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CITIZENS CONCERNED ABOUT JET NOISE Inc
1060 Laskin Road, Suite 12B, Virginia Beach, VA 23451-6365

July 11, 2005

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The Honorable Mr. Principi, Defense BRAC Chairman
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

RE: Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Recommendations

Dear Honorable Defense BRAC Chairman Principi,

Your responsible and prudent request seeking the DOD's justification for not including NAS Oceana as a realignment candidate brings hope to the thousands of people subjected to the high impact noise and accident risk within our community. **It was truly refreshing to listen to your opening remarks on C-Span2 recently as you promised to leave politics out of the decision making process.** It is time for common sense to prevail given the serious nature of the problems involving NAS Oceana.

Recently, a number of factual mischaracterizations have appeared in the media since your inquiry. The attempts by senior elected Virginia officials to downplay and marginalize the very real safety, noise and training problems associated with naval jet operations at NAS Oceana is appalling.

The thrust of this misinformation about the encroachment problem in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake is that it has been exaggerated. In responding to such a misleading line of defense, CCAJN suggests the Commission inquire as to recent City approvals of multi-unit dwellings within the highest noise zones and accident potential zones. (Two examples: a 92 unit condominium complex on Laskin Road and a hundred-plus unit South Beach Apartments complex at Birdneck Rd. and 19th Street. The first was approved over Navy objections; the latter was approved with Navy reluctance and a request that all residents sign a document acknowledging Navy jets would be flying within 800 ft. of the building thus subjecting the owners to frequent high impact noise and accident risk.)

Responsible Dissent ... is the True Sound of Freedom



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You might also inquire about the City's participation in the recent Joint Land Use Study in which very little "real" accommodation was granted by the City to the Navy. Developer interests prevailed, making this a document in which the Navy would be ill-advised to put much faith. In essence: The City of Virginia Beach and the Navy "agreed to disagree" on the relative importance of many OPNAV directives.

Although senior governmental officials now loudly proclaim "unsurpassed cooperation" with the Navy, such fortuitous assertions are transparently self-serving and such behavior is unlikely to survive more than a few years beyond a BRAC that gives NAS Oceana a pass in this round.

The Navy has also used a noise simulator for local civic groups and the City Council to help them understand the severity of the jet noise. They won't even play the highest decibels the jets can create because it would be extremely harmful at such a close range!

Routine low level flight operations, including frequent air show practice (for air shows not conducted at NAS Oceana), occur over nearly two dozen public schools, hospitals, senior citizen homes and numerous other sensitive facilities. The Navy pledged to CCAJN six years ago that it would endeavor to redirect air show practice to a more appropriate rural site, but after less than six months reverted to its more "convenient" local operation – citing budget shortfalls. Nor did the Navy ever actually budget to effect this change.

One wonders what the Navy's response would be to some future accident review board that queried as to why the Navy was conducting non-mission related evolutions involving very high-speed, low-altitude, high-risk acrobatic maneuvers over a densely populated city.

In response to earlier BRAC commissioner queries, the Navy indicated that no other East Coast facility existed at which this mission capability could be relocated. Such a statement is both inaccurate and disingenuous as you have already determined.

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The recent City of Virginia Beach "quality of life survey" which our local officials are using to make broad sweeping statements regarding the effects of jet noise within our community was seriously flawed at best. CCAJN has critiqued this study in detail and can provide you with our scientific analysis of the data, if you so desire. It's not difficult to understand and we're not playing games either.

Pro status-quo advocates regarding NAS Oceana also argue that an "economic calamity" will befall Virginia Beach and this region should Oceana be realigned or even closed. This assertion is discredited by a study done less than five years ago by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission on behalf of the City of Virginia Beach which found that even under a closure scenario, the impact locally and on this region would be mild and short-lived.

CCAJN recognizes that a lot of these details are not specifically "on point" with the exact mission of the BRAC committee. However, since these issues have been brought to your attention in the public forum in Arlington, CCAJN felt the need to respond. CCAJN appreciates the enormity of the information which you need to process and we strive to keep our input brief and "on point".

With Highest Regard, I am

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly Johnson".

Kimberly Johnson, CCAJN Chairwoman

Cc: BRAC Commission members

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