



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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Anthony Principi, Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
Polk Building, Suite 600
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202

07052005

Dear Chairman Principi:

Since 1954 the US Army has conducted its most advanced research on soldier equipment at The Soldier Systems Center in Natick. This Army facility states its mission simply: "Provide America's soldiers with the best equipment in the world". I am proud to have this facility in my district for the work it does to protect our service men and women in combat and ultimately to keep America secure. As a member of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies of the Massachusetts General Court I am also committed to the advancement of the defense technology industry in the Commonwealth. The Soldier Systems Center conducts some of the most advanced and efficient technology research in the world and is a key economic resource for the Commonwealth and the Northeast region as a whole. State policymakers are cognizant of our responsibility to support the collaborative efforts of the SSC and the entire business/academic defense technology industry which it leads.

I write today to support of the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations to preserve the Soldier's System center and expand Hanscom Air Force Base. For decades, Hanscom and Natick have made significant contributions to the technological advancement that drives our nation's warfighting capabilities. The command and control technologies developed at Hanscom and the soldier systems advancements from Natick help give the US military a technological advantage over every other military force in the world.

SSC-Natick has a 50 plus year tradition of serving all branches of the military and was ranked number one in military value for both Human Systems Research and Development & Acquisition by the Pentagon's Technical Joint Cross Service Group. Both Natick and Hanscom ranked in the top ten of several other categories of TJCSG ratings.

The successful track record of these bases can be attributed in large part to their proximity to the nation's top defense technology cluster that stretches from Southeastern Massachusetts into Southern New Hampshire. This region possesses the critical mass of skilled workforce, experienced institutional and academic partners and research and development base to enable these facilities to thrive now and into the future. The Pentagon has a willing partner in Massachusetts to help create the future vision for these facilities. As you have seen, the community support for these facilities and their mission is widespread and proactive, led by the Mass Defense Technology Initiative, a public-private partnership, co-chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy and Governor Mitt Romney, which was created to preserve and expand the missions of these two unique technical facilities. [REDACTED] in the Massachusetts state legislature, town officials, the business and academic research community have all displayed a continuing commitment to work collaboratively to support this crucial effort.

By recommending the addition of more than 1100 new direct jobs to Hanscom and retaining the core technology mission at Natick, the Pentagon has made a tremendous commitment to Massachusetts and its technological capabilities. We recognize that commitment and will do our part to enhance the collaboration between academic/high tech/medical sectors and these facilities so that they can continue their critical work in defense of our nation and grow for the future.

Sincerely,



Karen E. Spilka
State Senator
2d Middlesex and Norfolk District