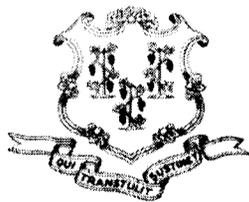


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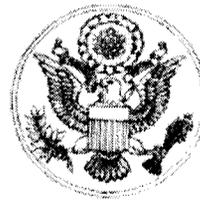
STATE OF CONNECTICUT



Received

UNITED STATES CONGRESS

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CHRISTOPHER DODD, SENATOR
JOSEPH LIEBERMAN, SENATOR
NANCY L. JOHNSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS
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ROB SIMMONS, MEMBER OF CONGRESS



July 21, 2005

The Honorable Anthony Principi
BRAC Commission
Polk Building, Suites 600 and 625
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

Enclosed for your information and consideration are two letters relating to the OPNAV 2004 Force Structure Assessment (FSA) submitted to the Joint Staff in support of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. The first letter is from the Connecticut delegation to Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Vernon Clark, dated June 23. The second is his reply, dated July 18.

At the heart of this correspondence is the question, why did the Chief of Naval Operations Submarine Warfare Division, OPNAV N77, not agree with assumptions and factors used to produce the OPNAV 2004 FSA, which shows a 21 percent reduction in the fast attack submarine force by 2025? *In his July 18th response to the June 23rd letter, Admiral Clark conceded that N77 had "concerns" that were never resolved. These unresolved concerns are central to the force structure plan.*

The Department of Defense's failure to correctly assess our nation's required SSN force levels is a substantial deviation from the BRAC criteria that undermine the recommendation to close Naval Submarine Base New London. As you know, the U.S. General Accountability Office (GAO) this month reported that the proposed closure of SUBASE New London is based on the planned reductions in the fast attack submarine force.

The assumptions and factors used to produce the force structure plan are unrealistic and potentially dangerous. The plan, for example, assumes eight to nine submarines at Naval Base Guam, which currently can homeport only three. N77 rejected this assumption because a decision to homeport additional submarines would mean massive military construction outlays and a high level of risk from tropical storms.

The plan also assumes a turnaround rate that would deploy our fast attack submarines for unacceptably long periods. N77 rejected the turnaround rate an SSN force level of 37 to 41 would require because it is virtually impossible to execute.

Furthermore, Admiral Clark's response suggests the Combatant Commanders "presence requests" for SSNs are the same as those for "carriers, amphibious groups, and surface combatants." In actuality, the presence requests for fast attack submarines are intended to fulfill critical intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions -- not traditional flag displays. These ISR missions give us information to fight the war on terror and counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; they also prepare the force for anti-submarine warfare overseas. Eliminating these missions is not a viable option for the Navy.

Finally, the modeled warfare scenarios unwisely rest on an assessment of the threat environment twenty years from now. The U.S. intelligence community has been consistently surprised by foreign threat developments; the Chinese navy, for instance, recently launched a new submarine class without warning. Our nation should not bet so much on a threat assessment so far into the future.

We believe a better indicator of our future SSN force level needs are to be found in real trends. Commander, Naval Submarine Forces, Vice Admiral Charles L. Munns recently testified to Congress that 54 fast attack submarines are "about what we need into the future."

VADM Munns also confirmed that "Combatant Commanders are collectively asking for more and more submarine mission days." He added that the Combatant Commanders, those directly responsible to the President for the performance of assigned missions and the preparedness of their commands, currently want 150 percent of the "critical" attack submarine mission days that the U.S. Navy can provide.

The BRAC process depends on an accurate and dependable force structure plan. The Department of Defense's failure to produce one that had the concurrence of N77 undermines its recommendation to close Naval Submarine Base New London. We urge you to consider this important point in the coming weeks.

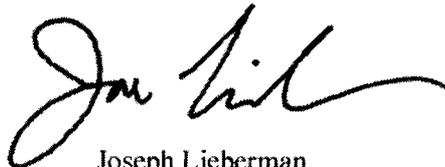
Sincerely,



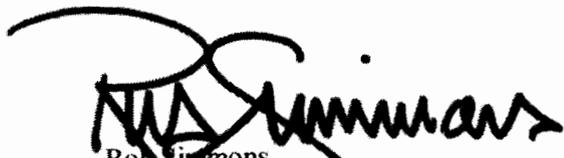
M. Jodi Rell
Governor

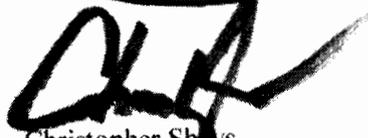


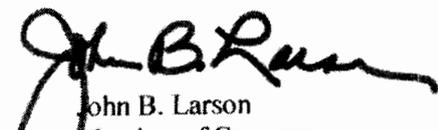
Christopher J. Dodd
United States Senator

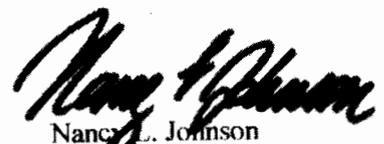


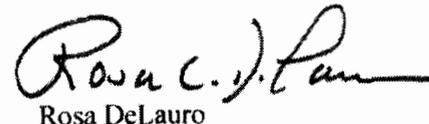
Joseph Lieberman
United States Senator


Rob Simmons
Member of Congress


Christopher Shays
Member of Congress


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Member of Congress


Nancy L. Johnson
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Rosa DeLauro
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