

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

June 28, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

Medical group's BRAC suggestions based on points

National News Articles

A Military Hospital May Itself Become A Casualty

Retired Navy vice admiral to defend submarine base at hearing

Commission to hear base closings cases from NC, SC, WV officials

Congress members: Closing Otis will hurt Coast Guard

Local News Articles

Leaders To Lobby For Bases (Charlotte, NC)

130th Backers Plan 'All-Out Attack' (Charleston, WV)

Ohio Leaders Ask For BRAC Shift (Dayton, OH)

Critics Take On Plan To Close Niagara Base (New York, NY)

Rell Briefed On Base Cleanup (Hartford, CT)

Realignment Would Cripple Yeager, Report Says (Huntington, WV)

Md. officials prepare to fight for Fort Monmouth jobs (Long Island, NY)

Opinions/Editorials

N/A

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

Medical group's BRAC suggestions based on points

Air Force Times

Deborah Funk

June 27, 2005

Military medical planners used a point system to determine the value of hospitals and clinics, then weighed that against professional military judgment in drawing their recommendations about which ones to keep open, downsize, consolidate or shut down under the new base realignment and closure process.

The point system included scoring for factors such as patient care; staff training programs; age and capacity of buildings; costs to operate there, including how efficient it was to work in a particular space; and size of the local population to support the facility, which can determine whether staff see enough cases to keep their medical skills current.

For education and training programs, greater military value was placed on those the military needs most and are unique to military medicine. Even if identical training could be found in the civilian sector, higher military value was placed on military programs that allow staff to complete training faster than they could elsewhere.

Newer and better-maintained buildings got higher points than older ones. A location also scored higher if it offered nearby programs so as to minimize temporary duty trips or transfers.

Outpatient care was weighted greater than inpatient care in determining value. And eligible and enrolled population counted for the greatest element of value in determining health-care services scoring.

Military facilities in markets with ample available care in the civilian sector scored lower than isolated facilities.

Retired Army Col. (Dr.) John Pierce, former deputy commander of clinical services at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington D.C., questions the methods, which he says short-changed large medical facilities.

For example, Pierce pointed out that in overall scoring of health-care services, Hurlburt Field's outpatient clinic in Florida topped the Army's flagship Walter Reed Army Medical Center, even though Walter Reed outscored Hurlburt for its education and training programs.

The Pentagon proposes moving Walter Reed from its 113-acre campus and consolidating it with nearby National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and beefing up services at DeWitt Army Community Hospital at Fort Belvoir, Va., just south of Washington.

Pierce also said neither Walter Reed nor the naval medical center scored value points for their ability to provide medical care in secure environments for senior government officials and other dignitaries. Air Force Col. Mark Hamilton, secretary to the Medical Joint Cross-Service Group, said Hurlburt Field scored higher

than Walter Reed because it has more active-duty family members enrolled, is a newer facility, and has less medical care available in the surrounding civilian community.

Pierce said those things are fine to include in a metric, but it doesn't reflect how much medical care is provided in an outpatient clinic.

Calculating points is only one part of gauging military value, however. The other is the judgment of the Medical Joint Cross-Service Group, which bypassed a number of options where the hard data otherwise would have forced change.

In general, the group looked to cut excess capacity while allowing for surge capabilities; reduce inefficiencies by closing inpatient operations that average a daily load of 10 or fewer patients if the local civilian community could handle the required care; and consolidate services in areas where multiple military hospitals operate.

National News Articles

A Military Hospital May Itself Become A Casualty

New York Times

Howard Markel, M.D.

June 28, 2005

Since it opened its doors on May 1, 1909, Walter Reed Hospital in Washington has been a healing destination for hundreds of thousands of American soldiers, several presidents and luminaries like Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur, Gen. George C. Marshall, King Hussein of Jordan and the exiled shah of Iran. But last month, Walter Reed became a casualty of the Pentagon's plan to shut, reduce or reorganize military facilities in all 50 states.

If Congress accepts the recommendation to close the medical center, most of its 113-acre campus will be razed. Some have suggested preserving the complex's most historic buildings for a national health museum. Local officials hope the land will be deeded to the city for development.

To replace what is demolished, the Defense Department proposes building a 300-bed hospital, combining the Army and Navy medical corps, on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. The new facility is to be called the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Outpatient clinics and some other services would be moved to Virginia.

For many, the loss will provoke feelings of nostalgia. Over the last 96 years, countless stories of crisis, caring, triumph and grief have unfolded on its wards.

The closing of Walter Reed, said Dr. John Pierce, a retired Army colonel who practiced there for 15 years and is now medical inspector for the Veterans Health Administration, would mean "the loss of a cherished Army institution and culture of service that is poorly understood by most civilians."

The hospital's namesake, a physician and an Army major, led the 1900 investigation that determined the critical role that mosquitoes play in the transmission of yellow fever, a deadly scourge that flourished, especially in warmer climates, during the 19th century.

