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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0553**

COMMITTEES:  
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21ST CENTURY COMPETITIVENESS

July 6, 2005

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07082005

Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman  
Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to reiterate our strong support for Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) San Diego. As Members of Congress who represent San Diego, we are greatly dismayed that you would disregard the recommendations of the Secretary of Defense by pursuing further inquiry into closing MCRD San Diego and consolidating recruit training with MCRD Parris Island.

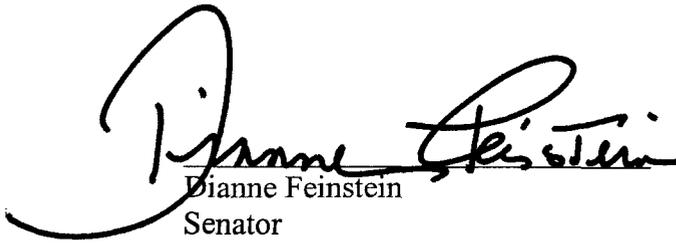
Quite simply, the question of whether or not to retain MCRD San Diego has been asked and answered. Pursuant to the BRAC process, every Marine Corps installation across the country, including MCRD San Diego and MCRD Parris Island, was subjected to thorough examination and analysis for maximum efficiencies and effectiveness. The Department of Defense was provided ample data to assess the capacity of MCRD San Diego and its strategic and military value. We agree with the resulting DOD conclusion: MCRD San Diego provides the most overall value when it remains in its current location.

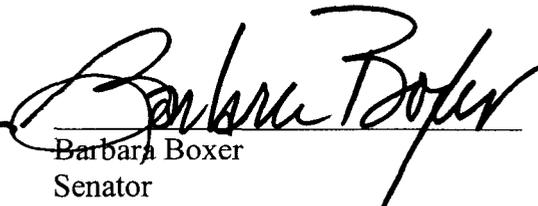
As you well know, the Marine Corps considered consolidating recruit training at MCRD San Diego with MCRD Parris Island. The cost estimate for such a move was determined to exceed \$640 million. Beyond cost concerns, the Marine Corps was also apprehensive about a move to Parris Island because of potential peak-period operational problems and seasonal limitations caused by routine hurricanes in that region.

Perhaps most important, however, is surge capacity. Due to unique constraints that limit each MCRD in different ways, consolidating recruit training at either single location would leave the Marine Corps with little to no ability to ramp up its end strength to respond quickly to future conflicts. The unique parameters that bound each MCRD distinguish them from their historic Navy and Air Force counterparts. Moreover, the Marine Corps has stated unequivocally that such a move would be detrimental and nonproductive to its recruiting mission. The current East-West geographic focus of Marine Corps recruiting has given the service a unique advantage in understanding and capitalizing on regional dynamics.

We can think of no worse time to be taking successful recruiting tools away from our military than now -- we are at war and face a recruiting crisis in this country. Any move that could impair the Marine Corps' future surge capacity would be irresponsible and potentially dangerous for America's national security. We strongly urge you to reconsider the conclusions of the Marine Corps and DOD with regard to MCRD San Diego and the damaging and costly impacts its closure and relocation would entail.

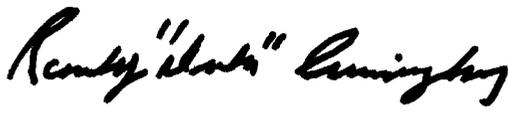
Respectfully,

  
Dianne Feinstein  
Senator

  
Barbara Boxer  
Senator

  
Susan A. Davis  
Member of Congress

  
Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress

  
Randy "Duke" Cunningham  
Member of Congress

  
Bob Filner  
Member of Congress