE THE BEST. AND THEY ARE ALREADY GETTING IT IN CLEVELAND.

WE APPRECIATE ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING YOU CAN DO FOR OUR CLEVELAND AREA, AS OUR STATE HAS REALLY BEEN HIT HARD WITH THE ECONOMY.

THANK YOU.

MRS. JEAN RUSYNIAK
525 HOLLY DR
BEREA, OH 44017

Mrs. Jean Rusyniak



When city, how can you shaft us further? Kottun Shamp

Plain Dealer 6/29/06 Cleveland keeps military connected

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'We will stay in the fight until the fight is over'



CHARLES DHARAPAK | AP

President Bush speaks at Fort Bragg, N.C. on Tuesday.

JENNIFER LOVEN
Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — President Bush on Tuesday rejected calls for a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq or sending more troops, counseling patience for Americans who question the war's painful costs.

"Is the sacrifice worth it? It is worth it, and it is vital to the security of our country," Bush told a nation increasingly doubtful about the toll of the 27-month-old war.

To support the troops online

The Pentagon has set up a Web site for people looking for ways to show their support for U.S. troops. Visit the site at www.americasupportsyou.mil.

Bush spoke in a half-hour evening address at an Army base that has 9,300 troops in Iraq, hoping to convince the

public that his strategy for victory needs only time — not any changes — to be successful. He offered no shift in course.

"We have a clear path forward," he said. "As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down."

The audience of 750 soldiers and airmen in dress uniform listened respectfully, breaking into applause when Bush vowed that the United States "will stay in the fight until the fight is won."

Bush said he understands the public concerns.

SEE BUSH | A7

"In this war, we have lost good men and women who left our shores to defend freedom and did not live to make the journey home. . . . And the best way to honor the lives that have been given in this struggle is to complete the mission." President George W. Bush



MIKE LEVY | THE PLAIN DEALER

Sharon Berry, mother of Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling of Strongsville, kisses the flag that was draped over her son's casket at Holy Cross Cemetery Tuesday. Keeling was killed June 9 in Iraq while serving with a Marine Reserves unit.

Marine is home for final salute

Mourners honor Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling, killed in Iraq



Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling of Strongsville

BRIAN ALBRECHT
Plain Dealer Reporter

STRONGSVILLE — A slow river of headlights and sadness flowed down Pearl Road, passing long lines of people who stood in Tuesday's hot morning sun, sweat mingling with tears, gripping small American flags.

They came because "no serviceman should die alone," said Dave Hrusch, 55, of Parma, a Vietnam vet who brought a salute to the rim of his Marine Corps hat as the hearse rolled past.

They came because military families support each other, said Cheryl Bertonaschi, of Cleveland,

whose 22-year-old daughter Victoria is currently serving in the Ohio National Guard.

Bertonaschi brought a sign for her curbside vigil: *May Thomas find peace in God's arms, may his family find peace in their hearts, and may mankind find peace amongst itself.*

She's scared to death that someday, someone might be standing out there for her daughter, too. Still, it was important to be there, she said, "to salute someone who gave his life for our freedom."

They came because Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling, 23, was coming home.

