



COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

ANÍBAL ACEVEDO VILÁ
GOVERNOR

June 13, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and
Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202



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Dear Chairman Principi:

Please accept this letter with regards to the Department of Defense (DoD) recommendations for military base closures and realignments. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico appreciates and is grateful for the DoD recommendation to retain Fort Buchanan, in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

My administration is fully aware of the great value, militarily and otherwise, that Fort Buchanan provides to the United States and Puerto Rico. Retention of this Base recognizes the strategic location of Puerto Rico and the Base, the significance of Puerto Ricans' contribution to national defense, and the importance that Fort Buchanan provides to federal and local homeland security efforts. While the loss of any jobs or mission from any installation impacts the community and is undesirable, the Commonwealth understands the justification for realigning Fort Buchanan by relocating the Army Contracting Agency Southern Hemisphere Region headquarters.

I also agree with the plans in the DoD recommendations pertaining to the Reserve Components and National Guard in Puerto Rico. As our Fort Buchanan task force had conveyed to the leadership of the Army and Defense Department, it is my administration's intent to financially and institutionally support the relocation of the

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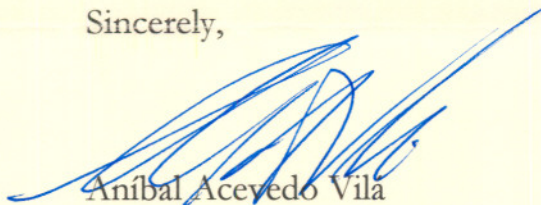
National Guard San Juan Readiness Center to Fort Buchanan that is proposed in the DoD recommendations. Further, I support the DoD proposal to close certain other Army Reserve Centers and to consolidate their operations into four new Armed Forces Readiness Centers dispersed across the Island. The DoD proposals are the result of coordination between our Adjutant General, the Army Reserve, and others in DoD to develop a long-term strategic plan for the Reserve Components in Puerto Rico.

This co-location and realignment plan will save the Reserves and Guard money, and will provide modern, quality facilities for the servicemen and women from Puerto Rico who now serve in the reserve components in the 6th highest per capita amount of any state or territory.

While representatives of my administration will attend a regional hearing, we currently do not plan to request the opportunity to present or testify before the Commission in order not to infringe on the limited time available at the hearing. However, should Fort Buchanan become a subject before the Commission during the hearings, I would appreciate notification, and we will be prepared to address any issues or questions that arise during the process pertaining to Puerto Rico or Fort Buchanan.

Once again, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico appreciates the recommendations of the DoD, and the opportunity provided for my administration to convey its support for Fort Buchanan. I understand the difficult work ahead for the Commission, and hope to work with you closely should Fort Buchanan arise in your deliberations. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or to have your staff contact Eric Lausten of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, at (202) 778-0730 or elausten@prfaa.com.

Sincerely,



Anibal Acevedo Vila