



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

BERNARD KINCAID, MAYOR

August 19, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi,
Chairman
BRAC 2005 Independent Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Chairman Principi:

This letter serves to inform you that I have notified Secretary Rumsfeld that I do not approve of the realignment recommendation regarding the Birmingham International Airport Air Guard Base, and specifically, the 117th Air Refueling Wing.

With gratitude for your service, I must express my concern with the Air Force's proposal to realign the 117th Air Refueling Wing. As you are aware, the Air Force's proposal deviated substantially from the BRAC criteria in that six other KC-135R tanker units with lower military value than Birmingham's 117th Air Refueling Wing are either retaining jets, or gaining additional jets. Chairman Principi, when all factors are considered legitimately, the Birmingham International Airport Air National Guard Base can put more gas in the air with one aircraft that ANY other Air National Guard tanker base in the nation. This is true military value.

I also must point out that a recent Economic Impact Analysis Study indicated the projected Fiscal Year 2005 Total Economic Impact of the 117th ARW on the City of Birmingham to be \$61 million. In addition, the Fire Protection provided by the 117th to the City of Birmingham is estimated at \$6 million. As the Mayor of Birmingham, these numbers are vital to our community, and cannot be overlooked.

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi,
Chairman
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In conclusion, the Birmingham International Airport Air Guard Base has a proud history of meritorious service dating back to 1919 in multiple conflicts and wars. The high military value placed on the unit by the Department of Defense makes it the logical choice for the KC-135R mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bernard Kincaid". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bernard Kincaid, J.D., Ph.D.
Mayor