Based on these findings, Reed prescribed aggressive quarantine and mosquito eradication procedures that sharply diminished the incidence of yellow fever in Cuba and, a few years later, in Panama, at a time when 50,000 laborers were building the canal.

In 1902, Reed, 51, died of a ruptured appendix. His scientific achievements led Congress in 1905 to appropriate \$100,000 to build a hospital. When construction began on the first Georgian-style buildings in 1906, the War Department officially designated it the Walter Reed General Hospital.

Not surprisingly, the number of patients admitted to Walter Reed has ebbed and flowed with times of peace and war. When the hospital opened, the 10 patients had 50 staff members to take care of them. During World War I, the

census climbed to 2,500, the typical patient there for specialized treatment of battle injuries caused by gunfire, mustard gas and burns.

Just before leaving for Europe to lead troops in World War II, Gen. George S. Patton visited Walter Reed, seeking the blessings of his mentor, Gen. John J. Pershing, whose ailing heart required him to spend the last seven years of his life at the military hospital.

Over the years, and on through the wars in Korea and Vietnam, the doctors there contributed greatly to advances in medicine, especially rehabilitation practices.

In the 1950's, the clinical facilities, training programs and research projects expanded widely at Walter Reed. But its growth also had much to do with its most famous patient, President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Eisenhower often visited soldiers and was treated at Walter Reed for several heart attacks, a bowel obstruction and a stroke during and after his presidency. While convalescing as president, he held important meetings there with cabinet members and world leaders like Winston Churchill.

In 2004, 16,000 patients were treated at Walter Reed, including thousands of soldiers wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over the decades, thousands of children and spouses of military personnel received care there, as well.

An adage often quoted by doctors is that every hospital built is obsolete by the week before the doors open. Rapid changes in medical technology, and in where and how we care for patients, have dictated additions and renovations to every medical center in the United States.

Even hospitals with iconic status have the potential to become dangerous places if they fail to keep up with this relentless pace.

"While many of us will regret the loss of the original campus, the necessity for modernizing or replacing hospitals is a national priority for civilians and military alike," said Dr. Robert Joy,

an emeritus professor of medical history at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and the former director of the Walter Reed Research Institute. "I am, however, delighted that the new institution will continue the Walter Reed name."

Retired Navy vice admiral to defend submarine base at hearing

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
Lolita C. Baldor
June 28, 2005

He's known as Big Al, the Sailor's Pal.

But next week, retired Navy Vice Adm. Al Konetzni just may be Connecticut's best friend.

Konetzni, who began his career as a submariner and retired last year as a highly decorated deputy and chief of staff for the Atlantic Fleet, will give part of the presentation to the base closing commission next week in defense of the submarine base in Groton.

A graduate of the Naval Submarine School who spent nearly 40 years in the Navy, Konetzni has been an outspoken advocate of the need for a larger submarine fleet. And that argument will play a key role in the ultimate decision to shut down the Groton base or keep it open.

While some military brass tend to quietly toe the line, Big Al - who has said he's proud of his nickname - made a name for himself by giving speeches, while still serving in the Navy, that were critical of efforts to scale back funding for shipbuilding, including submarines.

In 2000 he told a Sea Power forum that the Navy needs as many as 68 attack submarines - vastly more than the 37-41 that some recent studies have suggested. And in 2002, he spoke at a warfare symposium, saying that the country needs to know the dire consequences of shrinking the number of ships in the fleet.

Konetzni met with Connecticut's congressional delegation for the first time last Friday, along with two other consultants from The

Washington Group, who also are helping to coordinate the presentation for the hearing July 6 of the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

"The Admiral is one of the nation's top experts on submarines," said Casey Aden-Wansbury, spokeswoman for Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn. "He brings a real weight and credibility to the important argument for the strategic value of submarines to our future security and for the critical role that the right bases, located in the right places such as New London, will play in realizing the full capability of our nation's submarine force."

The Boston hearing are expected to give officials in New England the chance to argue against the Pentagon's proposed shutdown of the Naval Submarine Base New London, which is in Groton, and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, and the Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod.

Navy officials told Congress in May that reducing the submarine fleet to about 41 would allow them to retain just two facilities on each coast, and shutting the Groton base would save about \$200 million a year over the next 20 years.

Congressional members from Connecticut, however, have argued that the nation's security would be at risk without the Groton facility, which is homeport to 18 attack submarines and the Naval Submarine School, three submarine squadrons and other staff and support facilities.

Commission to hear base closings cases from NC, SC, WV officials

The Associated Press
Tim Whitmire
June 27, 2005

For North Carolina officials hoping to emphasize the importance of the military in the state to members of a base closing commission, the scheduled presidential visit to Fort Bragg on Tuesday couldn't come at a better time.

