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5 July 2005

Hon. Anthony J. Principi - Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street - Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202



Dear Chairman Principi:

First, as a former commissioner on Jim Courter's 1993 BRAC, I want to tell you that you have my utmost respect and admiration for the job that you and the rest of the 2005 Commission are doing for our country! Only a few citizens, other than those who have served previously, know the difficulty of the decisions that you and your colleagues must make!

Second, I want to give you my experienced opinion on two installations currently on the DOD closure list: Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Submarine Base, Groton. As a former commissioner:

- I believe that the Shipyard's operational and safety performance, placing it clearly first among its private and public sector peers, coupled with its innovative history, deserves special consideration for removal from the DOD list. Although the money that the Shipyard is saving is clearly tangible and substantial, the performance and industry leadership of the PNS team is indeed priceless! No one even comes close!

- It befuddles me that DOD planners would even consider (again) the expense of disassembling and transporting Submarine Base, Groton a thousand miles to the south. They tried to do just that in 1993 and we rejected the idea! Additionally, although I was not a strategic planner during my 30-year career of Navy nuclear submarine and shipyard assignments, the consolidation of our forces in a few southern locations seems to be just plain unwise!

Finally, everything that I have read or heard about the 2005 Commission reflects the great leadership that you are providing. I secretly wish I could be a part of your team!

With great admiration and appreciation,

Peter B. Bowman
CAPT, USN (Ret)