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BRAC Commission

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Ms. Lesia Mandzia
Senior Analyst
2005 BRAC Closure and
Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Ms. Mandzia:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with the team from Arlington County on Friday. We realize that you had many more requests than meeting opportunities and greatly appreciate the generous allocation of your time.

I hope that we demonstrated to you Arlington County's ability to develop options for hosting extramural research agencies of the Department of Defense (DOD)—DARPA, ONR, AFOSR, and ARO—that result in greater military value to the nation, at lower cost, and that fully meet DOD's anti-terrorism and force protection standards. In this regard, we presented to you two options that we have developed on an expedited basis since May—the Ballston site and the Arlington Hall site—as fully viable examples of what we know can be accomplished in Arlington if we are given the opportunity to work with DOD. These options could be accomplished using privately developed leased space, lease-to-own arrangements, or military construction.

DOD's BRAC recommendations argue that relocation of these research organizations is necessary to enhance synergy. In fact, these organizations have developed a high degree of synergy at their current locations, all within easy walking distance of each other. Moreover, the DOD recommendation seems to have overlooked the essential synergy that these defense organizations have, at their current location, with the National Science Foundation (NSF), also within an easy walk. NSF, as the leading civilian research counterpart to the DOD organizations, is an invaluable resource and source of regular collaboration opportunities for the DOD research community. The DOD organizations benefit significantly from the strong "gravitational pull" that NSF exerts on the civilian research community in the United States, the same community that the DOD organizations are trying to recruit to support DOD missions.

We ask that the Commission provide the opportunity for Arlington County and the DOD to work cooperatively and creatively to develop options for continuing to host the DOD extramural research agencies in Arlington. Specific options for the consideration of the Commission are included below.

Commission action in this regard would be fully consistent with its mandate. DOD's self-imposed imperative to use the BRAC process to move out of leased office space constitutes a substantial deviation from the approved BRAC criteria. By statute, DOD's BRAC recommendations were to be based on eight Selection Criteria. This structure provides for a process by which military value is analyzed with data collected for the past several years and from which realignment and closure "scenarios" are developed, costed, and selected. Regarding leased space, the process collapsed in the following ways: (1) the scenarios were drafted before data existed, prejudicing all subsequent thinking; (2) the Office of the Secretary of Defense established three imperatives above and beyond the statutory selection criteria, one of which called for the elimination of all leased space; (3) data were displaced by arbitrary assumptions on leasing and force protection that were, regardless of the facts, heavily biased and often based on flawed information.

Detailed documentation from the minutes of the two Joint-Cross Service Groups, Headquarters and Support Activities and Technical Joint-Cross Service Group reveals that the process was driven to achieve pre-determined outcomes. Arlington's full exposition of the leased-space issue is fully documented for the Commission in the materials already provided under separate cover.

Options for Action. Arlington County urges the Commission to adopt one of several options:

Option 1. Set aside all leased space recommendations in the BRAC report, thereby preserving the extensive discretion that DOD currently has to reduce, expand, or reallocate leased space as it deems appropriate. DOD is in no way dependent upon the BRAC process to make such decisions. In cases where DOD determines that activities in leased space should be relocated to military installations, there are opportunities to do so as part of the annual authorization and appropriations processes. More importantly, this option would provide the Secretary of Defense a means to address concerns regarding assets and capabilities that only state and local governments can offer in partnership with the private sector to achieve the best possible DOD outcomes.

Option 2. If the Commission determines that leased space should remain part of the BRAC process, the recommendations should be modified to permit the exploration of better alternatives. The appropriate alternative language already exists in DOD's BRAC report under "Relocate Miscellaneous Department of Navy Leased Locations Recommendation." In addition to identifying the "most likely relocation sites" on military installations, the text states:

*However, the recommendation is written broadly enough to relocate Navy organizations currently in leased space **to any other DOD leased space in the NCR.** (Emphasis added.)*

Similar language applied to other leased space recommendations would provide DOD the ability to explore alternatives with greater military value and reduced costs, such as the ones we offer.

Option 3. Modify the language specifically regarding extramural research managers to permit exploration of the Arlington Alternatives. This narrowly focused option enables DOD to at least consider the compelling case that has been presented to achieve greater military value at substantial cost savings for the science and technology functions.

Again, on behalf of Arlington County, I would like to thank you for meeting with us. Arlington has worked hard over several decades to develop a strong, vibrant, urban community with the facilities, infrastructure and amenities that make Arlington a preferred location for DOD and other U.S. Government offices. We firmly believe that we can fully meet the evolving requirements to continue to host DOD facilities if we are given the opportunity by the Commission to work cooperatively and creatively with the Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Carlee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ron Carlee
County Manager