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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4327

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEES:
RANKING MINORITY, MILITARY READINESS
TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES

RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEES:
ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
FISHERIES, CONSERVATION, WILDLIFE, AND OCEANS

August 25, 2005

BRAC Commission

AUG 26 2005

Received

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed is the copy of the motion I submitted to the BRAC Commission staff today related to establishing the Center for Homeland Defense for the Gulf of Mexico Region.

I ask the Commission to consider and pass this motion that provides the Commission a win-win situation for the citizens, nation and the Department of Defense (DoD). My resolution does not overturn the Commission decision to relocate the mine warfare assets with the fleet; and builds on the comments by commissioners (specifically Commissioners Hill, Bilbray and Hansen) during the discussion surrounding the closure of Naval Station Ingleside. Several Commissioners, including those voting to close NS Ingleside, expressed frustration with disposing of a state of the art Naval Station in the Gulf of Mexico.

I am concerned that as a result of the base closures as approved by the Commission, the western Gulf of Mexico, strategically located in the midst of the nation's refineries, near our vital trading sea lanes, and near the Southern Border, will be left unprotected and vulnerable to a terrorist attack. My conscience requires that I make one final appeal for your consideration of a motion that allows time for a thorough review of the maritime homeland defense role through the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process and leaves NSI as a Naval asset until it is conclusively determined there is no need for a DoD surface facility in the Gulf of Mexico over the next 20 year horizon

I thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and I appreciate your consideration of this motion. With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Solomon P. Ortiz
Member of Congress

SPO:ct

Enclosure: Motion related to homeland defense

Motion # (190 #)-2M

A Motion to Amend
Department of the Navy Recommendation (N-26),
Closure and Realignment of Naval Station Ingleside, TX
and Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, TX Recommendation,
appearing at Chapter (Ch #), Section (Sec #) of the Bill.

Group: Navy

Offered by:_____

Seconded by:_____

Approved Disapproved

I move:

- that the Commission find that when the Secretary of Defense made Department of the Navy Recommendation (N-26), Closure and Realignment of Naval Station Ingleside, TXand Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, TX Recommendation, he substantially deviated from Final Selection Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4, and the Force Structure Plan;
- that the Commission amend the recommendation to close Naval Station Ingleside as follows:
- notwithstanding any other provision contained in the Secretary's recommendations, the decision of the Secretary shall not be effective or be implemented prior to the Department of Defense developing a detailed plan for the homeland defense of the Gulf of Mexico Region and an evaluation of the relocation of additional defense mission to Naval Station Ingleside as part of the South Texas Military Facilities Complex. Such plan must include the establishment of a Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region, which would include facilities, personnel and equipment sufficient to establish the security of the region, including, at a minimum, the capacity to berth and support vessels and their crew up to the size of an aircraft carrier and any accompanying assets. The plan shall include input from NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM. The plan must be coordinated with the Department of Homeland Security and other appropriate Federal, State and local authorities. The plan and the required review shall be completed within 180 days from the date this BRAC legislation enters into force. After the expiration of this 180 day period, the Secretary of Defense shall forward to the oversight committees of Congress the plan, and his recommendation on the establishment of a Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region. If the Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region is not established within two and one-half years of the BRAC legislation entering into force, Naval Station Ingleside shall be closed as originally recommended by the 2005 BRAC Commission.
- that the Commission find this change and recommendation as amended are consistent with the Final Selection Criteria and Force Structure Plan.

Additional statement of the Commission:

The BRAC 2005 report language shall state:

"The Commission finds that the Secretary of Defense deviated from the BRAC criteria by failing to adequately consider the implications of Department of the Navy Recommendation (N-26), Closure and Realignment of Naval Station Ingleside, TX and Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, TX Recommendation on homeland defense in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Commission directs the Secretary of Defense to develop a plan, as discussed below, for the Gulf of Mexico and reevaluate its recommendation to close Naval Station Ingleside in the Gulf of Mexico.

The presence of naval assets in the Gulf of Mexico Region is critical to homeland defense and security. Over 50% of imported oil and gas enters the United States through Gulf of Mexico ports. Fifty percent of U.S. refining capacity is located in the U.S. Gulf Coast. Eight of the ten busiest ports (tonnage) are located in the Gulf of Mexico Region. It is imperitive that these ports and assets be protected. Strategic control and immediate response capabilities in the region are also critical in securing the safety and security of the Region, stemming illegal immigration and drug trafficking, as well as halting the influx of members of terrorist organizations.

The closing of NAS Ingleside will in the long term, create a situation where the security of the Region will be unacceptably degraded. The remedies presented to the Commission thus far have been unconvincing. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the decision of the Secretary must not be effective or be implemented prior to the Department of Defense developing a detailed plan for the defense of the Gulf of Mexico Region and an evaluation of the relocation of additional defense mission to Naval Station Ingleside as part of the South Texas Military Facilities Complex. Such plan should be developed immediately, and must include the establishment of a Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region, which would include facilities, personnel and equipment sufficient to establish the security of the region and its important assets, including, at a minimum, the capacity to berth and support vessels and their crew up to the size of an aircraft carrier and any accompanying assets. The plan shall include input from NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM. The plan must be coordinated with the Department of Homeland Security and other appropriate Federal, State and local authorities. The plan and the required review shall be completed within 180 days from the date this BRAC legislation enters into force. After the expiration of this 180 day period, the Secretary of Defense shall forward to the oversight committees of Congress the plan, and his recommendation on the establishment of a Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region in keeping with the above requirements. If the Center for Homeland Defense & Security for the Gulf of Mexico Region is not established within two and one-half years of the BRAC legislation entering into force, Naval Station Ingleside shall be closed as originally recommended by the 2005 BRAC Commission."