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THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



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Congressman Brian Higgins
Congresswoman Kathy Hochul
Congresswoman Louise Slaughter
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

Dear New York State Congressional Delegation,

I am writing to you today to ask that you continue to press the Defense Secretary and those working on the realignment of the Defense Department to give the Niagara Falls Air Base a chance to show its strategic importance and value to the military. With the recent news that the Air Force will stop the flying mission of the Base's Air National Guard unit, the 107th Air Lift Wing, it is extremely important we find a new mission that could operate out of this base. The loss of 987 jobs from the Niagara Falls area would be devastating and destructive.

As you know, this base is not only economically vital to the surrounding region, but it also has unique qualities being on the border with Canada. My hope is that the Defense Department can be made to see the advantages of perhaps locating a border security detail or even a cyber security operation on the Air Base. Several other suggestions have been made, including the recent idea from the Niagara County Legislature to make the Border Patrol locate their Headquarters in a new building on the Reserve Station. We know that the economic loss of over \$160 million to our area would be crippling but we need our voices in Washington to make this impact a national catastrophe so that they will act to save the jobs.

Governor Cuomo is commissioning a \$500,000 study to explore the growth opportunities and strategies to keep all New York bases open. This study will better assist the Defense Department in making its decisions about what steps to take next. I hope that you can persuade the Defense Secretary to hold off on any job cuts or closures until this study has been completed.

Over the years the Defense Department has recognized the value of this Niagara Falls Air Base investing over \$80 million in the last decade to improve the overall infrastructure at the site. While we recognize cuts have to be made to cover the economic shortfall created by our deficits, I am hopeful that a long term solution can be found to create jobs, keep the base open and still meet the budget constraints of the Defense Department.

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. Please keep fighting for our citizens, our military and the community-at-large.

Sincerely,

Senator Mark Grisanti
Member, Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Grisanti', written over a horizontal line.