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Received

Eugenia Vainberg
2727 Lancashire Road
Cleveland Heights, OH 44106

August 17, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi – Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Honorable Chairman Principi:

The DoD recommendation to realign the Army Research Laboratory (ARL) Vehicle Technology Directorate (VTD), located at NASA Glenn and NASA Langley, to Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), MD does not meet the criteria of military value. The VTD contains the Army's leading researchers in aviation, particularly in the areas of propulsion and structures. These researchers are sought out as expert consultants on issues in related areas such as ground-based turbine engines for tanks and turbomachinery in general. The VTD has been located at the NASA sites since 1970 because of the existence of unique NASA facilities and the interaction with NASA researchers working in similar fields; this strong relationship has greatly benefited both agencies.

The VTD was somewhat arbitrarily moved into ARL during a reorganization in 1992, and the relationship between the VTD and the rest of ARL was never as symbiotic or close as that with NASA. The proposed move to APG would permanently enshrine that capricious reorganization and ultimately destroy the very fruitful relationship that the VTD and NASA have shared. Beyond that, Aberdeen has no facilities to replace NASA's, especially in the propulsion area, so the VTD's mission will be compromised.

There is a popular notion that research can all be carried out in simulation and APG does have the impressive Army High Performance Computing Research Center which is being used by some VTD researchers. However, the areas encompassed by the VTD's mission (rotorcraft propulsion and power, part life prediction, transmission diagnostics, advanced materials, performance optimization, etc., that directly impact the warfighter) must be ultimately carried out in the types of facilities currently only available at NASA; simulation cannot and will not suffice. We are at war, our soldiers risk their lives in real helicopters, not simulations. We owe them real research to improve the safety, reliability and operational readiness of their equipment.

The BRAC Commission must ensure that high quality military research is maintained at the best available facilities to satisfy the BRAC process criteria of military value. To guarantee that military value is preserved, take the Glenn Research Center and Langley VTD off the BRAC list.

Thank you and best regards,



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General Lloyd W. Newton
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

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