

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

BRAC Commission

August 5, 2005

AUG 05 2005

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

Received

Dear Chairman Principi:

We write to provide some final thoughts regarding the future of military installations in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This letter will avoid restating the points that we raised in the testimony and the letter we submitted for the record on June 20, 2005 (see Attachments No. 1 and 2). It also will not reiterate the arguments with respect to potential realignment of the Patton Museum, which we laid out in our letter to you of August 1, 2005 (see Attachment No. 3). We ask that you review this letter in conjunction with these other three documents.

There are three final issues that have come to light recently that we would like to address: 1) the need for flexibility in the implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommendation to move the Armor School to Fort Benning; 2) the need for four C-130H planes to be returned to Louisville, Kentucky, a DOD recommendation we support but which has been thrown into question due to concern about the BRAC Commission's legal authority to realign certain Air National Guard assets; and 3) the need to implement DOD's recommendation to establish its Center for Personnel Excellence at Fort Knox.

First, the implementation of the BRAC recommendations is both a large and complex process, one we fear may have a temporary, negative effect on sustaining the Army's war-fighting capability at both Fort Knox and Fort Benning. We ask that the Commission's final recommendation be written in a way that maximizes the Army's flexibility in implementing this recommendation. It is essential that the Army be given the flexibility to take any action necessary to sustain its war-fighting capability while establishing the Maneuver Center of Excellence.

Second, we recognize the difficult legal problem with which you have been presented regarding the BRAC Commission's authority to realign Air National Guard assets. We believe that however this legal dispute is decided, four C-130H planes should be returned to Louisville. If it is determined that the BRAC Commission does in fact have the authority to realign Air National Guard assets, then DOD's recommendation that four planes be transferred from Nashville, Tennessee should be implemented for the reasons we state below.

We believe that the legal position opposing DOD's recommendation is not an overly compelling one. The Congressional Research Service has examined this issue in detail and concluded that of the two relevant statutory provisions that might prove an obstacle to the BRAC Commission having the authority to transfer Air National Guard units (10 U.S.C. §18238 and 32 U.S.C. §104(c)), the first is essentially unpersuasive and "cogent arguments" can be made against the second.¹ Furthermore, these provisions govern National Guard "units." The proposed transfer of four planes, however, does not constitute the transfer of a "unit." It only involves assets, thus further strengthening DOD's legal position.

If it is decided that the BRAC Commission does not have the authority to require realignment of Air National Guard assets, then the BRAC Commission should recommend that the prior realignment of four planes from Louisville to Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho be reversed based on legal authority DOD currently enjoys. Such an interpretation would be consistent with the intent of Congress, the importance of which your Deputy General Counsel acknowledged in his memorandum of July 14, 2005.² While there may be some dispute as to the BRAC Commission's ability to realign National Guard units, there should be no disputing Congress's authority in this vein.

If DOD exceeded its authority in the first place by moving the planes from Kentucky, then the transfer is null and void and should be rescinded.

As a policy matter, we also believe that there are compelling reasons for having these four planes returned to Louisville. First, the 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard can immediately use 12 C-130H aircraft for the war effort. The Kentucky Air National Guard requires only the additional four aircraft for the National Guard to be combat ready, fully manned, equipped, and trained. As of June 30, the Air National Guard Bureau Recruiting and Retention Report indicated that the Louisville Airlift Wing was 97.6 percent manned, compared to Nashville, which was manned at only 89.2 percent.

Moreover, DOD has proposed specific locations for the 12 C-130H aircraft to provide an optimal regional response to surrounding Midwest and Southern states in support of the Emergency Management/Homeland Defense and/or Security Compacts. Kentucky can respond quickly, assisting all neighboring states in the event of natural disaster or terrorist attack, and the Commonwealth is geographically positioned and jointly organized to be the regional cargo provider for homeland defense.

The 123rd Special Tactics Squadron (123 STS) is unique to Louisville. The 123 STS contains both combat controllers and pararescuers with the ability to provide Search and Rescue command and control. While other states have Civil Support Teams (formally

¹ Congressional Research Service, *Base Realignment and Closure of National Guard Facilities: Application of 10 U.S.C. §18238 and 32 U.S.C. §104(c)*, July 6, 2005.

² In FY1992, 12 C-130H aircraft were purchased for the 123rd Airlift Wing in Louisville at the direction of Congress.

known as Weapons of Mass Destruction teams) and Army National Guard Special Forces, no other state has all these capabilities in one location except Kentucky.

