

DCN 6853

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BRAC Commission

AUG 04 2005

Received

Congressman James H. Bilbray
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 20500

July 5, 2005

Dear Mr. President,

I feel strongly that the Groton sub base should remain open. Why close a submarine base that has easy access to both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, as well as a faster route to the Far East than both Norfolk and King's Bay? This versatility constitutes significant military value and should not be stifled. Also, why does the Navy need four nuclear submarine bases in the Pacific but would be satisfied with only King's Bay and Norfolk in the Atlantic?

Significant questions have been raised regarding the infrastructure at bases in Norfolk and King's Bay. The addition of attack submarines from Groton would come at a great financial cost. Norfolk is congested and housing is expensive. At King's Bay, a lot of money would be required for new piers, training facilities, roads, housing, schools and hospital capacity. How is it cost effective to abandon a fully functional and modern facility and then turn around and reconstruct it somewhere else? Not to mention Governor Rell's contention that the Navy has so drastically underestimated the cost of cleaning up the Groton sub base that the closing of it would, in all likelihood, yield absolutely no savings.

Money aside, there are compelling cultural reasons for keeping the base open as well. The quality of life in southeastern Connecticut and the acceptance of the military in the area are important considerations for the morale and retention of Navy personnel. Though the military recruits individuals, it must retain families. High quality schools, access to shopping and interstate highways contribute to a high quality of life and a raised level of satisfaction and happiness within the families waiting at home while their spouses, fathers, and mothers are at sea for extended periods. Also, extracting the military personnel in Groton and moving them down south will exacerbate the problematic shift in of military forces from the north to the south, further widening the significant divide.

Simply put, the reasons for keeping the Groton sub base up and running – which extend beyond monetary – are far more compelling than the reasons for closing it down. Please recognize the negative consequences of closing down the base. It is neither economically smart nor conducive to the well-being of the families – both civilian and those with members in the military – of the United States.

Sincerely,



Cathy Taylor