

August 9, 2005

Mr. Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

With only two days remaining until your scheduled meeting to determine the final BRAC list, I am taking another opportunity to convey to you and the Commission the important role that West Virginia's 130th Airlift Wing plays in our state.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, only 14.8% of West Virginians, age twenty-five and older, hold a bachelor's degree or higher. That number is roughly 10% lower than the national average of 24.4%. While my administration and others have put a strong emphasis on increasing these numbers, in many cases in a rural state such as ours the key to success is funding. While we are actively engaged as a state in finding that funding, the West Virginia National Guard and its tuition assistance program are one of the keys to ensuring that more of our citizens are provided with an opportunity to obtain college degrees.

For example, in the spring of this year, 177 members of the 130th Airlift Wing received tuition and fee payments from the National Guard to continue their education. That's roughly 18% of the unit's 1001 personnel (which, I would like to add, is a strength level of 103%). Those numbers are significant in West Virginia, and we can't afford to lose even one of these potential college graduates.

Therefore, I once again respectfully ask that you and the members of the BRAC Commission allow the 130th Airlift Wing to continue on its current, and extremely important, mission and vote to remove it from the BRAC list.

With warmest regards,



Joe Manchin III
Governor

Received
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BRAC Commission

August 10, 2005

Mr. Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

With only one day remaining until your scheduled meeting to determine the final BRAC list, I am taking another opportunity to convey to you and the Commission the important role that West Virginia's 130th Airlift Wing plays in our state.

The flow-through impact of the 130th's resources on our Charleston airport (Yeager Airport) and the surrounding communities is enormous. For example, the 130th maintains fire protection/emergency response for the airport and its adjacent areas. If the 130th were to be realigned and its fire protection services were lost, it would cost the airport roughly \$7 million in start-up costs to purchase the appropriate fire equipment and nearly \$1.5 million per year for personnel costs (excluding training). In addition, the 130th's fire department and security police have mutual aid agreements with local first responders who would be left with increased costs and significant shortages should these fire and security resources no longer be available, which, given the national threat concerns with regard to our state's chemical manufacturing industry just outside of Charleston, could be devastating to our state and our country if a terrorist attack on these chemical sites were to ever occur.

And finally, the proposed realignment of the 130th would result in a lost of several hundred jobs. For the first time in a very long time, West Virginia is on the verge of achieving economic growth, but this type of significant loss would have an adverse effect on any potential economic turnaround - both at the state and local level.

Therefore, I once again respectfully ask that you and the members of the BRAC Commission allow the 130th Airlift Wing to continue on its current, and extremely important, mission and vote to remove it from the BRAC list.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Manchin III
Governor

August 8, 2005

Mr. Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

With a meeting scheduled later this week that will ultimately determine the make-up of the final BRAC list, I wanted to continue to reiterate to you and the Commission the important role that West Virginia's 130th Airlift Wing and its C-130's play with regard to the impact readiness of the National Guard.

West Virginia consistently leads the nation in National Guard readiness. This is due in large part to our C-130's. Among many other tasks, they transport Army indirect fire units (tanks, artillery) to out-of-state field training sites so members can get real-world experience firing as they would in combat. In addition, Special Forces members use these C-130's as a platform for maintaining jump proficiency, and the 167th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron based in Martinsburg, WV requires our C-130 platform for crucial training missions as well. The bottom line being that the loss of our C-130's and the reorganization of the 130th Airlift Wing in any substantial way will negatively and permanently impact the readiness and manning of a Guard unit that to date has been the nation's leader in impact readiness – something I believe our country can ill afford during these difficult times.

Therefore, I again respectfully ask that you and the members of the BRAC commission vote to remove the 130th Airlift Wing from the BRAC list and allow it to continue on its current, and extremely important, mission.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Manchin III
Governor

August 5, 2005

Mr. Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

Knowing that the BRAC Commission has scheduled a very important meeting on August 11th that will ultimately determine the make-up of the final BRAC list, I wanted to take this opportunity to reiterate to you and the Commission the important role that West Virginia's 130th Airlift Wing and its C-130's play in regard to our nation's homeland security.

First, because the 130th is located near most metropolitan areas of the East Coast it has regional FEMA responsibilities in times of natural disasters. In addition, the Wing's National Guard CERF and Civil Support Teams are charged with responding to any potential terrorist threats or disasters that affect our National Capital Region. Even if the unit receives different types of aircraft, the loss of Aerial Port members will hinder the movement of critical response assets to the National Capital Region in times of emergency. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that if the worst should happen to our nation's capital and/or its leaders, the impact of realigning the 130th could have a disastrous effect on our nation's security and military stability.

Again, I respectfully ask that you and the members of the BRAC commission vote to remove the 130th Airlift Wing from the BRAC list and allow it to continue on its current, and extremely important, mission.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Manchin III
Governor

August 4, 2005

Mr. Anthony J. Principi, Commission Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

First, I want to personally thank you for the consideration that you have shown the state of West Virginia with regard to the 130th Airlift Wing and its improper inclusion on the Department of Defense's Base Realignment list. You and the members of the BRAC commission have taken our concerns, and the facts that support them, very seriously, and I know are working hard to make the best possible decision with regard to the future of the 130th and its members.

To that end, I would like to reiterate that the 130th Airlift Wing and the C-130's it is comprised of are the most valuable military resource I have at my disposal as Governor of the state of West Virginia in times of natural disasters, terrorist attacks or state and national emergencies. Given the terrain and climate of our state, our National Guard has been called upon 57 times in the last 10 years to assist with various crises. In addition, the C-130's can land at most airports in our rural state and are able to deliver relief supplies within hours of an event to those who are in severe need. Without this resource available to me, I, as Commander in Chief of the West Virginia National Guard, will not be able to adequately respond to our citizens in distress if and when the worst happens.

Therefore, I respectfully ask again that you and the members of the BRAC commission vote to remove the 130th Airlift Wing from the BRAC list and allow it to continue on its current, and extremely important, mission.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Manchin III
Governor