Four commission members will hold an afternoon hearing in Charlotte on proposed base closings and realignments in North Carolina, South Carolina and West Virginia just hours before Bush makes what's expected to be a major policy address.

All three states planned to send plenty of political heavy hitters to the commission hearing, one of 16 regional events where state and local officials can discuss the proposed changes.

Last month, the Pentagon released a list of proposed cuts that would close or downsize 62 major domestic military facilities.

While North Carolina and South Carolina officials are generally satisfied with the proposal, West Virginia is expected to make the most noise at the hearing. More than 100 supporters of the Air National Guard's 130th Airlift Wing are expected to attend.

The Pentagon has proposed shifting the unit, which now runs eight C-130 Hercules turboprops out of Yeager Airport in Charleston, W.Va., to North Carolina's Pope Air Force Base.

The Defense Department has said Yeager is too small to accommodate a preferred 12-plane unit, while state officials and unit supporters argue that the base can easily accommodate 14, even 16 of the planes.

"We need to have the opportunity to prove the data's wrong, to say, 'Here's the correct data,'" retired Col. Bill Peters, head of a group called "Keep 'Em Flying" that's lobbying to keep the 130th at Yeager, said in a telephone interview.

The 130th is currently in southwest Asia, serving its 11th rotation since the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, said Peters, who served with the unit from 1969 to 2002. Four times since the 1970s, the 130th has been named the Air Force's outstanding unit.

Keep 'Em Flying has received money from West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin, who was slated to

attend Tuesday's hearing along with U.S. Sens. Jay Rockefeller and Robert C. Byrd.

For the Carolinas - both generally satisfied with the Pentagon's proposed changes - Tuesday's session was expected to be more about playing defense against the possibility of major changes to the Pentagon recommendation.

North Carolina's delegation was to be led by U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, Gov. Mike Easley and Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue. Municipal officials affected by proposed changes were also expected to attend.

That includes Cherry Point, which would see the greatest loss of civilians jobs under the Pentagon's proposal - 656 civilian jobs in helicopter maintenance would be shifted to other states.

Leigh McNairy, the state's special assistant for military issues to Easley and Perdue, said North Carolina will continue selling itself.

"The state's message will be to continue to stress our military-friendliness and to give supportive evidence," McNairy said. "We go way back in terms of building a base of support for our military."

Overall, if the Pentagon's cuts were implemented as proposed, North Carolina would lose 568 military jobs and gain 307 civilian positions.

Officials from Charleston, S.C., were expected to argue against plans to move 1,100 jobs away from that port city, which lost an estimated 20,000 jobs when its naval base and shipyard were closed in 1993 during the last military realignment.

This time around, the Pentagon wants to close the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and the South Naval Facilities Engineering Command and move the jobs elsewhere.

Overall, South Carolina would have a net gain of more than 700 jobs under the Pentagon's proposal.

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and Gov. Mark Sanford are to head their state's delegation to the hearing.

Retired Army Gen. James T. Hill was be one of the four commissioners slated to attend Tuesday's hearing. The others were: Samuel Knox Skinner, secretary of transportation under President George H.W. Bush; Philip Coyle, an assistant defense secretary in the Clinton administration; and Harold W. Gehman Jr., a retired Navy admiral and former NATO supreme allied commander.

The commission is to forward its recommendation for closings and realignment to the president by Sept. 8.

Congress members: Closing Otis will hurt Coast Guard

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
Lolita C. Baldor
June 27, 2005

Shutting down Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod could mean more budget strain for the already strapped Coast Guard, but those costs were not considered when the Pentagon decided to close the facility, members of Congress said Monday.

Instead, Massachusetts officials said the Air Force overstated the cost savings that will come from closing the base because the Coast Guard and other remaining tenants will have to pay up to \$25 million more each year to keep the base running.

In a letter to Air Force Chief of Staff James Jumper, state lawmakers asked for a formal accounting of any discussions the service had with other agencies about the plan to close Otis.

"Because of current financial constraints, it is highly unlikely that the Coast Guard can afford to absorb the \$15 (million)-\$25 million in infrastructure, maintenance and operations costs associated with closing Otis," said the letter, written by Rep. William Delahunt and Sens.

Edward Kennedy and John Kerry, all Democrats.

They said that according to law, the Air Guard was required to consult with the Coast Guard and others who would have to pay additional costs. The Air Guard shares the airfield with the Coast Guard Air Station and the Army National Guard.

Earlier this spring, as part of the fifth round of military base closings, the Defense Department proposed closing Otis and shifting the 102nd Fighter Wing to stations in Jacksonville, Fla., and Atlantic City. That decision will be reviewed by the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission during a hearing July 6 in Boston.

The Congress members also said they are concerned that the Air Force relied on inaccurate information when deciding the base's military value.

The process, said Delahunt, must respect both economic reality and national security and "from Cape Cod to California, Americans need to know that this review is based on a thoughtful review of the facts and their consequences."

