

## LASA MONROIG &amp; VEVE

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

BRAC Commission

July 27, 2005

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Chairman Anthony J. Principi  
 Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
 2521 South Clark Street  
 Suite 600  
 Arlington, VA 22202

Received

Antonio Monroig, P.C.

(Admitted: DC, VA &amp; PR)

*Reply to:*

2121 K Street, N.W.

Suite 800

Washington, DC 20037

(202) 261-3522

Fax (202) 261-3523

e-mail: amonroig@aol.com

*Puerto Rico office:*

Buchanan Office Center

40 Road 165

Suite 304

Guaynabo, P.R. 00968-8001

Tel. (787) 774-0400

Fax (787) 774-1564

<http://www.lmvlaw.com>

RE: BRAC disestablishment of the Armed Forces Institute of  
 Pathology (AFIP)

Dear Chairman Principi:

As a member of the business community of the District of Columbia who has for many years had the pleasure of close collaboration with the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP), I was dismayed to learn of the preliminary Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendation to dislocate the AFIP from its current headquarters on the grounds of Walter Red Army Medical Center.

Since its origin as the Army Medical Museum in 1862, the AFIP has historically supported the nation's Armed Services and the American people through its pathology consultation, education, research and special program. Its location in our nation's capital is crucial not only to ensure the accessibility of the institute's services and expertise to our military leaders, but also to facilitating the public's access to those same resources.

**The location of the AFIP in Washington helps maximize the institute's value to the military and the public in general. Anyone can access its resources for diagnosis for difficult problems and consultations on potentially significant initiatives. These services are especially valuable to small and remote facilities, scientific organizations and academic institutions, both public and private. This mutually beneficial interface with the public, in turn, has allowed the AFIP to accumulate voluminous collections and develop expertise on difficult and rare diseases that serve our military well.**

In my capacity as Washington representative for many Hispanic serving institutions of higher learning, I have built over the years a close

working relationship with the AFIP on multiple initiatives to improve scientific endeavor in the Hispanic community. The location of the AFIP's resources and expertise in Washington, DC – where they are readily accessible to minority organizations and institutions with representation in Washington, DC – is instrumental to ensuring that these resources remain available to minorities throughout our country.

I would also like to take the opportunity to note that the AFIP's great human resources have been under increasing financial pressure and demands due to reduced Defense Health Program (DHP) budgets. The best alternative for the AFIP – a new facility in the District of Columbia – was squashed in 1998, and now the AFIP has been included in the DoD proposal for the realignment of the entire DoD medical services, which would most likely bring the AFIP's presence in the District to an unfortunate end.

I urge you to consider carefully the unintended negative consequences of the BRAC recommendations and to strive to find a solution that keeps the AFIP where it belongs – in our nation's Capital.

Sincerely,



Antonio Monroig