

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



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House Panel Rejects Bid To Thwart Base Closure Decisions

Congress Daily (Defense)
27 September, 2005

The House Armed Services Committee voted, 43-14, Tuesday to reject legislation that would thwart the base-closure process and prevent an independent commission's recommendations from becoming law.

Despite the panel's disapproval, the House is expected to consider the joint resolution as a high-priority item, perhaps as early as next week, Armed Services Tactical Air and Land Subcommittee Chairman Curt Weldon, R-Pa., said. The committee will report the measure adversely to the House.

During the markup, members highlighted what they believed to be errors made in this base-closure round, both by the Defense Department and the commission.

Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, questioned decisions to close two Gulf Coast installations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. And Rep. Thelma Drake, R-Va., criticized the commission's decision to allow a southern Virginia community to decide whether to adhere

to anti-encroachment restrictions to keep open the Oceana Master Jet Base.

Rep. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii, argued that minimal projected cost savings -- \$15 billion over 20 years -- did not justify the "grief and suffering."

Armed Services ranking member Ike Skelton, D-Mo., voted to report the bill to the floor unfavorably, but not before criticizing the Pentagon for not being more forthcoming with base-closure information.

"It's been a long ride ... to get us to this point in the base-closure process," Skelton said. "This journey has been more difficult than it needed to be."

Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., introduced the resolution, a formal expression of congressional disapproval of the commission's list. LaHood, who picked up five Democratic co-sponsors, has opposed plans to take aircraft from Air National Guard units, including those belonging to the 183rd Fighter Wing in his district.

The House and Senate Armed Services panels have repeatedly reported similar legislation unfavorably during four previous base closures, and at least one chamber has voted on the joint resolution in each of those rounds. But neither the House nor the Senate ever passed the legislation.

In the unlikely event the measure passes the House, the Senate then would consider the legislation under expedited rules outlined in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990.

The commission sent its final report -- including recommendations to shutter 22 major military facilities and realign 33 others -- to the White House Sept. 8. President Bush approved the report a week later, sending it to Congress Sept. 15. Lawmakers have 45 days to pass a joint resolution to disapprove the list, or it becomes law. By Megan Scully

House Panel Plans Effort to Block Base Closures; Floor Passage Unlikely

CQ TODAY – DEFENSE

Sept. 23, 2005 – 7:48 p.m.

By John M. Donnelly, CQ Staff

The House Armed Services Committee is scheduled to mark up a resolution Tuesday that would block President Bush's recommended military base closures.

The measure is all but certain to come to a House vote, but its odds of passage there are considered slim. The committee may vote to "adversely report" the resolution, but such a move would not keep it from reaching the House floor.

There is more than one version of the resolution, even though its wording is dictated by law. An Armed Services spokesman said the committee is likely to take up the version (H J Res 65) introduced by Ray LaHood, R-Ill., instead of the one filed by Harold E. Ford Jr., D-Tenn. (H J Res 64).

Both LaHood and Ford represent districts with Air National Guard bases that were closed or downsized because of votes of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission that the president ratified.

"We ask our National Guardsmen to do amazing things, from fighting for freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan, to helping rescue victims of Hurricane Katrina, and now the government wants to move their job to another state or even eliminate them altogether," said LaHood in a recent statement. "That is wrong, wrong, wrong!"

The president on Sept. 15 sent Congress the list of hundreds of military bases that the BRAC commission said should be shut down, enlarged or realigned. The goal is to save money and posture forces for future threats.

Under the BRAC statute (PL 101-510), Congress has 45 legislative days after it receives the president's list to pass a resolution of disapproval, or the changes become law.

In four previous BRAC rounds, Congress has never passed such a resolution and it is not expected to start now, experts said. Previous resolutions have been defeated handily.

By law, the Armed Services committees have 20 days after the president sends his BRAC list to Congress to report a resolution. If they do not do so by then, they are discharged of the responsibility and the measure goes straight onto the House or Senate calendar.

No matter how the House committee votes Tuesday, it is all but impossible to keep the

resolution from eventually reaching the floor. And once it gets there, the BRAC law essentially mandates a vote.

It is not clear how House Armed Services will vote, but on five previous occasions when an Armed Services panel reported a resolution of disapproval, it did so unfavorably.

