



NEW JERSEY COMMERCE, ECONOMIC GROWTH & TOURISM COMMISSION  
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RICHARD J. CODEY  
*Acting Governor—Chair*

VIRGINIA S. BAUER  
*Chief Executive Officer/Secretary*

August 8, 2005

BRAC Commission

**AUG 08 2005**

**Received**

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

Dear Chairman Principi:

I realize that you and the other members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission have received input from numerous officials in New Jersey and Maryland regarding the recommended closure of Fort Monmouth and the planned consolidation and relocation of operations to the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. Please allow me to add to this dialogue.

I recently received a copy of a July 26, 2005, letter sent to you by Secretary Aris Melissaratos of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development. While I appreciate Secretary Melissaratos' perspective, I was disturbed by some of the misleading information contained in his correspondence. You can expect to receive other letters from experts qualified to rebut some of the more technical and military aspects of the Secretary's letter, but I would like to touch upon some of the most obvious errors.

We in New Jersey remain deeply concerned about an apparent over-reliance by officials from Maryland, and their request for BRAC Commissioners and staff to accept workforce data presented in terms of statistical percentages rather than absolute numbers. Citing a recent Milken Institute study, Secretary Melissaratos states that "... Maryland is first among states in the nation with the highest percentage of professional and technical workers, and is second among the states in its number of people holding advanced degrees. Maryland has a large labor market for recruiting which can help mitigate these risks."

Looking at educational attainment levels in terms of actual numbers, however, tells a far different story. For example, 2000 U.S. Census data about the home counties of Fort Monmouth and the Aberdeen Proving Ground — Harford County and Monmouth County reveal some indisputable facts about their respective workforces. Also, Monmouth County boasts nearly five times the number of industry-related businesses necessary to support base activity than does Harford County:

Source – U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

<b>Educational Attainment *</b>	<b>Monmouth</b>	<b>Harford</b>
Some College, no degree	80,586	34,138
Associate Degree	26,393	10,497
Bachelor's Degree	90,050	25,564
Graduate or Prof. Degree	52,792	13,492

\* Population 25 years and older

When Secretary Melissaratos writes, "... it has been suggested that Fort Monmouth has suffered from a lack of newly trained, highly motivated individuals bringing the latest skills and technology to complex projects," he makes a completely unsubstantiated claim supported by no factual evidence whatsoever. Throughout his letter, he promises that "Maryland stands ready" — well, at Fort Monmouth, highly skilled, highly motivated personnel not only are ready but also are already in place, already doing the job, and already doing it well. And a recent survey reveals that few of them — perhaps 15 percent — would consider following their jobs to Maryland.

Can the Department of Defense really afford such a significant loss of experienced, skilled people during a time of war? You answered that question yourself during your June visit to Fort Monmouth when you said, "In five or 10 years you can build that kind of talent base, but in time of war, we don't have that much time." As someone who lost a husband to the terrorism of September 11<sup>th</sup>, I keenly understand the importance of maintaining a strong national defense. We certainly will not advance these efforts through the massive "brain drain" this closure would mean.

We cannot afford to gamble when it comes to our defense. We should not now be speculating about whether the Maryland workforce will be up to the task. We should value what is already happening at Fort Monmouth and the skilled, experienced, dedicated people who make it happen.

I appreciate your consideration and hope for your support in this most serious matter.

Sincerely,



Virginia S. Bauer  
CEO/Secretary

cc: Honorable Richard J. Codey, Acting Governor-Chair  
Honorable Jon S. Corzine, U.S. Senator  
Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg, U.S. Senator  
New Jersey Congressional Delegation