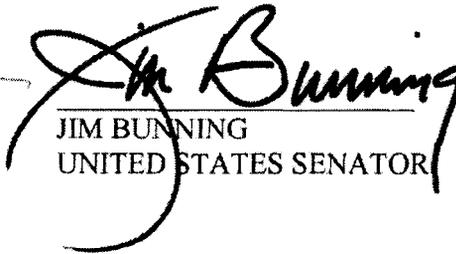
Third, it has come to our attention that there has been discussion about the wisdom of DOD's recommendation to establish the Center for Personnel Excellence at Fort Knox. We believe establishment of such a center is long overdue. The integration and consolidation of the personnel function will provide "life cycle management" for both the current and future force. Fort Knox is the logical choice for the Center since its recommended functions match up favorably with existing capabilities on post, such as the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. Moreover, the cost of living, quality of life, geographical location and housing of such a Center on a military installation all work to provide the best solution for managing DOD's most valuable resource – its people. The increased synergy resulting from this recommendation will result in increased savings for DOD and more effective management of the "Total Force." The Commonwealth of Kentucky, the local community and the Army are all fully supportive of this recommendation. Finally, moving from leased space in Virginia to leased space in Missouri does not satisfy the Army's need to provide adequate force protection consistent with its regulatory requirements. Fort Knox does not face this problem.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our concerns, and of course, the service you, your fellow Commissioners and your staff have rendered to our nation.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR



JIM BUNNING
UNITED STATES SENATOR

Enclosures

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

JOINT STATEMENT OF SENATORS McCONNELL AND BUNNING BEFORE THE DEFENSE BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE COMMISSION ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI REGIONAL HEARING JUNE 20, 2005

Members of the Commission, fellow Kentuckians, and friends, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss our views on the Department of Defense's (DOD) base realignment and closure recommendations as they affect the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We want to begin by thanking each one of you for making the sacrifice to serve on the Commission and for taking the time to review our concerns. We would also like to thank Senator Bond and his staff for their effort in hosting and coordinating this hearing.

Our military is undergoing an important transformation in order to adapt to a new national-security environment, and, as a general matter, we believe the Secretary of Defense's recommendations for Kentucky's military facilities reflect those changes. We understand the need for conducting this base-closure round and believe the recommendations from DOD provide the Commission with a good starting point as you begin your deliberations. On the whole, we are pleased that DOD recognized the vital roles Kentucky installations and personnel play in enhancing our national security.

We would like to take this opportunity to address two concerns we have with the Secretary's recommendations: the downgrading of the Ireland Army hospital to a clinic at Fort Knox and the relocation of the Louisville, Kentucky, Detachment of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (the Louisville Detachment) to Picatinny, New Jersey. At the same time, we are pleased DOD has recommended that the Fort Campbell and Blue Grass Army Depot remain important parts of the Army's future and that our Guard and Reserve assets remain strong.

Fort Knox

We are pleased to see that DOD recognized Fort Knox's value to our nation's security. This value stems in part from the significant maneuver acres and training ranges at Fort Knox, two reasons why the Army ranked Fort Knox 12th in military value among Army bases nationwide. We want to thank everyone from the Fort Knox community who helped make that value clear to DOD.

Not only will Fort Knox remain a valuable DOD asset, it will welcome the return of combat troops after a ten-year absence. Fort Knox is well suited for a light-infantry unit of action not only because of the maneuver acreage and training ranges but also because the installation has forged a productive relationship with the local community. Fort Knox's surrounding community offers an excellent quality of life. For instance, Hardin County's cost of living is almost 20% below the national average. In addition, Fort Knox abuts the greater metropolitan Louisville area, which was rated last year by the *Military Communities of Excellence Study* as one of the top-ten metropolitan areas for military quality of life. *Sperling Best Places* ranked Louisville the fifth most family-friendly community in the country.

We are also pleased that the Army intends to transform Fort Knox from a training installation into a multi-functional installation that will house not only operational Army forces, but also various administrative headquarters. The Army plans to consolidate soldier management at Fort Knox with the relocation of Human Resources Command, Accessions Command and Cadet Command, Army Reserve Personnel Command and Army Enlisted Records Branch, 100th Division (IT) Headquarters, and 84th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center. Consolidation of human resource functions at Fort Knox provides efficiencies because these recommended functions match up favorably with existing capabilities on post, such as the U.S. Army Recruiting Command.

We look forward to working with our fellow congressional delegation members in Washington and the Fort Knox community to facilitate the changes necessary to transform Fort Knox into a premier power-projection platform, as well as a first-rate home for many of the Army's administrative needs. We note that as part of that transformation, numerous facilities designed for heavy maneuver stationing and training will become available for use as the Army's future needs dictate.