No resolution of disapproval has been introduced in the Senate. It appears to be too late: Members had 10 calendar days to introduce one after Sept. 15, when the president submitted the BRAC list to Congress.

Forced To Choose At Military Bases

Wall Street Journal

September 28, 2005

By Maura Webber Sadovi, Staff Reporter Of The Wall Street Journal

John Mamoudis grew up in the Norfolk, Va., area, so he was accustomed to planes buzzing overhead from the nearby air base. He also didn't think much about how close the 72 luxury condominiums he was planning were to the flight path for the Oceana Naval Air Station.

Then the federal government started making noise about limiting development around the air base. In the hopes of avoiding a showdown, the city council of Virginia Beach, where the project was located, voted to buy Mr. Mamoudis's land for \$15 million.

That didn't stop the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission from issuing an ultimatum that stunned the region, which runs along Virginia's coast from colonial Williamsburg down to Chesapeake, near the North Carolina border. The choice was clear: either roll back development around the Oceana Air Station by condemning or purchasing the land that holds roughly 3,500 homes and some businesses valued at nearly \$550 million, or lose Oceana's planes and about 12,000 jobs to Florida. The panel, charged with consolidating military bases nationwide, was concerned about encroachment on the Navy's main base for fighter jets on the East Coast. It also recommended closing nearby Fort Monroe in Hampton -- a base that harbored President

Lincoln during the Civil War and still employs about 3,500.

The conclusions of the BRAC commission, which will become law unless the Congress rejects them, threaten to destabilize Norfolk area's real-estate market and economy, which has been comparatively strong in recent years thanks to robust military spending and a booming shipping industry. Unemployment was 4.1% in July, below the national level of 5.2%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The region has a population of about 1.6 million. Mr. Mamoudis said other developers are alarmed by his experience and the general uncertainty in the market. "People who are conservative by nature are finding reasons not to do things," Mr. Mamoudis said.

While the area's economy has diversified since it was hit by severe military downsizing in the mid 1990s, military and defense-related businesses -- including the world's largest naval station in Norfolk, which houses carriers that are deployed with Oceana's jets -- make up one-quarter of its workers and 36% of the local economic output, according to Property & Portfolio Research Inc., a Boston-based real-estate research firm. If Virginia catches a cold when the Pentagon sneezes, then a loss at Oceana would amount to "a painful case of strep," said Kevin Hall, a spokesman for Virginia Gov. Mark Warner.

To date, the warehouse sector is one of the star performers of the area's real-estate market. It reported above-average rents and below-average vacancies in the second quarter, fueled by demand for distribution space prompted by rising volumes of Asian goods arriving at the expanding Ports of Virginia, PPR said.

The office market saw vacancies fall but rents inch downward in the second quarter, though they are expected to rise through 2009, PPR said. A loss at Oceana isn't likely to directly affect the region's office market though certain corridors near the base with high concentrations of defense contractors could be affected, said Jordan Slone, chairman of the Norfolk-based Harbor Group International.

By contrast, the slated closure of Fort Monroe, located on a roughly 570-acre peninsula in the Chesapeake Bay, could open up new real-estate opportunities. Professor Gilbert Yochum of Old Dominion University in Norfolk views the base as a "developers' nirvana" due to its rich history and stock of gracious officers' homes with waterfront views. Even before the recent base closing decision, Drucker & Falk, a property-management company based in Newport News, was moving ahead with plans to redevelop the stately Chamberlin Hotel on the base into a retirement community.

Fitch Rates San Angelo, TX \$20MM Certificates of Obligation 'AA-'

Business Wire
27 September, 2005

Fitch Ratings assigns an 'AA-' rating to San Angelo, Texas' (the city) \$20,000,000 combination tax and revenue certificates of obligation, series 2005 (the certificates). Additionally, the 'AA-' underlying rating has been affirmed for the city's outstanding \$3.8 million general obligation bonds and \$31.0 million certificates of obligation. The certificates are scheduled to sell Sept. 29 via negotiated sale to a syndicate led by Southwest Securities. The Rating Outlook is Stable.

