

Princeton UniversityPresident's Room
Nassau Hall
Princeton, New Jersey 08544-0015

BRAC Commission

August 5, 2005

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received

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman, 2005 Defense Base Closure and
Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

As President of Princeton University, with its long tradition of federally sponsored and, in many cases, defense-related research, I am following with interest the issues being considered by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, especially those regarding the U.S. Army's CERDEC at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. Fort Monmouth's excellence in science and engineering, rooted in a fruitful partnership with Princeton University and other New Jersey research institutions, has enabled it to make a vital contribution to national security. Its groundbreaking research and development initiatives will be doubly crucial in the future, given our increasingly sophisticated technological environment and the unconventional threats to our nation that have recently emerged.

Cutting-edge research and technological innovation are far more likely to take place when there are mutually beneficial interactions among research institutions, government, and private industry. Having worked closely with all three sectors on two state-sponsored economic development panels, I have a first-hand appreciation of the strength Fort Monmouth derives from New Jersey's colleges and universities, the state's highly skilled workforce and entrepreneurial community, and a variety of New Jersey government agencies.

Both Fort Monmouth and Princeton University have benefited enormously from the long-term collaboration of CERDEC personnel with Princeton faculty, staff, and students. The base was one of four charter members in 1989 of our highly successful Center for Photonics and Optoelectronic Materials (POEM). POEM focused on areas of communications and materials science that are of special relevance to Fort Monmouth's mission. The efforts of Fort Monmouth, Princeton University, and other partners have yielded breakthroughs in all-optical broadband and wireless communications, ad hoc networks, infrared imaging, and organic electronics. These technological advances have either been successfully deployed in battlefield conditions or are well on their way towards military, homeland security, and commercial applications.

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Building on these successes, Princeton University has recently embarked on a major strategic plan to expand its School of Engineering and Applied Science. The long-range goal of the plan is to further strengthen our positive impact on society, which means fostering even closer ties with government and industry. One of the first and most important expressions of this commitment is the new Princeton Institute for the Science and Technology of Materials (PRISM), which expanded POEM's interdisciplinary work in advanced materials and photonic technologies to include some 60 faculty from eight departments and more than 200 graduate and post-doctoral students. Fort Monmouth is one of PRISM's key partners, and we look forward to working with CERDEC personnel on the theoretical and practical questions that must be answered if science and engineering are to meet our nation's vital needs.

Fort Monmouth is ideally situated to reap the benefits of an ever increasing infusion of resources – intellectual, facilities-related, and financial – from nearby Princeton University, as well as from other area research, governmental, and industrial partners. New Jersey as a whole is strongly positioned to meet the evolving requirements of our nation's military, and I trust that the close and effective collaboration that our partnership with Fort Monmouth symbolizes will be permitted to continue.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SM Tighman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Shirley M. Tighman