Also, according to data released by the Defense Department, millions of federal dollars would be spent on new construction and environmental cleanup costs to shut down Otis and relocate aircraft, personnel and other services.

Moving 12 aircraft and personnel to Atlantic City International Airport Air Guard Station will cost more than \$18 million. Three fighters would be moved to the Jacksonville International Airport Air Guard Station.

Air Force officials have argued that shifting the fighters will save money and better position the Air Guard to protect the country.

The Massachusetts Military Reservation, located on the Upper Cape, includes the Otis base, as well as Coast Guard and Army National Guard bases. The shutdown would result in 827 lost

jobs in the region - 505 direct and 322 indirect jobs over the 2006-2011 time period.

Inaccurate Pentagon Data Colored Recommendation to Close DFAS Office, Says the Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance; New findings conclude Cleveland office should rise to #1 in Department of Defense ranking PR Newswire June 27, 2005

BUFFALO, N.Y., June 27 /PRNewswire/ -- A new analysis of Department of Defense (DoD) base closure data and methodology concludes that inaccurate information and illogical recommendations artificially dropped the ranking of Cleveland's Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) office, though the data clearly supports its continued operation and expansion.

The Cleveland Defense Industry Alliance (CDIA), the group of business leaders whose sole purpose is to retain and grow jobs for DFAS, Northeast Ohio's primary military installation, carefully reviewed DoD processes and recommendations and today revealed several disturbing findings:

1. The DoD made a fundamental mistake in its overall calculation of Military Value for all DFAS operations.

This mistake failed to correctly scale the Workforce Pool metric in its overall calculation of Military Value, affecting all DFAS operations, not just Cleveland's. The CDIA met with staff and re-accomplished the calculations, resulting in the correct Military Values. Correcting the mistake does not affect the ranking of Cleveland DFAS, but it does have an impact in some other critical areas. It is vital that the correct data be used, as it forms the foundation for all subsequent calculations.

2. The criteria focus on physical attributes of facilities - not the

people or the services provided; even if those criteria remain, glaring inconsistencies in applying the standards are evident.

As one commissioner has noted, accurately and promptly paying men and women in military service does have significant military value. However, the Department of Defense standards don't adequately take that importance into account, concentrating on 10 percent of the DFAS operations - the facilities and associated building costs - while almost completely ignoring the 90 percent portion that consists of the people and the critical work they do. Even if those standards are maintained, the

Pentagon's recommendation to relocate more than 1,000 DFAS employees in the Celebrezze Federal Building ignores the 435 non-DoD civilians who would remain in the building doing similar work. In addition, the Pentagon has illogically recommended that 3,500 jobs from around the country -- including from Cleveland -- be located near Indianapolis, Indiana but not on a military base.

3. An inconsistent method of analysis marginalized 19 unique functions performed at Cleveland DFAS, harming Cleveland's contributions and benefiting receiving communities.

Rather than following a method of analysis used in other areas, the DoD staff used a scale that did not properly reflect the 19 unique functions that Cleveland DFAS provides, significantly more than any other DFAS site in the country. This seemingly arbitrary application of standards works against the fair evaluation of the Cleveland office while benefiting the communities that will gain jobs at Cleveland's expense.

4. The federal government charges high lease on the office space Cleveland DFAS occupies, then penalized it for high lease costs in the base closure review process.

Lease costs at the General Services Administration-owned Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building in Cleveland are far higher than the rent GSA charges DFAS offices in other cities. A "real world" market conditions evaluation shows that per square foot office leasing costs in downtown Cleveland are actually significantly lower than those in the other listed markets. In addition, Cleveland has prepared detailed plans for a new DFAS site that meets security considerations, has advanced telecommunications capabilities, is capable of expansion and has a fixed, below-market-cost 20-year lease.

The CDIA and other DFAS supporters also pointed out the Pentagon's failure to account for nearly \$52 million dollars (inflation-adjusted) to house the increased workforce in the receiving communities as well as the difficulty of finding qualified, skilled employees to perform the complex work that Cleveland DFAS now does.

These new findings represent a substantial deviation from the closure ranking criteria set by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, an independent entity created to provide President George W. Bush an objective review and analysis of the military installations the DoD has recommended for closure or realignment.

Nance led an Ohio delegation testifying today before BRAC commissioners in Buffalo, N.Y. The delegation included Cleveland Mayor Jane L. Campbell, U.S. Senators George Voinovich and Mike DeWine, U.S. Representatives Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Steven LaTourette, Dennis Kucinich, and Ohio Governor Bob Taft.

The Cleveland DFAS office is the world center for Navy pay operations. Its nearly 1,200 highly skilled accounting and information technology professionals process payroll for troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world. The Cleveland office has been the world center for Navy pay operations and personnel data management since the advent of DFAS. A model of operational efficiency and customer service, the Reserve Pay Center of Excellence was established at Cleveland DFAS in 2004, bringing with it the payroll processing responsibilities for the Army, Air Force and Naval Reserves and National Guard. The Cleveland office is the only DFAS branch trained to process payroll services for military retirees.