The certificates constitute direct obligations of the city and are payable from a direct and continuing ad valorem tax, within the limits prescribed by law, on all taxable property within the city. The certificates are also payable from a pledge of surplus net revenues of the city's waterworks and sewer system. The city intends to repay the debt with a one-half cent sales tax collected for economic development approved by voters in July 2005 for a period of twenty years. Proceeds will be used for constructing, installing, and equipping improvements and renovations at the San Angelo Fairgrounds, the City Coliseum, the Convention Center, the Fort Concho Historical Museum, sports and recreational facilities, the city's water system, and improvements to the Concho River banks.

The 'AA-' rating reflects the city's continued strong financial performance in the form of a healthy general fund balance, and a diverse tax base, which includes a sizable military sector. Steady, continued growth remains likely given the city's sound economic base and sufficient water resources. Goodfellow Air Force Base (Goodfellow), located near the city, is not included on the closure or realignment lists of the 2005 round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), which helps resolidify the city's credit profile. While the city has not adopted a formalized capital plan, future borrowing needs appear manageable, and the city maintains a policy of rapid debt amortization for tax-supported debt. Property tax rates are higher than those of other regional cities but have remained stable over the past several years and will decrease modestly for fiscal 2006 as a result of stronger than expected tax base growth due in part to robust residential development around the city's Lake Nasworthy.

The city, which has a 2005 estimated population of about 90,000, is located in the western-central portion of Texas and is the regional trade center for the 13-county area known as the Concho Valley. Unlike many cities in the region, the city has an ample supply of water, which it receives from five local reservoirs. Unemployment rates within the city have been consistently below state and national averages.

The city's economy is stable and is centered around agriculture, education, medicine, and manufacturing. In addition, there is a substantial military presence at nearby Goodfellow, which serves as an intelligence training center for the Air Force and a fire and rescue training center for three of the military branches. Goodfellow employs nearly 4,500 military and civilian workers, a number which has increased in recent years, partly due to the BRAC process resulting in the transfer of fire protection and special instruments training to the base.

The city's finances are strong, benefiting from conservative fiscal policies and moderate tax-base growth. Fiscal 2004 sales tax collections increased 5% over fiscal 2003 levels, and fiscal 2005 receipts are budgeted to increase another

4.2% due to strong retail and restaurant activity. Overall general fund net revenues were essentially unchanged in fiscal 2004, leading to a total fund balance of more than 25%, or about three months, of operating expenditures and transfers out, well in excess of the city's informal two month policy.

Overall debt levels are modest at 2.1% of the taxable assessed value (TAV) and \$563 per capita, including state support for overlapping school district debt service. A substantial amount of the city's general obligation debt is supported by the water and sewer system and intergovernmental lease payments. Amortization is rapid, with 70% of all principal (including longer, self-supporting debt) retired in 10 years. Future borrowing needs are manageable, with one \$3 million-\$5 million issuance every three years and two additional phases of economic development project sales tax supported debt totaling approximately \$30 million to be issued within about 4 years. Amortization is expected to remain rapid as the city attempts to limit the life of new, nonself-supporting debt to around six years.

Fitch's rating definitions and the terms of use of such ratings are available on the agency's public site, www.fitchratings.com. Published ratings, criteria and methodologies are available from this site, at all times. Fitch's code of conduct, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, affiliate firewall, compliance and other relevant policies and procedures are also available from the 'Code of Conduct' section of this site.

Local News Articles

Group kicks off anti-Cecil campaign

The Florida Times-Union
September 23, 2005
By DAVID DECAMP

A group led by Westside and Clay County residents has begun trying to galvanize opposition to a \$50 million package promised to reopen Cecil Field as a Navy jet base in Jacksonville.

Kicking off its campaign outside the West Regional Library east of the old base, the group started hours after the first meeting of Mayor John Peyton's panel assessing how to accommodate the Navy's potential return to Cecil. About 175 attended Thursday's meeting of the Better Westside Project, formerly the loose-knit Say No To Cecil.

The group has formed to defeat the \$50 million bond issue promised to convince the federal base-closure panel Cecil should reopen. The City Council, which has a committee reviewing effects of the Navy's return, could decide the bond issue by November.

"Is the city of Jacksonville ready to spend another \$50 million to bring the base back to a neighborhood that doesn't want it?" said Michael Griffin, Better Westside Project president and Diamond D horse ranch owner.

