University of Wisconsin
MEDICAL SCHOOL

DCN: 6507

6507

Department of Pathology
and Laboratory Medicine

July 28, 2005

BRAC Commission

AUG 0 4 2005

Received

Brigadier General Sue Ellen Turner, USAF (Ret.)
Commissioner
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Turner,

The Pentagon's 2005 recommendations for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) include the "disestablishment" of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, located on the campus of Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. This action would eliminate the consultation and education missions of the AFIP and their unique value to the military, the nation, and ultimately, the world.

Pathology is the science of understanding and diagnosing disease. While not in the limelight of public attention, pathology is a pillar of clinical practice. In fact, no cancer patient is treated without a pathologist's diagnosis.

In 1976, recognizing the importance of pathology and the unique value of the AFIP, Congress enacted Public Law 94-361, charging the AFIP with serving both the civilian and military sectors in pathology education, consultation, and research. The AFIP has carried out this mission so vigorously and successfully that today, most people around the world have been touched either directly or indirectly by the Institute's efforts in the diagnosis of rare and emerging diseases and its dissemination of health-related information to the world's physicians. Furthermore, the AFIP's decades-long role as one of the World Health Organization's International Reference Centers has bolstered America's image in the international medical community. Yet despite this extraordinary accomplishment and world service, the DoD is proposing closure of an institution-an organization that has likely contributed more to medicine than any other DoD healthcare facility, one that ranks with the world's finest and most prestigious medical institutions.

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6152 Medical Sciences Center
608/262-1189

1300 University Avenue

Madison, WI 53706-1532
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In addition, the AFIP fulfills a crucial role in pathology quality assurance and thus contributes greatly to maintaining an equal and high standard of medical care for our military personnel and Veterans.

Therefore, we urge you to reject the proposal to close the AFIP.

Sincerely,

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Staff Pathologist, William S. Middleton VA Hospital

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The Honorable Philip E. Coyle, III
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

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General Lloyd W. Newton, USAF Ret,
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Newton:

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General James T. Hill, US Army, Ret.
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

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Admiral Harold W. Gehman Jr. USN Ret.
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
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The Honorable Sam Skinner
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
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Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
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Base Closure and Realignment Commission
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The benefits of preserving the AFIP are obvious. First, military and civilian pathologists around the world routinely consult with the experts at the AFIP, helping to ensure correct diagnosis and proper treatment for their patients. As a result, the AFIP has accumulated the world's largest repositories of rare and complex cases, and its professional staff has developed unmatched expertise and insight into diagnostic criteria and disease prevalence around the world. By training pathologists and radiologists in this country and around the world, the AFIP is helping to alleviate medical and educational disparities and shortages that I and many others in Congress are seeking to address. Because of its precarious position on the BRAC list, we must take immediate, decisive action to preserve the core functions of the AFIP (virtual and live courses and workshops, point-of-care consultation/education through AskAFIP(tm), and the innovative use of its unique archive) in order to retain the critical mass of expertise necessary to ensure the quality and integrity of their products.

In addition, the AFIP fulfills a crucial role in pathology quality assurance and thus contributes greatly to maintaining an equal and high standard of medical care for our military personnel and Veterans.

Therefore, we urge you to reject the proposal to close the AFIP.

Sincerely,

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