Finally, we would encourage the Commission to reexamine the downgrading of Ireland Army Hospital to a clinic. We believe it is essential for Fort Knox to maintain a strong medical capability on post, especially now that a brigade combat team will permanently call Fort Knox home. The soldiers at Fort Knox will require a level of care best delivered by a full Army hospital. In addition to the quality of care, the arrival of permanent troops is also likely to increase the overall demand for medical services, again pointing toward the need for a full service hospital. We believe that the recommended arrival of these new troops necessitates a full review of this recommendation.

Naval Surface Warfare Center Port Hueneme Division, Louisville Detachment

We also have concerns about DOD's proposed relocation of the Louisville Detachment to the Integrated Weapons & Armaments Specialty Site for Guns and Ammunition to Picatinny, New Jersey. Overall, this recommendation would involve moving eight installations to New Jersey to focus on research and development issues.

While the other seven installations slated for realignment may have capabilities appropriately included in this recommendation, the Louisville Detachment's capabilities do not seem well suited for transfer to Picatinny. This is because only about 1% of the work conducted at the Louisville Detachment actually involves research and development, the major focus of the New Jersey installation. In fact, the specialized work done in Louisville focuses almost entirely on non-research and development activity, such as fleet-user support, which involves manufacturing, shipboard integration, and life-cycle support of naval armaments.

Relocation of the Louisville Detachment would also upset a decision of the 1995 BRAC Commission that specifically privatized the Detachment's workload. Since that time, the cooperation between the installation and its contractors has been a model public-private partnership.

Finally, relocation of the Louisville Detachment could very well be costly for the U.S. taxpayer. For instance, the cost of living in northern New Jersey is significantly higher than that of Louisville, Kentucky.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to reexamine DOD's recommendation to relocate the Louisville Detachment.

National Guard and Reserves

We are pleased with the Army's decision to include the Adjutant General of each state in the decisions to transform the guard forces. Kentucky's Guard and Reserve forces have been active participants in the Global War on Terror and deserve the respect that their active brethren receive. We applaud the efforts to ensure they receive the same high-quality training opportunities that will exist at the new armed forces Reserve Centers that the Department has created.

Furthermore, we welcome the addition of four C-130s from Nashville, Tennessee, as we expand the Louisville Air Guard to 12 aircraft. The Louisville unit is one of the best in the country, with 11 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, the most in the Air National Guard. Minimal resources will be needed to accommodate the additional aircraft because Louisville was home to twelve C-130s until the Air Guard decided to restructure last year. In addition, the aircraft will be ideally placed to conduct joint service training missions with the new brigade combat team at Fort Knox.

Fort Campbell

We are pleased that DOD has recommended that Fort Campbell remain one of the premier power-projection platforms in DOD's inventory. The power projection and joint-service operational capability of the base is highlighted by the Army's longest airfield, which is not only outfitted with staging and loading facilities for rapid deployment via Air Force C-17 aircraft, but also covers some 2,500 acres to support future missions and stationing at the installation. Four Infantry Brigade Combat Teams, a Multi-Functional Aviation Brigade, a Containment Brigade, a UEx Headquarters, the 5th Special Forces Group and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment will remain at Fort Campbell. Based on the net impacts of Modular Force Transformation and BRAC-related actions, it was recommended that there be an increase of approximately 300 soldiers over the FY2003 to FY2011 time period, and we welcome these additions. We look forward to working with DOD to ensure that our warfighters at Fort Campbell are well prepared and well equipped.

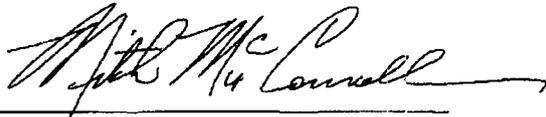
Blue Grass Army Depot

We are pleased with the Department's decision to consolidate operations such as munitions maintenance at the Blue Grass Army Depot. The Blue Grass Army Depot will take on new importance as a DOD Munitions Center of Excellence, and will become a focal point for one of the most critical aspects of Army combat capability—the ammunition on which our soldiers depend.

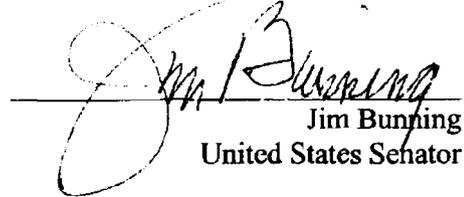
DOD recommended that the Blue Grass Army Depot receive munitions maintenance functions from Red River Army Depot, Texas. This recommendation is fully consistent with DOD's recommendation to make Blue Grass Army Depot a Munitions Center of Excellence.

