

June 27, 2005

RECEIVED

07092005

The Honorable Anthony Principi  
Chairman, Defense Base Realignment  
and Closure Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

I am urging the commission to give close attention to the strong factual case in support of saving the 110th Fighter Wing and the Battle Creek ANG Base. I would like to see the commissioners make a site visit to the 110th. I urge the commissioners to spare the 110th for sound military reasons and to reject the political manipulation that has put the 110th on the chopping block.

Respectfully,



Chrysa Richards  
7351 South 25th Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048



May 26, 2005

Dear Sir / Maam:

I would like to begin this letter to you by introducing myself as the new Assistant General Manager of the Holiday Inn Express located in Fremont, Indiana. I come to the job after serving two terms as Mayor of Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

I am aware that the BRAC Commission has identified two bases (Fort Wayne ANG & Battle Creek ANG) in the area as possible closure sites. Our hotel is in a location that would serve as a great convenience for members of the commission while visiting these bases. Our location is at the junction of I-80/90 & I-69, which is a midpoint between the bases.

Being a former government official, I can certainly appreciate the demands that a government traveler may have. The government traveler needs a clean, efficient place to stay & complete his or her business. I can guarantee that should the Commission choose to stay at our establishment, the members will be satisfied! Here are just some of the amenities we offer:

- Complimentary deluxe continental breakfast
- Free high-speed wireless internet access
- Free local & toll-free calls
- Popcorn & fresh baked cookies nightly
- Updated guest rooms, including 33 newly constructed guest rooms

Again, these are just some of the amenities we offer. Should you decide to choose the Holiday Inn Express in Fremont, Indiana for your lodging needs, please contact myself or the General Manager Mike Rucinski.

Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kevin C. Jenkins  
AGM – HIE Fremont

2005 DOD BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

**ATTN: ADVANCE OFFICE**

**FREMONT/ANGOLA**

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07092005

July 5, 2005

**The Honorable Anthony Principi,  
Chairman, Defense Base Realignment and  
Closure Commission  
2521 S. Clark St., Suite 600  
Arlington, Va 22203**

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**Dear Honorable Chairman:**

**We are writing to please have you pay close attention to the strong factual case regarding the closing of the Battle Creek National Air Guard, Battle Creek, Michigan, the Fighter Wing.**

**Have the facts regarding this facility been completely perused and considered? Perhaps a site visit to the 110<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing would prove of value in leaving the base as is.**

**Thank you for your time and kind consideration in this important matter.**

**Respectfully,**



**Mr. & Mrs. Warren Unterkircher  
971 Weaver Rd.  
Bronson, Michigan 49028**

**Phone: 517-369-7351**

**E-Mail: [njunterkircher@charter.net](mailto:njunterkircher@charter.net)**

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**Viewpoints**

*This was in the Kalamazoo Gazette Sunday, June 26, 2005. It says it better than I could... Please reconsider this important decision.....*

# Closing Battle Creek Air National Guard base will save little, if any, money

By Thomas N. Edmonds

The Air Force has proposed to the Federal Base Realignment And Closure Commission (BRAC) that the 110th Air National Guard (ANG) Fighter Wing at Battle Creek be eliminated, the base closed and the A-10 fighter jets from Battle Creek transferred to the ANG base in Macomb County near Detroit. Only a few of the members of the 110th are likely to be offered and accept positions across the state in the Macomb County unit.

As the recently retired vice commander of the Michigan Air National Guard, I am certain that this move doesn't make sense from a military perspective, doesn't serve the purpose of BRAC (to save money), and does a great disservice to the 930 members of the

110th Fighter Wing, most of whom come from West Michigan, and who have served their country so ably.

From a military perspective, does it make sense to do away with a unit that flies a critical, war-proven aircraft during a war? A unit that has had seven highly successful combat deployments in the last 10 years?

A unit that occupies the best-developed (\$41 million in improvements since 1991) A-10 base in the ANG? A unit that the Air Force has rated as "outstanding" by Air Force standards?

A unit whose members have earned 10 Bronze Stars and 14 Distinguished Flying Crosses in combat in Iraqi Freedom? A unit that is always at or over 100 percent of its authorized personnel strength at a time when all active services are struggling to address

serious recruiting and retention problems?

A unit that is fully qualified and trained to fly and maintain the A-10 and give their aircraft to a unit that will take three to five years to cross-train and be ready to fly in combat?

Simply put, the answer is a resounding "No."

Does the "cost savings" to the Air Force override all of the foregoing considerations? Again, the answer is "No."

Independent review of the methodology used by the military to evaluate the viability of the Battle Creek base and to calculate the cost savings from its closure shows the methodology to be fatally flawed. Staff from congressional offices, Battle Creek Unlimited, the W.E. Upjohn Institute, as well as military experts have documented that there are little or no savings

that will actually result from the closure. They have made their case to the BRAC commission and anyone else who will listen.

So if logic and/or cost savings aren't driving the Air Force recommendations to close the 110th, what is? POLITICS!

On a grand scale, the Air Force has suddenly sold out its critical wartime partner, the Air National Guard. Across the nation, the Air Force has proposed massive cuts in the Air National Guard behind the smokescreen of the BRAC process. Why? Because it needs to generate money to pay for the new and expensive aircraft it wants to purchase in the near future.

On a local scale, West Michigan is losing a base and a unit that it has supported and nurtured since 1947, and hundreds and hundreds of West Michigan

citizen-airmen are being told that their loyal and dedicated service is no longer necessary to the defense of their country. Why? So that the 110th Fighter Wing's A-10 aircraft can be given to a unit in the Detroit area. Why? So that the other unit can replace aircraft that the Air Force is taking away and thus protect that base from future closure.

The politicians who have pressed for, and perhaps engineered this result are from the districts that benefit from this scheme. A short-sighted approach; Michigan should be fighting a united front to save all of our ANG aircraft and missions.

The presidentially appointed BRAC commissioners are experienced, dedicated citizen-volunteers trying to sort out many situations like this and deter-

mine just which bases should be closed. I urge my fellow citizens to contact:

The Honorable Anthony Principi

Chairman  
Defense Base Realignment  
And Closure Commission  
2521 South Clark St., Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Please urge the commission to give close attention to the strong factual case before it in support of saving the 110th Fighter Wing and the Battle Creek ANG Base. Urge the commissioners to make a site visit to the 110th. Most importantly, urge them to spare the 110th for sound military reasons, and reject the political manipulation that has put the 110th on the chopping block!

*Thomas N. Edmonds is the retired vice commander of the Michigan Air National Guard.*