

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 15, 2005

Chairman Principi and Commissioners
2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi and BRAC Commissioners:

We are writing to present additional evidence for your consideration regarding the Base Realignment and Closure recommendation to close Human Resource Center (HRC) facilities in St. Louis, MO., Alexandria, VA., and Indianapolis, IN., and consolidate HRC operations at Fort Knox.

The Commission was presented a strong case highlighting serious errors in the Army recommendation at the June 20 hearing in St. Louis. We appreciate the attention paid to these details by BRAC commissioners, and particularly the immediate follow up to clarify facts presented by panel experts. This letter presents details and information resulting from a follow-up visit to the Alexandria HRC directed by BRAC commissioners after the hearing, which we believe should be part of the official written record.

Through this consolidation the Army estimated \$1.9 billion of cost-savings to eliminate duplicate systems, services and facilities while improving the overall service mission, and eliminate high-cost lease payments to third-party property owners in favor of facilities on DOD-owned military base property. Both are commendable goals. However, the Army review to meet these goals is deeply flawed, and did not consider key information that would have supported a simpler, more effective solution with significantly higher savings and at far less cost to the taxpayer and the Department.

The Army recommendation is flawed in several respects. First, it did not **investigate whether the needed facilities to accommodate the HRC mission exist at Fort Knox.** After the hearing, staff from the General Services Administration (GSA) Missouri Heartland Region traveled to Washington D.C./Alexandria, VA. to meet with Army and BRAC staff to further review HRC facility needs and construction costs at Fort Knox. Based on these discussions, GSA estimates that construction of a new 1 million square foot facility needed to consolidate HRC in one location would cost the Army a minimum of \$300 million. The Army agrees with GSA that these facilities do not currently exist in Fort Knox, Kentucky. HRC consolidation in Fort Knox would, under these estimates, consume 15 percent of the total BRAC construction budget.

Second, the Army stressed to GSA that there cannot be *one day* of down time in servicing the records of our soldiers – especially as we face growing demands for recruits

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and the need to transition soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore, in addition to these extraordinary military construction costs, further expense would be incurred to replicate HRC-St. Louis operations at Fort Knox, i.e., equip the facility with computer, digital scanning and other resources needed to meet Army requirements.

The HRC mission would suffer greatly under a move to Fort Knox. In the last two reorganizations at HRC there were many problems with mission transition, lost records, training gaps, and other key areas that accompany any change of this size. The Army estimates that only 40 percent of the current civilian workforce are likely to move to Fort Knox. From past experience with civilian personnel moves, we know that this number is optimistic. The workforce experience and infrastructure necessary to support the HRC mission does not exist at Fort Knox.

Third, the Army did not review the status of the property they occupy in St. Louis in making the decision to vacate. The Army currently utilizes only 75 percent of the HRC-St. Louis Prevade 1 building built, which was built for \$40 million in 1989 to meet HRC specifications for advanced fiber optics and climate controls for digital and physical records. Full use would provide 377,000 square feet of ready space in that building alone. Additional land and facilities are available within the secure and ready complex that would easily accommodate HRC consolidation. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) plans to move outside the Federal Records Complex in St. Louis by 2009. The NARA move will result in GSA surplus this 1 million square foot property, making it available under federal disposal laws at little or no cost to another federal agency or public entity. Transferring the GSA property to Army ownership would eliminate the \$550 - \$600 million third-party lease. Renovation costs for the St. Louis facility will be ten times less than construction costs at Ft. Knox.

Finally, the Army asked GSA to review the St. Louis space for "surge capability." GSA reported that St. Louis could accommodate an additional 1000 personnel in time of **need**. **St. Louis County and City of Overland officials have the authority and have stated their firm commitment to provide additional land for the Army, if needed.**

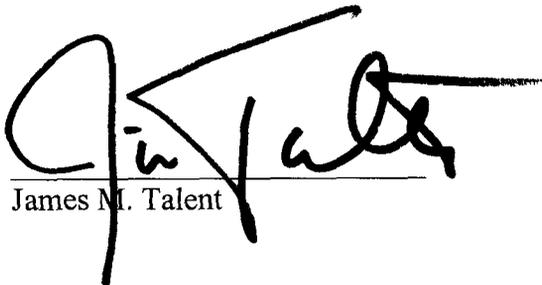
The evidence presented in St. Louis and in the follow-up meeting in Alexandria makes clear that HRC-St. Louis can readily accommodate this consolidated mission. It has a sixty-year history in records management, and important measures of educational attainment, available workforce, infrastructure and accessibility are all met in St. Louis.

In addition, we strongly encourage and would support dialogue between the Army and the union's national leadership with the intent of resolving any issues of concern that may have led to the placement of HRC-St. Louis on the closure recommendation list.

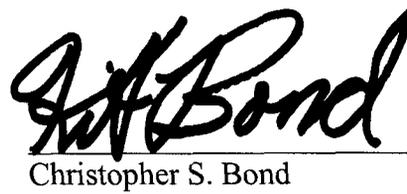
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HRC Consolidation at Fort Knox does not make sense from a fiscal or military perspective. We recommend that the BRAC commission direct the Army to undertake the Human Resource Command consolidation in St. Louis.

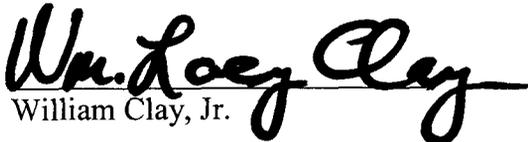
Very truly,



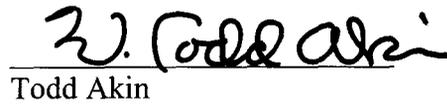
James M. Talent



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