Conclusion

The changes at Fort Knox, Fort Campbell, Blue Grass Army Depot, and for the Kentucky National Guard and Reserves are a part of the greater transformation that America's armed forces must undertake to successfully fight a new war—the Global War on Terror. We believe that, with the recommendations we have outlined above, DOD will be able to fully harness the potential military value of the Kentucky installations and personnel and provide maximum benefit to our nation's security.



Mitch McConnell
United States Senator



Jim Bunning
United States Senator

MITCH MCCONNELL UNITED STATES SENATOR	JIM BUNNING UNITED STATES SENATOR	ANNE NORTHUP UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE	JERRY ABRAMSON MAYOR OF LOUISVILLE
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Attachment No. 2
BRAC Comm

June 17, 2005

The Honorable Anthony Principi
Chairman, Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

AUG 9
BRAC Commission
Received

AUG 09 2005

Dear Chairman Principi:

Received

We are writing in response to the recent recommendation of the Department of Defense (DOD) to realign the Louisville, Kentucky Detachment of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (Louisville Detachment), by relocating gun and ammunition research, development & acquisition capabilities to Picatinny Arsenal, New Jersey.

The city of Louisville and the Kentucky congressional delegation support the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission process and agree with DOD on the need for strategic closures and the realignment of various military installations. Further, we see the wisdom in DOD's recommendation to consolidate all gun and ammunition facilities that emphasize research and development. However, we must take issue with DOD's recommendation that the Louisville Detachment's mission primarily involves research and development and therefore is a candidate for relocation to New Jersey.

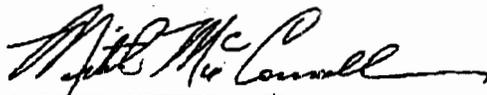
Our central concern with regard to the Louisville Detachment is that its mission is focused on manufacturing, shipboard integration and life-cycle support, with only peripheral involvement in the research and development elements of guns and ammunition. Only a handful of the Louisville Detachment's staff work on research and development activities; the vast majority focus on non-research and development activities, such as direct end user support and in-service support of armaments. The Louisville detachment, therefore, is incorrectly considered a research and development facility. Due to the demonstrable difference in the core missions between the Detachment and the Picatinny installation, we believe the Department mistakenly recommended the Louisville Detachment for realignment.

In addition to our concern about the different missions served by the two installations, we also believe that such a relocation would result in the termination of an effective public-private partnership, which was itself a creation of the 1995 BRAC process. Moreover, such relocation would likely result in higher costs to the U.S. taxpayers due to, among other things, the higher cost of living in northern New Jersey.

Attachment No. 2

In sum, we request that you revisit DOD's recommendation to relocate the Detachment. We thank you for your attention to this matter and are happy to answer any questions that you and the Commission might have.

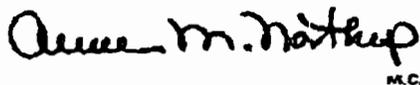
Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR



JIM BUNNING
UNITED STATES SENATOR



ANNE NORTHUP
UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE



JERRY ABRAMSON
MAYOR, CITY OF LOUISVILLE

Congress of the United States

Attachment No. 3

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.

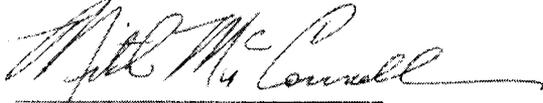
Fourth, with over 120,000 annual visitors, the Patton Museum is a vital asset to the local area and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In fact, the Museum is among the top ten most visited tourist attractions in the entire state.

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.

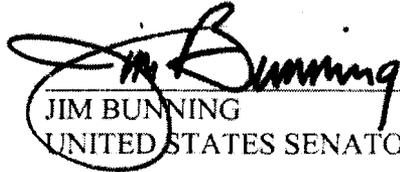
The issue of the Patton Museum is understandably a sensitive one with the local community, the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Patton family. For the reasons outlined above, we request that you write your recommendations to ensure that the Patton Museum remains at Fort Knox.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



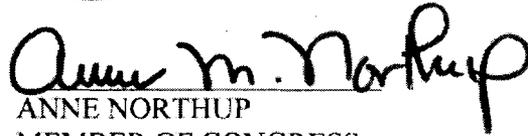
MITCH McCONNELL
UNITED STATES SENATOR



JIM BUNNING
UNITED STATES SENATOR



RON LEWIS
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



ANNE NORTHUP
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Enclosure

