

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 1, 2005

The Honorable Anthony Principi  
Chairman  
Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
Polk Building  
Suites 600 and 625  
2521 South Clark Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Dear Chairman Principi:

We write regarding the future status of the Patton Museum located at Fort Knox. It has come to our attention that the Department of the Army (DOA) may interpret the Museum as falling under the educational mission of the Armor Center and therefore the Museum may be eligible to be realigned to Fort Benning, Georgia. If in fact, DOA is operating under this assumption, we believe this assumption is in error and we strongly urge that in your recommendations to the President you explicitly state that the Museum remain at Fort Knox.

We believe such an action on the Commission's part is warranted for five reasons. First, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process is predicated on the concept of operational military value and how that value can be best positioned to serve American national security interests. The Patton Museum is just that – a museum and, as such, it has no operational military value. The Museum contains a number of personal items used by General Patton throughout his life and it preserves historical artifacts relating to Cavalry and Armor. These items are of no operational military value.

Second, the cost of moving the Patton Museum is significant. We have seen conservative estimates that relocating the Museum could cost as much as \$45 million. Not only is that figure high in and of itself but since the Museum has no operational military value the expenditure of \$45 million seems to us to be gratuitous.

Third, unlike other components of the Armor Center, the Patton Museum enjoys a unique public/private status. While DOA owns the artifacts and exhibits, the private Patton Museum Foundation paid for the Museum building itself and also pays for a number of operational costs. Moreover, the Foundation is engaged in a massive fundraising drive to expand the museum facilities and is at the point of hiring a design firm to begin work on the project. At the same time, the Commonwealth of Kentucky just completed a multimillion dollar highway access project to serve the museum and its visitors. The community, therefore, truly has a significant degree of ownership in the Museum. In this respect, the Museum is uniquely rooted to the community.

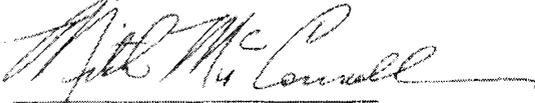
Fourth, with over 120,000 annual visitors, the Patton Museum is a vital asset to the local area and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In fact, the Museum is among the top ten most visited tourist attractions in the entire state.

Finally, the Patton family itself firmly believes that the Museum should remain at Fort Knox. We have attached a letter from the family that reflects their views on the subject.

The issue of the Patton Museum is understandably a sensitive one with the local community, the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Patton family. For the reasons outlined above, we request that you write your recommendations to ensure that the Patton Museum remains at Fort Knox.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



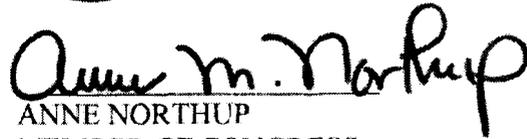
MITCH McCONNELL  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



JIM BUNNING  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



RON LEWIS  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



ANNE NORTHUP  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Enclosure

James Patton Totten  
108 Governors Point Boulevard  
Hendersonville, Tennessee 37076

July 25, 2005

TO: Senators McConnell and Bunning and Congressman Lewis

SUBJECT: The Patton Museum of Cavalry and Armor at Fort Knox, Kentucky

As a grandson of General George S. Patton, a Trustee of the Patton Museum Foundation, and as a representative of the Patton family, I wish to express my unequivocal support for the Patton Museum and the General George S. Patton Collection, which was donated by my family, to remain at Fort Knox. Our family has supported the creation and development of the Patton Museum from its founding 56 years ago. We have given artifacts worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, as well as, significant cash and endowment contributions.

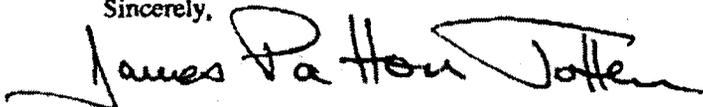
As a Trustee of the Patton Museum Foundation, I have been deeply engaged in planning for the future expansion of the museum. During this past year, I have served as a member of the museum's expansion planning committee. The committee has traveled throughout the country interviewing architects and exhibit planners to develop plans for quadrupling the size of the museum and completely redoing the exhibits. We have selected one of the most renowned design firms in the world to lead this effort. We have worked hard to do this planning and to build a fundraising base to help fund this expansion. The Commonwealth of Kentucky, this past year, completed a new direct access, signalized intersection into the museum parking lot at a cost of more than \$1 million.

The current museum facility was constructed with private money, contributed by thousands of donors from the local community, Kentucky, around the world, and from many members of the Patton family. We cannot visualize the Patton Museum being located anywhere other than Fort Knox.

There has been much speculation about the possibility of moving the Patton Museum to Fort Benning as a part of implementing BRAC recommendations. The Infantry Museum Foundation at Fort Benning has been engaged for many years in the expansion of the Infantry Museum. At this time, they are raising \$40 million for construction of a new building. We seriously doubt that Columbus, Georgia can support two major Army museums. Further, the minimum estimated cost to duplicate current Patton Museum facilities at Fort Benning is \$35 million.

I and other Patton family members feel that moving the Patton Museum would put its future in serious jeopardy. It is our desire that all speculation regarding moving the Patton Museum from Fort Knox cease.

Sincerely,



James Patton Totten  
Trustee  
The Patton Museum Foundation