Local News Articles

Leaders To Lobby For Bases Carolinas' officials to make case for keeping military facilities intact

Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, NC)
Kerry Hall
June 28, 2005

Lawmakers from the Carolinas and West Virginia are converging in Charlotte today to try to convince the military to leave their military bases and jobs alone.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission is holding more than a dozen hearings across the country to meet with communities affected by the Pentagon's proposed list of base closures and downsizing.

Four of the commission's nine members will be in town today for the day-long hearing at Central Piedmont Community College's west campus.

North Carolina and South Carolina will each have two hours to present their cases for why their bases should be spared or, in some cases, expanded.

President Bush appointed the commission, which will make recommendations for how military bases should be realigned. The Pentagon has named more than 800 military

installations nationwide it believes could be closed or changed. The commission will present its recommendations to Bush and Congress in September.

The Carolinas escaped relatively unscathed in the Pentagon proposal released in May. Only four military bases in the Carolinas, none of them large, were targeted for closing. And several bases -- including Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, S.C., and Fort Bragg in Fayetteville -- could see their missions and payrolls grow.

Still, Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue has said North Carolina must mount a strong defense as other states fight to regain jobs and move cuts elsewhere.

S.C. lawmakers plan to make a case for sparing a Navy engineering facility in Charleston, which the Pentagon has recommended be closed. If that happened, the region would lose up to 1,100 jobs. Overall, South Carolina would gain 700 military jobs under the Pentagon's plan.

Lawmakers expected to attend today's hearing include: Perdue, Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C.; N.C. Gov. Mike Easley; Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.; Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C.; S.C. Gov. Mark Sanford; and several House members.

Also slated to speak: representatives from key military communities, including Fayetteville, Goldsboro, Jacksonville, Havelock and Durham, where the Pentagon has proposed closing an Army research office.

130th Backers Plan 'All-Out Attack' Scores of Air Guard unit's supporters heading to Charlotte for BRAC hearing

Charleston Gazette (Charleston, WV)
June 28, 2005

Col. Bill Peters spent 36 years with the West Virginia National Guard 130th Airlift Wing, retiring as its base commander in 2001 and from the Guard a year later.

He's now leading Keep 'Em Flying, a coalition of retired National Guard members, their families and private citizens, in an effort to save the 130th from losing its eight C-130 Hercules turboprops to Pope Air Force Base in Fayetteville, N.C.

"The Department of Defense is using incorrect data just to gain the airplanes and hurt these great units that have supported missions all these years," Peters said. "It's not just against Charleston; it's against 24 units in the Air National Guard."

Up to 150 supporters of the 130th will board three buses in Charleston today as they head to Charlotte, N.C., for a regional hearing before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Gov. Joe Manchin, Adjutant Gen. Allen Tackett and the state's entire congressional delegation will speak before the nine-member commission.

"The importance of the 130th Airlift Wing cannot be understated," Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., said Monday. "This unit is the support backbone for homeland security efforts in 11 states and the District of Columbia."

The unit has a reputation for being one of the best-run in the country. It has the highest personnel strength of any Air Guard C-130 base, 103.6 percent, and is second in readiness and fifth in retention. It also has been named the Air Force's outstanding unit four times since the 1970s and has been recognized by the National Guard Association four times for best overall operation.

The Department of Defense wants to pair the 130th's eight planes with eight other C-130s from Pittsburgh's 911th Airlift Wing to form a 16-plane unit.

The DOD's recommendation is part of a national plan to close 33 major bases and downsize 29 others. It aims to save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilities and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The recommendation said the 130th unit at Yeager Airport did not have enough space to accommodate 16 planes. BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi, on his visit to Charleston last week, saw 11 C-130s parked on the ramp, two more in the hangars and space to accommodate three more.

“One of the lessons we learned from the Sept. 11 attacks is the need to be prepared at home,” said Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee. “The 130th Airlift Wing has the right location and the right people, and it should be at the top of the list of bases that must be saved.”

The DOD has estimated that removing the 130th’s planes would wipe out 156 full-time military and civilian jobs and about 700 part-time positions. The unit employs 320 full-time military and civilian staffers. Another 700 National Guard members are assigned to the unit.

The fight to save the 130th will not end in Charlotte. The nine-member commission led by Principi can change the closure and realignment list before it is submitted to the White House and Congress this fall. The final decision lies with President Bush.

“We want to make an all-out attack and do every single thing we can, so at the end of day we can say we did everything we could to help our case,” said Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va.

