

May 13 2005 - Reps. Slaughter, Higgins, Kuhl & Reynolds Outline Efforts to Keep Niagara Falls Air ..

Reps. Slaughter, Higgins, Kuhl & Reynolds Outline Efforts to Keep Niagara Falls Air Base Open

Following the Department of Defense's announcement this morning that the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS) is to be included on the list of military base closures, U.S. Representatives Thomas M. Reynolds (R-Clarence), Louise Slaughter (D-Fairport), Brian Higgins (D-South Buffalo), and Randy Kuhl (R-Hammondsport), discussed efforts to reverse the military's decision.

NFARS is currently home to the 914th Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve) and the 107th Air Refueling Wing (New York Air National Guard).

"I believe that this recommendation is wrong - it's wrong for our national security, it's wrong for the Air Force, and it's certainly wrong for our community," Reynolds said. "These highly-decorated units have served their country well, and I am prepared use every available resource to fight to keep this facility open."

"We are all deeply disappointed with the military's decision. The Air Base is a vital part of the Niagara community," Slaughter said. "While, this is clearly a discouraging development, we should all remember that it is not the final verdict. My colleagues and I will continue to do everything possible to make certain that the BRAC Commission understands the important strategic value of the Niagara Falls Airbase to the military, our homeland security and the war on terror."

"Today's announcement has been disheartening for all of us in Western New York, but our fight is not yet over," Higgins

said. "The Department of Defense has made an unfortunate mistake, and we will persist until the very end in our effort to get that mistake corrected."

"This is not welcome news to Western New York, but it's also not the end of the story," Kuhl said. "As a delegation we will work to ensure that the BRAC knows of the critical role this Air Base plays due to its critical mission in support of our nation's defense and our local economy."

The military's Base Realignment and Closure plan, or BRAC, was made public this morning. However, the list must still be reviewed by President Bush, the President's BRAC Commission, and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), before a final decision on closures will be made.

Delegation Members stressed that NFARS could still be removed from the list.

"Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station has been and should remain an integral part of our Western New York community," Reynolds said. "This fight is not over; it has just begun."