Other leaders in the group are Russ Stalvey and Katja Palmer. The group also hired Mandarin-based political consultant John Daigle and commissioned a poll showing mixed reaction on the Westside, though it declined to fully disclose the results.

It has scheduled a town hall meeting for 7 p.m. Thursday at the Cecil Equestrian Center and launched a Web site at www.betterwestside.com.

The local Democratic Party also has started what it calls a "shadow commission" to assess whether Peyton's office got its facts right. Party activist Pat Scher attended the mayor's panel meeting Thursday.

The old base, now Cecil Commerce Center, closed in 1999. But a federal base-closure panel decided to move the Oceana jet base to Cecil if Virginia leaders cannot meet conditions and Florida comes up with promises. The \$50 million from Jacksonville is part of \$200 million promised to relocate tenants at Cecil, one of the conditions of moving from Virginia Beach.

It has provoked opponents like Better Westside members who fear declining property values and

loud jet noise and are angry Peyton didn't come to them first. He spent much of August pressing for Cecil's reopening with federal officials instead.

"In an ideal world, we would not have proceed this way," Peyton said. "This is something we did not seek. It came to us."

In response to complaints, Peyton formed the Cecil Field Opportunity Commission of business and political insiders, mostly outside the area of the base. Initially 17 members, the group is expected to be rounded out next week by two more. Nancy Broner, chairwoman of the Duval County School Board, joined Thursday.

A working group on land use will be headed by developer Ed Burr, who has a contract with the city to build the Shipyards on the Northbank. Chamber of Commerce Chairman Bob Helms will lead a group on economic effects. Lobbyist and Republican Party leader Mike Hightower will lead a community outreach group.

Public hearings are planned, but times and locations are uncertain. As is the next meeting date.

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Top Admiral Trying To Give Firm Answer On Oceana

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot
September 28, 2005

By Jack Dorsey, The Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH — While he's not certain whether Oceana Naval Air Station will remain a master jet base, the Navy's top admiral told an audience of 1,000 sailors here Tuesday he is searching for the answer.

"There is a lot of work going on right now to make sure we get the decision about the future of Oceana right," Adm. Michael G. Mullen told enlisted men and women at an all-hands meeting in the base theater, his first here since becoming chief of naval operations in July.

"I have got to work my way through a very careful review of the options, not just what the Navy is going to do, but clearly what the city of Virginia Beach and the state of Virginia will do," he said.

The federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission wants the state and Virginia Beach to establish a \$15 million-per-year program to acquire homes and most businesses in "accident-potential zones" near Oceana.

If its conditions aren't met by March, more than 200 Navy fighter jets based at Oceana will go to the former Cecil Field near Jacksonville, Fla., the commission decided in August.

President Bush has endorsed the commission's recommendations. And while state and local officials already have promised to limit further development around Oceana, many are hesitant to condemn and seize the homes of longtime residents, particularly without a guarantee that the Navy won't leave anyway.

Sen. John W. Warner and Gov. Mark R. Warner told Mullen over the weekend that before committing the resources needed to halt and roll back development around Oceana, they want a promise that the Navy will keep the base "for the foreseeable future."

Mullen, referring to a visit to Oceana on Monday by Sen. Warner, said he knows "he needs a commitment from me."

But he first needs to address the requirements the BRAC Commission laid out and how they affect the area. Mullen said he hopes to reach his decision by mid- to late November.

Talking with reporters later, Mullen said he is aware of the investment the BRAC Commission has directed the city and state to make.

"It is a significant one, and I need to be able to commit to the long-term future," he said.

Asked if he hoped to decide once and for all whether Oceana is the long-term solution for the Navy, Mullen said, "Yes, clearly."

From what he has seen so far, Mullen said, he believes the city and state are committed.

"The BRAC Commission laid out some very strong requirements, and it is important to me for the long term to ensure that those requirements are met in order for us to have the kind of master jet base we need for the future," he said. "At the top of this is the need to be able to train exceptionally well for the mission that we have."

While Mullen has testified before the commission that the future of naval aviation was at Oceana, he also said that the encroachment had become an increasing concern and "clearly it couldn't continue."

Mullen said the huge cost of moving to another base remains a major issue because the government has limited resources to upgrade the Navy and to meet other needs.