Ohio Leaders Ask For BRAC Shift

Dayton Daily News (Dayton, OH)

Jessica Wehrman

June 28, 2005

BUFFALO -- As a coalition of Ohio lawmakers and civic leaders made their case for protecting defense jobs targeted in the 2005 base closure process, Rep. Mike Turner threw a haymaker: Massachusetts played dirty.

Turner, R-Centerville, argued Massachusetts officials inappropriately lured an estimated 2,250 information technology jobs from Wright-

Patterson with the promise of \$410 million in economic development at and around Hanscom Air Force Base.

The Department of Defense has a policy that BRAC recommendations cannot be based on community proposals to invest future resources in the base. Turner accused Massachusetts of "offering the DOD \$410 million in an attempt to purchase jobs."

Turner said because of that financial lure, approving the recommendation to move jobs to Hanscom would "undermine the credibility of BRAC in any future BRAC rounds" and would result in BRAC becoming a cash contest where only wealthy states receive Defense jobs.

In a tightly-scheduled two-hour hearing in a Buffalo auditorium, Ohio's two senators, Gov. Bob Taft and six congressmen argued against job losses at Air National Guard bases in Springfield and Mansfield, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and at the Defense Finance and Accounting Systems in Cleveland and Kettering. The testimony came before four members of the nine-member independent base closure and realignment commission. The commission, which will continue to accept testimony and information throughout the summer, must decide on the Defense Department's base closure recommendations by Sept. 8.

Wright-Patterson would net an estimated 870 more governmental and non-governmental jobs under Defense base realignment and closure proposals. But the Dayton contingent focused primarily on the Hanscom proposal.

Hanscom does not have the proper space to accommodate the new jobs, argued retired Air Force Gen. Lester Lyles, the former commander of Air Force Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson. He also said it would be costly to transfer the work from the Midwest to pricier Massachusetts.

Lyles said the Defense Department did not consider the access to other information technology resources offered by the surrounding community, including LexisNexis, NCR-

Teradata and Standard Register. Those programs work well in conjunction with the information technology talents at Wright-Patterson, he said, and have people and programs of use to Wright-Patterson.

In October, a Massachusetts group led by U.S. Sen. Ted Kennedy visited Wright-Patterson. The visit was criticized by Ohio lawmakers who suspected it was a lure to pull missions to the rival Air Force Materiel Command base.

During his testimony Monday, Lyles also endorsed a Defense proposal to move jobs from Brooks City-Base in San Antonio to Wright-Patterson. Lyles argued it made sense to move five missions from that base to Wright-Patterson during this round, and he said it would encourage "intellectual synergy of like-minded researchers" and spur innovation.

Finally, Lyles endorsed a Defense proposal to move the sensors programs at Hanscom and Rome, N.Y., to Wright-Patterson, which also does sensors work. But Wright-Patterson was not the only base fighting for sensors at the Monday hearing. Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., and others argued that the Air Force Research Laboratory in Rome, N.Y., should not lose sensors.

Kettering Mayor Marilou Smith and Turner, meanwhile, argued against the closure of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Kettering. Smith argued that the city's loss of Gentile Air Force Station in the 1993 BRAC round was devastating enough. The closure of the accounting service, she said, would cost the community 425 jobs.

Rep. David Hobson, R-Springfield, argued that the Defense Department erred in its recommendation to prematurely shutter the F-16 Air National Guard training mission at the Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport. The base had originally expected to hold the training mission until at least 2015, but the Defense recommendations would remove the flying mission in 2010.

Hobson said the Air Force Education and Training Command has allocated student pilots to the Springfield unit for fiscal year 2008, and the Air Force will need pilots well beyond that date. Some of the aircraft are slated to leave Springfield in fiscal year 2007.

Hobson helped secure some \$80 million for the base over the past decade after receiving an Air Force promise that the mission was safe until at least 2015.

He accused the Air Force of withholding information that Ohio bases could have used to make their arguments, saying Springfield did not get all of the information the Defense Department used for its recommendations until the day before BRAC staff members visited the base in June.

Springfield was also wrongly characterized as a general purpose flying unit under the Defense recommendations, he said. In fact, he said, it is one of two F-16 training units left in the country.

"The Air Force got it wrong," he said, arguing the Air Force would lack much-needed F-16 training if Springfield's training mission is dismantled.

BRAC realignment, he said, would also remove all maintenance and operations personnel in fiscal year 2007, but keep F-16 pilots until 2010, with students slated for 2008. "This is inconsistent," he said, arguing maintenance personnel would be needed if pilots are flying.

Critics Take On Plan To Close Niagara Base

New York Times (New York, NY)
June 28, 2005

AMHERST, N.Y., June 27 (AP) - The Pentagon used flawed data, exaggerated potential savings and strayed from guidelines in recommending the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station for closing, state leaders on Monday told a commission that will decide the base's fate.

"This is a decision that runs afoul of what BRAC is supposed to do," said Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton after testifying before four members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, known as BRAC.