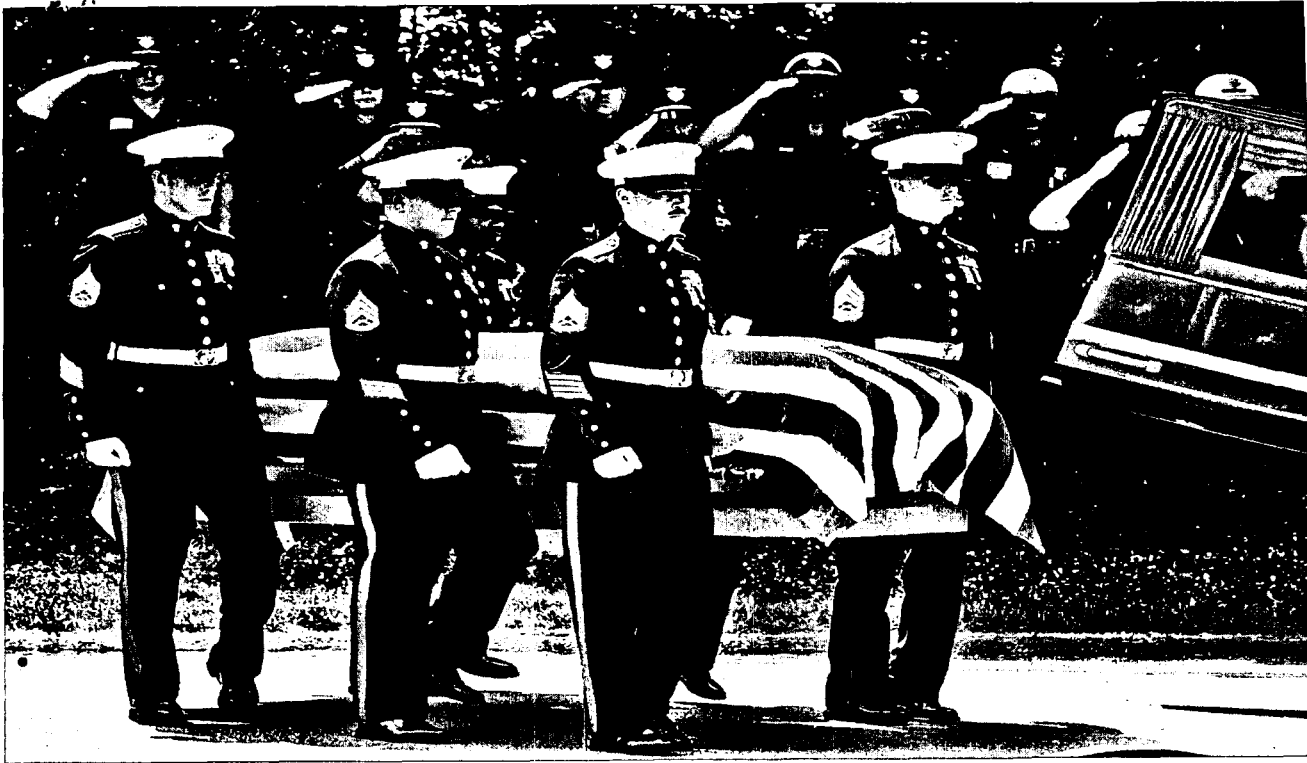
Keeling was one of three Ohio

Marines killed June 9 in Iraq while serving with a Marine Reserves unit that was based in Akron.

Robert Berry, Keeling's stepfather, said the family was told that his stepson and the other Ohio Marines — Cpl. Brad Squires, of Middleburg Heights, and Lance Cpl. Devon Seymour of St. Louisville, Ohio — were returning to base after rescuing two Marines from a burning tank. Their Humvee hit a mine, killing all five instantly.

How Keeling died may not have mattered to many of those saluting the funeral procession.

SEE KEELING | A6



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE LEVY | THE PLAIN DEALER

The flag-draped coffin of Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling is carried to its final resting place at Holy Cross Cemetery.

KEELING

FROM A1

Marine home for final salute

All except the man who complained how the word "sacrifice" doesn't apply.

"Nobody sacrifices their life over there unless they threw themselves on a grenade," he said. "Their lives were taken."

Yet "sacrifice," to Jeremy Spencer, 25, of Strongsville — wearing a T-shirt reading "My brother, one of the few, the proud, a Marine" — meant being out on that curb as "the least we can do, not only for this family but all military families."

And in the funeral Mass at St. John Neumann Church, the Rev. Bob Kraig also spoke of sacrifice, saying, "Thomas, as did Jesus, gave his life for the freedom of others."

Kraig, who gave Keeling his first Communion, noted, "He came into our world prematurely, and he leaves us ... prematurely."

A statement from the family asked people to remember the accomplishments of Keeling who had graduated from Kent State University in 2004 with a criminal justice degree, and was considering an FBI career.

"He accepted his responsibilities, he honored his commitments and he served his country," the statement said.

"America the Beautiful" and bells steadily tolling serenaded the procession out of the church and back to Pearl Road where people gathered to watch, wave flags and hold up signs — *Thank you, Tom/God Bless America*. They stood on tree lawns and parking lots, arrayed their wheelchairs in front of the Crystal Wa-



Miranda Meadows, 7, came to the funeral of Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling Tuesday. Miranda was with her grandmother, Terry Severo of Brook Park. Severo said she lost her brother in Vietnam in 1966, and she comes to soldiers' funerals to show her respect. Her brother is also buried at Holy Cross Cemetery, where Keeling was buried.

ters Retirement Community, lining the route from the church to Holy Cross Cemetery in Brook Park.

As the procession — led by Vietnam vets with motorcycles and vest-patches grimly noting their war's 58,479 lost — flowed into the cemetery, World War II Army Air Forces veteran Al Tye, 86, of Middleburg Heights, rolled his walker closer to the Keeling gravesite.

Tye said he was there to show some respect, just as he had for the funeral of Squires three days earlier.

That, and as Tye noted, "No veteran should ..." He left the thought unfinished.

Die alone.

During the graveside service, David Worsencroft, of Parma

Heights, read aloud a letter from his son Mark, 23, a close friend of Keeling, who is serving in the same Marine unit in Iraq.

Mark Worsencroft remembered playing hockey with Keeling as kids, how happy Keeling was just before his death, and how there was "no limit to what Tom would do to help a fellow Marine."

A few hours after Keeling's funeral, President Bush would go on TV to tell Americans why they had to stay the course in the war until the troops could come back home.

But Lance Cpl. Thomas Keeling was already home.

His final salute ended with three shots from seven rifles echoing in the sunshine and taps.

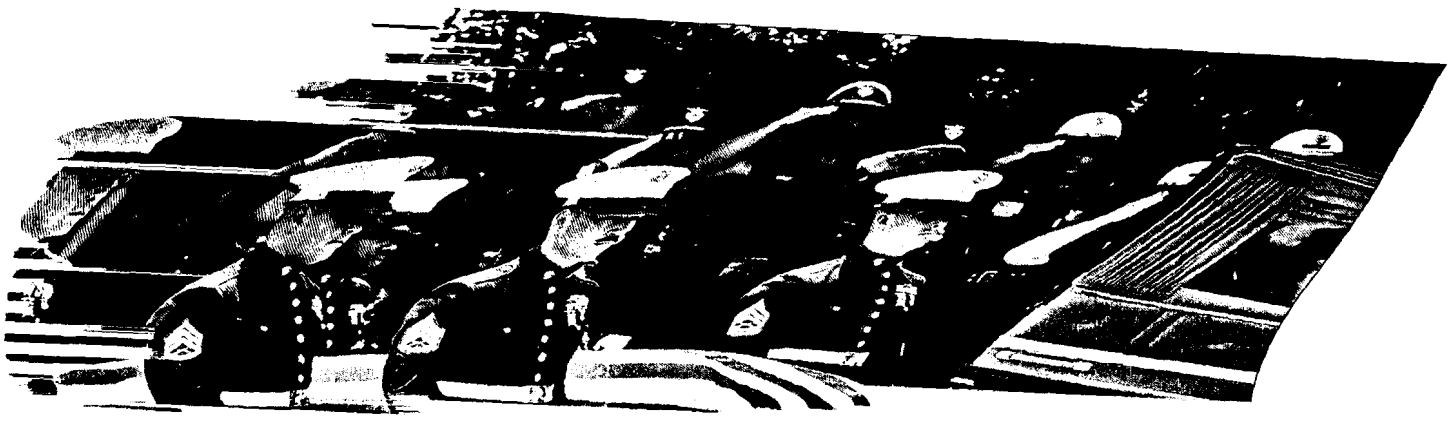
Each member of the Keeling family laid a single rose on the casket. Mourners added other flowers until the casket seemed already buried, not in dirt but beauty.

As people drifted away, about two dozen youths — about Keeling's age, possibly friends with perhaps the same hopes and dreams that he once had — lingered in a small group.

They stood not too close, not too far, from that silver-hued casket as it rested in the tented shade, alone for the first time that day.

They stood in silence, staring, for a long, long time.

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter: balbrecht@plained.com, 216-999-4853



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