"The Navy and those dollars compete. You add on additional pressures that are now there because of Katrina and Rita, and it makes it that much more difficult."

Virginia Beach, Va., oceanfront becomes popular with developers

Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, Virginia)

28 September, 2005

By Battinto Batts

VIRGINIA BEACH -- Scott Taylor has been investing in real estate for six years, so when he leaves the Navy SEALs in a few weeks, it's unlikely he'll be a proverbial fish out of water.

Taylor, some friends and Norfolk developer Bobby Wright are partners in a deal to turn the Captain's Quarters hotel at 28th Street and Arctic Avenue into a 42-unit condominium complex.

"We plan on doing a lot of things at the Oceanfront," said Taylor, 26, of Virginia Beach. "We see nothing but opportunity here."

Now a mix of resort hotels, some condominium developments and, a few blocks inland, single-family homes, the Virginia Beach Oceanfront is emerging as another hot spot for high-density housing developments similar to downtown Norfolk.

In some ways, Taylor and his team reflect the changing nature of Beach development. About 30 developers, some new faces for the Beach, have approached the city during the past nine months with plans for development at the Oceanfront that would require zoning changes, said Stephen White, planning coordinator for the city.

Some of these developers have plans to leverage the resort's appeal as a place to live, work and have fun. They plan multi story complexes, with a mixture of commercial, residential and office space.

The interest is encouraging, city officials said, but for now many of those other proposals are merely proposals. The skyline near the beach likely won't see drastic changes until the city decides how to proceed on the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission's demands regarding keeping Oceana Naval Air Station.

"Planning, as far as the Oceanfront is concerned, is on hold as the council tries to get a handle on what it wants to do regarding BRAC and what has been asked of us," White said.

"The development that is going on now is what is allowed by right in the existing zoning," he explained. "There is talk of updating the plan to allow more development that has a mixture of uses. But we will have to wait to see what happens with Oceana before we reconsider that."

White is somewhat perplexed as to the "why now" behind the recent interest in development near the Oceanfront.

"I am not sure if anything has held it up," he said. "I don't know if it is that people are finding out finally how nice it is to live at the Oceanfront as compared to other places in the region. It is interesting to hear there is an untapped demand there."

The Oceanfront is one of several areas in the region that are prime for investment and high-density development, said Wright, the Norfolk developer. Wright also cited Ocean View, downtown Norfolk, Chick's Beach and Shore Drive.

Development in one area is unlikely to come at the expense of others, Wright said. "We are seeing a maturation in the marketplace of Hampton Roads," he said. "The marketplace is tired of suburban development. In downtowns and oceanfront areas you get to know your neighbors. You are walking around a lot. There is a great feeling of community."

Jack Pope is a developer with condominium projects at the Oceanfront and in downtown Norfolk. Pope's company, Hampton Roads Housing, is constructing nearly 200 units in a condominium development near 29th Street at the Oceanfront called Old Beach Village.

The company is also a partner in the St. Paul's Place and Rotunda condominium developments in Norfolk.

Pope is investing in both areas because they share many of the same characteristics. "There are arts venues and museums at both locations," he said. "There are wonderful restaurants and wonderful opportunities to dine and dance and stay nearby."

"I've always looked at it as the heart of the Beach is the beach," he said. "It is the oldest part of the city, and you would think of it as downtown. It has all of the services and the most incredible amenity of all."

Jeffrey J. Wermers, president of Wermers Development and head of the Tidewater

Builders Association, said interest in the Oceanfront is being driven by market conditions.

Opportunities for redevelopment abound because many of the buildings, particularly the single-family residences, are starting to age, Wermers said,

"Virginia Beach is getting older and the overriding scarcity of land has builders looking for other opportunities," he said. "As land has become more expensive, redevelopment has become more viable."

The end result, Wermers thinks, will be a diversity of housing, providing products at different price points for consumers.

White just hopes that potential will be realized. The delay caused by BRAC is a concern for the developers and the city, he said. "The potential for a chilling effect is there. The concern I keep hearing from the developers is there is a fear that the market could change."

Taylor and his partners in Neptune Development are proceeding with plans at the Captain's Quarters, for which the group paid \$ 4.6 million. It is spending another \$ 1.5 million converting the hotel to condominium units.

When completed, the complex will be called Playa Rana Condos, in honor of the SEALs, as Playa Rana means "frog beach" in Spanish. SEALs are sometimes referred to as frog men. The units will start in the low \$ 300,000s and top out at about \$ 400,000.

Like other developers, Taylor has his eye on other properties at the Oceanfront and wants some clarity on the effects of BRAC.

"I would like to see it resolved," he said. "The current zoning doesn't allow the highest and best use of a lot of parcels in the Beach district."

Transportation official says base closure money cannot be used for bus system

The News Enterprise (Kentucky)
27 September, 2005

A project to develop a public transit system between the towns that surround Fort Knox cannot use money that is part of the changes planned under the federal base closure and realignment process, a state transportation official said.

Joe Sheilley, spokesman for the state Office of Transportation Delivery, said Tuesday that federal money to help military posts transition cannot be used along with the federal transportation dollars that would pay for most of the project in Hardin County.

The idea of using federal base closure money was examined in a Radcliff-Elizabethtown Metropolitan Planning Organization study on a countywide public transit system, said Mike Skaggs, a transportation planner for the organization.

"It's something that we hadn't looked fully into," he said. Skaggs said the project is expected to cost about \$1 million.

Changes coming to Fort Knox include the departure of the Army's Armor Center and School and the arrival of an infantry combat brigade. The post will also become home to the Army's personnel services, which will be consolidated on post from various offices nationwide.

Those changes will add civilian jobs, likely increasing the need for public transportation as workers live off-post, Skaggs said.

Skaggs said the organization has not ruled out base closure money to pay for the project.

Refineries suggested at closed bases

Tulsa World (Oklahoma)

27 September, 2005

By Jim Myers

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe introduced a bill Monday to encourage the building of refineries at military sites shuttered

by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

"The devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita further emphasizes the need to address the weaknesses in our nation's energy policy," the Oklahoma Republican said.

Under the Inhofe bill, federal incentives would be provided to build refineries at the former military sites, including making them a priority with the Economic Development Administration, which helps local officials transition the sites to other uses; an automatic 10 percent bonus to those willing to build the refineries; and increasing the federal share for a refinery project to as much as 80 percent.

"This bill embraces President Bush's proposal for building refineries on BRAC sites and will provide incentives through EDA which will, in turn, provide high-paying jobs to the people who need them most," Inhofe said. "This is a win-win solution to a serious need."

His proposal also is designed to provide certainty for industry by allowing state governors to require the Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate all necessary permits, provide states with aid to assist in permitting and establish deadlines for permit approval.

Inhofe introduced his bill as chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Last week, a House bill was introduced by Rep. Joe Pitts, R-Pa., calling on the administration to identify three military sites slated for closure for new refineries.

"No matter how much additional crude oil is made available, we simply do not have the capacity to refine it," Pitts said. "But experts say just one new refinery would make a significant dent in gas prices here at home."

If enacted, Pitts' bill would give the secretaries of defense and energy 90 days to identify the

three new sites that would be suitable for refinery construction.

Once identified, Pitts said, that land would be set aside for two years and reserved exclusively for oil refineries.

After two years, Pitts said, the land could be sold for other purposes.

Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said last week that he also plans to introduce legislation to help build new refineries.

Rep. John Sullivan, R-Okla., a member of Barton's committee, has said he wants to push legislation that would encourage the construction of a "megarefinery" in Cushing.

Opinions/ Editorials

Tennessee: Hilleary Wants to BRAC the Budget

The Hotline

27 September, 2005

'02 GOV nominee/ex-Rep. Van Hilleary (R) advocates taking the BRAC concept and applying it to the rest of the gov't. Hilleary: "Excessive spending is like an intravenous political drug for both parties in Congress and the only way to kick the habit is to take the drug away. If Congress can't get spending under control on its own, it's time we use the only model we know that works and that's the BRAC model that takes Congressional politics out of the decision." "Hilleary proposes that Congress create a temporary federal Budget Control Authority that will work for 12 months and come back to the President and Congress with a list of domestic discretionary savings in the non-military budget. The Authority's findings of waste would then be either accepted and implemented or rejected in their entirety by Congress in short order" (release, 9/26).

Additional Notes