United States Representative Thomas Reynolds, Republican of New York, said that the Air Force had "fabricated" \$17 million in savings to justify closing the base and that it was just one of several incorrect figures factored into the decision. He said closing the base could cost more than keeping it open.

The base's proximity to the United States-Canadian border and its benefits to homeland security - a factor in base-closing guidelines - were ignored, commissioners were told. Members of the commission spent the morning touring the base, Niagara County's second-largest employer. The Niagara base was a late addition to the closure list, officials said.

"Niagara Falls was one of the last bases put on the list for closure," Gov. George E. Pataki told the commissioners. "It should be one of the first to come off."

The Pentagon issued its recommendations for closings in mid-May. BRAC, which has the authority to make changes to the closure list, will forward its version to President Bush in September.

The Niagara Falls base, with nearly 3,000 full- and part-time employees and a \$50 million payroll, generates about \$150 million in economic activity in the region, supporters said.

The Pentagon's plans to consolidate offices of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service also drew fire from New York and Ohio lawmakers. Cleveland stands to lose more than 1,000 jobs, while 290 jobs or more would be lost in Rome, N.Y.

Commissioner Lloyd Newton, a retired Air Force general, said decisions would be based on law.

"This commission is committed to conducting a clear-eyed reality check that we know will not only shape our military capabilities for decades to come but also have profound effects on our communities and on the people who bring our communities to life," he said.

Rell Briefed On Base Cleanup

Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT)

Mark Pazniokas

June 28, 2005

BOSTON -- Gov. M. Jodi Rell slipped away from a Republican Governors Association meeting Monday, where business executives had paid to rub elbows with GOP governors, to strategize instead with an environmental group about saving the naval submarine base in Groton, Conn.

Philip Warburg, the president of the Conservation Law Foundation, briefed Rell on possible costs and environmental issues associated with the cleanup of the sub base if it is closed by the Department of Defense.

"My focus for Connecticut right now, of course, has to be on the ...recommendation to close the Groton sub base," Rell said during a brief appearance with Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney and three other governors. "We're working very hard to keep Groton off that list."

Rell is preparing for a hearing of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission on July 6, when Connecticut officials will argue that any savings from closing the base will be offset by environmental costs.

"I wanted to hear firsthand some of the initiatives we could use - how we could refute the dollars and cents," Rell said. "I got an eye-opener, but not necessarily all the answers I wanted."

The Boston-based foundation has studied radiological decommissioning and reviewed the costs of environmental cleanup at other bases, including the Massachusetts Military Reservation on Cape Cod.

Rell said Warburg and his staff were informative, but that state officials remain hampered by the Pentagon's failure to fully disclose the condition of the nuclear sub base.

"We can't assess dollars until we know the extent of the problem," she said. "We need a lot more data."

The Boston meeting of the governors association is one of many the group holds around the country with executives and others who pay for access to GOP officials. Democrats have a similar organization.

An association spokesman was unable to identify who met with the governors at the Omni Parker House, a hotel near the Massachusetts Statehouse, or how much they paid for the privilege.

Realignment Would Cripple Yeager, Report Says
Exclusive: Removing the 130th Airlift Wing could lead to fewer commercial flights to Charleston's airport, Marshall researchers say.

WOWK (Huntington, WV)

Beth Gorczyca

June 27, 2005

A proposal to realign the 130th Air National Guard Airlift Wing at Yeager Airport could impact more than jobs in the region. It could hammer a huge dent into the airport itself.

According to a study by Marshall University's Center for Business and Economic Research, realigning the Airlift Wing could force landing fees to go up at the airport, making landing at the airport too expensive for some airlines. The realignment also could cause the airport's tower to open later in the day and close earlier, impacting the airport's peak travel times.

The Pentagon "never really looked at the impact realignment would have on a joint use facility," said Rick Atkinson, airport director. "Right now,

there is a benefit that goes to both the military and the airport."

The Defense Department recommended in May that the 130th Airlift Wing be realigned with the planes stationed there moving to an Air Force base in North Carolina. The DOD presented its recommendation to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which is scheduled to file its report to the White House on Sept. 8. President Bush is scheduled to send his report to Congress on Sept. 23.

The BRAC Commission will hold a hearing Tuesday in Charlotte, N.C., to listen to comments relating to the Defense Department's recommendations for the 130th Airlift Wing as well as other military installations. Atkinson planned to attend the hearings and said he believed Gov. Joe Manchin would give commission members copies of the Marshall report.

The 21-page report paints a dramatic picture of what could happen in central West Virginia if the Airlift Wing is realigned.

The realignment plan calls for the tower to close from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. The report points out that those hours are when 26 percent of Yeager's commercial passengers fly into or out of the airport. The report said it would be likely that some of the flights will be canceled if the tower's operating hours were cut back.

"Yeager is a feeder airport in the spoke and hub operations of air carriers which serve it," the report said. "Such early flights out and late flights in are essential as passengers make connections to other flights."

The report said Yeager also likely would have to increase its landing fees if the Airlift Wing is realigned. Currently, the Airlift Wing provides the airport with fire protection service and perimeter security. In exchange, the airport is responsible for maintaining the runway for both its carriers and the Airlift Wing.

"It's a good benefit for everyone," Atkinson said. "It's very cost beneficial for them now. ... We

saw a report online where if they realign the 130th, their payback period is never. It would cost them money to close the base."

If the Airlift Wing cannot provide fire and security services, Yeager would have to spend more than \$7 million the first year and \$1.7 million annually after that to replace those services.

That would force the airport to increase its landing fees for commercial planes from \$1.20 per thousand pounds to about \$3.66 per thousand pounds.

"A typical regional jet weighs 48,500 pounds," the report said. "The landing fee for that aircraft would increase from \$58.20 and \$233.61, more than quadrupling the expense to the air carrier. Adding the fire service startup costs could increase fees by as much as \$4.88 per thousand pounds, to \$295 for a typical aircraft, a five-fold increase in landing fees."

Atkinson said those increases could place a huge damper on attracting air carriers to Yeager.

"We are close to having one of the lowest landing fees (among peer airports). After this, we would be one of the highest," he said.

In addition, the report estimates the realignment would cost 814 jobs and \$22 million in annual spending. And since the economy of Central West Virginia is not growing, those jobs and dollars would be hard to replace, the report said.

"The statistics for the area served by Yeager Airport are even more discouraging," the report said. "... Any reductions in economic opportunities, such as closing or realigning the 130th Airlift Wing, are likely to intensify an already distressed situation."

The report challenged early studies by the Defense Department, General Accounting Office and U.S. Census Bureau that suggested base closings and realignments did not have a long-term negative impact on local communities.

According to economists with Marshall, none of the earlier studies looked at Air National Guard bases at a joint-use airport or looked at markets that were as lightly populated and rural as Yeager's 20-county service area.

"Most of the closures took place in urban or other areas with strong labor markets that were capable of absorbing the displaced workers," the report said.

The economists also challenged the studies because the bases those federal agencies looked at employed only a fraction of the work force in the area. Closing or realigning the base, therefore, did not represent a significant economic loss. And if there was a loss, often it was absorbed by other military bases operating nearby.

But closing the 130th, the economists said, was a different situation. The Airlift Wing is a major employer in the region, the Marshall report said. And West Virginia doesn't have another military base that could absorb those people easily.

"Charleston is not a major urban center, so the loss of what is one of its 'major industries' will have a more profound impact than elsewhere," the study said.

Md. officials prepare to fight for Fort Monmouth jobs

Newsday (Long Island, NY)
Sarah Brumfield
June 27, 2005

ABERDEEN, Md. -- Members of Maryland's congressional delegation and state and local economic development officials are gearing up for a tussle with their counterparts in New Jersey over the recommended transfer of more than 2,000 jobs from the Garden State.

The Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closing Commission has endorsed the base closure at Fort Monmouth, N.J., sending nearly 2,200 jobs to Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Sens. Paul Sarbanes and Barbara Mikulski and Reps. Ben Cardin and Dutch Ruppersberger gathered with state and local government and business officials at Aberdeen High School to kick off "APG, Maryland is at the Ready," a campaign aimed at proving Maryland worthy of the BRAC recommendations.

In May, Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey told members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that the Army was concerned that many of the employees at Fort Monmouth _ mainly civilian engineers and scientists _ would not move. New Jersey's congressional delegation planned to survey the post's employees to see if they would move to Maryland.

"That brain drain is very real," said Republican Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J. "You just don't put an ad in the paper and get the people you need."

Those comments riled Maryland officials and now they're vowing to show the commission that not only does Maryland have a highly qualified work force, but it won't be hard to attract workers to the area.

"They threw the gauntlet down when they said we don't have a good work force," Cardin said.

Nearly a quarter of Maryland's workers are professionals or technical workers, the nation's highest percentage, Ruppersberger said. The state is also in a statistical tie for first place with the highest percent of the population with an advanced degree, he said.

The group is also launching a Web site for workers considering the move to Aberdeen Proving Ground, with information about the area, its work force, education and job search help for spouses, said Harford County Office of Economic Development Director Tom Sadowski.

Science Applications International Corp. had no difficulties hiring 190 people over the last year, said senior vice president Gary Boyd. More than half were local hires, and the area was very

attractive to applicants from outside the region, he said.

C. Warren Mullins, vice president for strategic planning and business development for Battelle's Eastern Technology Center echoed his comments. The research organization has had a presence in the Aberdeen area for 25 years and has grown from 12 people in 1994 to about 450 chemists, biologists, technicians and support staff today.

"We've had no problem getting the skills we need," he said. "You couldn't ask for a more friendly environment for developing a technology business."

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes