

# Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

October 28, 2005

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### **Department of Defense Releases**

N/A

### **National News Articles**

#### **House Paves Way For BRAC Proposals To Become Law**

National Journal

Megan Scully

October 27, 2005

The House voted overwhelmingly today to reject a last-ditch effort to halt the military base-closure process, bringing a relatively quiet end to an often raucous, six-month process. On a 324-85 vote, the House defeated a joint resolution sponsored by Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., that would have disapproved the independent Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission's final recommendations. Already endorsed by President Bush, the recommendations -- which include the closure of 22 major military facilities and the realignment of 33 others -- are now expected to become law. Overall, the panel backed 86 percent of the Pentagon's proposed 190 closures and realignments with estimated savings of \$35.6 billion over the next 20 years.

Before the vote, Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Texas, strongly condemned the recommendations, saying the commission's decisions were driven "more by bean counting" than military strategy. He joined lawmakers whose districts will be adversely affected by the base-closure round, complaining that Ellington Field near Houston, home of an Air National Guard wing that just returned from Iraq, would lose its F-16 fighter jets. Other lawmakers asserted that actual savings from closing installations would be

minimal, while LaHood emphasized that the country should not be shuttering bases while thousands of troops still are deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. "This is a wrong message to be sending," said LaHood, whose district is home to the 183rd Fighter Wing, which also stands to lose its aircraft once the commission's decisions become law.

Base-closure opponents also criticized the timing of this round, which was conducted before the Pentagon completes the Quadrennial Defense Review, a sweeping analysis of defense forces, plans and strategies due to Congress in February. "They have the cart before the horse," said Rep. Rush Holt, D-N.J. "It's a flawed process." The commission expressed similar concerns in its final report, recommending that future base closures be conducted in conjunction with the four-year review. But several lawmakers applauded the commission's work as thorough, well-reasoned and professional. Even some critics of this base-closure round vowed to vote against the LaHood resolution. "I feel this may have been the best [base-closure] process we've had," said House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman Joel Hefley, R-Colo., who tried unsuccessfully last year to delay base-closure by two years.

#### **House Approves Plan To Close Bases**

Washington Post

Liz Sidoti

October 28, 2005

The House voted overwhelmingly Thursday to allow the first round of U.S. military base closures and consolidations in a decade, clearing the way for facilities across the country to start shutting their doors as early as next month.

In a 324 to 85 vote, the House refused to veto the final report of the 2005 base-closing commission, meaning the report seems all but certain to become law in mid-November. Targeted facilities then would have six years to close and shift forces as required in the report.

The House and Senate must pass resolutions rejecting the report to stop the Pentagon's sweeping restructuring of its far-flung domestic

base network. But, as expected, the House effort by Rep. Ray LaHood (R-Ill.) failed. And there is no similar attempt underway in the Senate.

Opposition to closing bases dropped steadily in both chambers as the nine-member commission changed parts of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's original recommendations and issues such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita commanded Congress's attention.

The panel sent President Bush its final report in September. He signed off on it and sent it to Congress on Sept. 15. That began a 45-legislative-day period for Congress to reject the report.

Congressional critics and many local officials fear the impact of base closures on their area economies -- and on their political futures. They say the United States should not restructure military bases while the U.S. military is engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan.

LaHood, whose district includes a base in Springfield, Ill., that is to lose 15 National Guard fighter jets, urged his colleagues to vote to reject the report "in support of those that are citizen soldiers who come from those communities."

But Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, who supports closing bases, said: "These issues have been thoroughly discussed and debated."

The Pentagon, the White House and GOP congressional leaders -- and even many Democrats -- contend that eliminating extra space will free up money that could be used instead to improve the United States' fighting capabilities, and help reposition U.S. forces to face current and future threats.

In a statement, the Bush administration said that halting the round of base closings "would harm U.S. national security interests by preventing improvements designed to address the new demands of war against extremists and other 21st century needs."

Overall, the report calls for closing 22 major military bases and reconfiguring another 33. Hundreds of smaller facilities from coast to coast also will close, shrink or grow, under a plan that the commission says will mean annual savings of \$4.2 billion.

Rumsfeld had recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others, but the panel made changes even as it approved most of the plan.

### **Lawmakers OK base closures NAS Pascagoula to close; Meridian will lose planes to other bases**

Gannett News Service

Ledyard King and John Yaukey

October 28, 2005

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon can start closing and consolidating dozens of U.S. military bases — including the Pascagoula Naval Station — now that Congress has given it the go-ahead.

The House voted 324-85 Thursday to reject a proposal to derail the Base Realignment and Closure plan, dashing the hopes of some communities that Congress might save their bases and the jobs they provide. All members of the Mississippi delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, except Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-2nd District, voted with the minority to derail the base closure plan.

The Pentagon will close 22 major bases, restructure 33 others and make hundreds of smaller changes under the plan, which becomes law next month.

"We need all our resources to support our fighting men and women, and that means having the best and most efficient facilities," said Missouri Rep. Ike Skelton, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee.

But Rep. Gene Taylor, a Democrat whose 4th District includes the Pascagoula Naval Station, said lawmakers made a mistake in endorsing the Pentagon's plan.

"This isn't the first time that our nation has closed bases it will later regret having closed," Taylor said. "But for the sake of our nation, I hope it's the last time."

The congressional action also means the 186th Air Refueling Wing in Meridian will lose its planes to other Air National Guard bases.

The Pentagon wants to close bases to save money and reorganize the military so it is better prepared to fight terrorism and modern wars. The list was proposed by the Pentagon in May and modified by a nine-member, president-appointed commission in late August.

President Bush endorsed the commission's final list in September, leaving Congress as the last chance to block the plan. But the BRAC commission's decision to save some of the biggest bases — including the submarine base in New London in Connecticut, the Naval shipyard Portsmouth in Maine and Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota — mollified many of the most vocal opponents.

### **BRAC process nearly complete**

Arkansas News Bureau  
Alison Vekshin  
October 28, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Fort Smith leaders breathed a sigh of relief on Thursday when a federal proposal to assign a new mission to the 188th Fighter Wing in Fort Smith was all but assured of becoming law.

The House rejected, 324-85, an effort by an Illinois congressman to block the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations to overhaul the U.S. military, including the 188th.

"I voted no, which means I voted to enforce the BRAC process and go along with the recommendations of the commission," said Rep. John Boozman, R-Rogers.

All Arkansas House members voted against the resolution introduced by Rep. Ray LaHood, R-

Ill., in effect voicing their approval for the proposed changes.

"My understanding is there should be no problem to approve the recommendations," Boozman said.

The BRAC recommendations released on Aug. 26 called for the Air National Guard unit at the Fort Smith Regional Airport to lose its fleet of F-16 aircraft, regional training center and firefighting operations.

But the BRAC commission also proposed the unit gain a new mission with 18 A-10 Warthogs, which are low-flying, twin-engine aircraft designed for ground combat.

That decision drew wide support from the Fort Smith community, which had feared for the future of the 188th after the Pentagon's initial recommendations in May called for removing the F-16s without assigning a new mission to the unit.

The Pentagon's proposal had prompted community leaders to form a BRAC task force and hire a Washington consultant to support the 188th in BRAC discussions in Washington.

"We fought a very tough battle," said Bill Harding, Fort Smith city administrator and a member of the task force.

"We've gone from being in the grave with dirt being thrown on the box to rising up and having a whole new mission and life," said Maj. John Weisenfels, the 188th's community manager.

"We are looking now at new aircraft, a new mission and possibly gaining more people," Weisenfels said. "So the future looks really good now."

Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., also applauded the developments.

"Through our actions, the BRAC commission came to understand and retain the unique military value of Fort Smith," he said in a

statement. "I'm pleased the final recommendations are poised to be set in stone."

Under the rules guiding the BRAC process, the only possible roadblock remaining to the recommendations becoming law would have to come in the form of a Senate resolution opposing the proposal.

But no such resolution has or is expected to be introduced in the Senate, where it would face a probable defeat, Arkansas congressional aides said Thursday.

On Sept. 8, the nine-member BRAC commission sent their recommendations to President Bush, who approved and sent them to Congress on Sept. 15. Congress then had 45 legislative days to enact a joint resolution killing the process or the report becomes law.

## **House defeats effort to derail US base closings**

Reuters

Veena Trehan

October 27, 2005

WASHINGTON, Oct 27 (Reuters) - The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday overwhelmingly rejected an effort to stop the closure and reconfiguration of hundreds of military bases, clearing the way for the plan to go forward in 2006.

The House voted 324 to 85 to defeat a proposal by Rep. Ray LaHood, an Illinois Republican, to reject the findings of an independent commission to shut 22 big bases and reconfigure 33 others. Hundreds of smaller facilities also face changes under the plan approved in September and supported by President George W. Bush.

LaHood's resolution had been expected to fail because many House members did not have base closures or major reorganizations in their districts. Congress also has a track record of turning back attempts to derail base closing recommendations.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said the closure and realignment plan -- the first in a decade -- was a unique opportunity to reshape the U.S. military for new missions and prepare it for the return of troops from Europe and elsewhere.

In a statement urging rejection of the LaHood resolution, the White House said the nation's current base alignments are primarily designed for the Cold War. "The military must transform to meet the new demands," the White House said.

The nine-member base closing commission agreed with most Defense Department proposals, but preserved some bases earmarked for closure and made other changes.

Some major targets for closure are Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, Fort Monroe in Virginia, and Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. The medical center is moving most of its operations to a new facility in Maryland.

LaHood and his supporters said approving the recommendations would send the wrong message to American troops in Iraq, and questioned whether the estimated savings of \$15.1 billion over 20 years were achievable.

But House of Representatives Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Duncan Hunter supported the closure plan, and called the House vote the end of a long and difficult process.

"Every one of us spent the last four years making a case to the Pentagon and the (commission) that our bases were of such high military value that they should not be closed or realigned," the California Republican said.

There have been four rounds of base closings since 1988, the last in the mid 1990s.

Bush sent the proposal to Congress on Sept. 15, which had 45 days to act. There were no proposals in the Senate to reject the commission's recommendation.

## Local News Articles

### **U.S. House makes Arsenal BRAC moves official**

Quad City Times (Quad City, IA)  
Ed Tibbetts  
October 27, 2005

The U.S. House put the stamp of finality on a base closing panel's proposal that includes realigning Arsenal Island, voting overwhelmingly today to uphold the recommendations that will mean a net loss of more than 1,000 jobs.

The House vote came after a two-hour debate with nearly all parties involved saying it was a foregone conclusion.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended a package of base closings and realignments, which President Bush then sent on to Congress.

The measure to reject the recommendations, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., and voted on Thursday drew less than 100 supporters even as critics of the base closing process said it was flawed and politically driven. Backers of the base closings said that it is the only way to shave excess military inventory.

The final vote was 324-85 to reject the measure. By law, separate votes in the House and Senate to reject the base closing plan are required to stop it. The House defeat seemingly puts an end to the process. There is no move afoot in the Senate to reject the base closing recommendations.

Three white-collar agencies will be moved off Arsenal Island as a result of the plan, moves that are expected to take until 2011. About 6,400 people work on Arsenal Island, and local officials who fought the base closing plan have said they consider it fortunate that most of those jobs will remain in the Quad-Cities.

### **Most Texans vote for base closing plan**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Washington DC)  
October 27, 2005

Rep. Tom DeLay joined nine other Texans, most of them Democrats, to oppose a base closing plan Thursday, but he ended up on the losing side.

The House voted 324-85 to allow the first round of U.S. military base closures and consolidations in a decade. Texas installations that would be closed include Naval Station Ingleside, Lone Star Ammunition Plant and Brooks City Base in San Antonio. Red River Army Depot will be realigned and F-16s stationed at Ellington Field near Houston will be removed.

Also, thousands more troops will be added to Fort Bliss, but Fort Hood will lose a temporary unit local officials hoped would be permanent.

Along with DeLay, Republican Reps. Ted Poe of Houston, Mike McCaul of Austin and Ron Paul of Surfside opposed the recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Democrats who opposed the plan were Reps. Chet Edwards of Waco; Al Green and Gene Green of Houston; Ruben Hinojosa of Mercedes, Eddie Bernice Johnson of Dallas and Solomon Ortiz of Corpus Christi.

The vote marked the first time DeLay has opposed a base closing plan, said spokeswoman Shannon Flaherty.

DeLay asked the Air Force to keep the 147th Fighter Wing at Ellington Field until unmanned drones scheduled to be at the air field are delivered. He also has asked for a schedule for removing the F-16s from Ellington.

"It should be plain to see that instead of removing our fighter wing, Ellington Field is in need of more personnel, greater maintenance and better military assets," DeLay said. "And yet, the BRAC Commission has chosen to realign Ellington, removing its F-16 fighter wing, and leaving the Gulf Coast in many ways more vulnerable than it is now. "

The base closings and realignments - backed by the Pentagon, White House, Republican leaders and many Democrats are intended to streamline military facilities and troops and put savings toward improving U.S. military forces and restructuring them to respond to future threats.

### **Fort Bragg starts work on \$80 million building project**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Fort Bragg, NC)  
October 27, 2005

Fort Bragg has broken ground on an \$80 million project that will replace wooden World War II-era buildings with a complex of offices and barracks for the 1st Corps Support Command.

"For an old soldier who started out in COSCOM as a second lieutenant ... this is a very welcome improvement," Col. Albert Ballard, acting commander of 1st Corps Support Command, said Wednesday.

Completion of the 50-acre project is scheduled for March 2008.

The construction will include two barracks with 320 spaces, six battalion headquarters, a group headquarters, a company operations building and a dining hall. Soldiers will have individual rooms and share a bathroom with another soldier.

"This is not your grandfather's Army," Ballard said after the ceremony.

Material shortages and rising gas prices caused in part by hurricanes in the Gulf Coast have led to some concern among Army engineers as Fort Bragg embarks on a building boom, with other brigade barracks complexes under construction and large headquarters probably being built within six years.

President Bush recently accepted the recommendation of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission to bring two major commands to Fort Bragg - the Army's Forces Command and Reserve Command both now

based in the Atlanta area. The post is also getting a fourth combat brigade of 3,500 to 3,900 paratroopers.

Fort Bragg already is home to the 82nd Airborne Division, the 18th Airborne Corps and the Army Special Operations Command.

### **Ed circles the wagons around Willow Grove**

Philadelphia Daily News (Philadelphia, PA)  
Gloria Campisi  
October 28, 2005

A last-ditch effort failed yesterday in Congress to beat back base closings that imperil the Willow Grove Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Base.

Despite that, Gov. Rendell vows it will take a real dogfight for the Department of Defense to get its hands on 12 airplanes used by an Air National Guard unit at Willow Grove and fly them off to be mothballed in Arizona.

The department ordered the unit, the 111th Fighter Wing, a Pennsylvania Air National Guard outfit stationed at Willow Grove, deactivated as part of the latest round of cuts from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission aimed at saving the government billions of dollars.

Rendell sued in federal court to stop the deactivation of the 111th, arguing that, as governor, he is commander of the reserve unit and has to give his consent for it to be shut down. He had not even been consulted about it, he said.

A federal judge on Aug. 26 sided with Rendell and Pennsylvania Sens. Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, who joined in the suit.

The Department of Defense is appealing the ruling and has threatened to remove the dozen A-10 Warthog jets in the meantime.

The same day the judge ruled, the BRAC commission voted unanimously to end

operations at Willow Grove. Existing Navy and Marine units would be transferred elsewhere.

"If the Department of Defense comes for the planes, Gov. Rendell, as commander in chief of the Pennsylvania National Guard, would not surrender those planes," his spokeswoman, Kate Philips, said yesterday.

Instead, he would sue to keep them here.

Rendell has said it is necessary to have planes stationed at Willow Grove in case of an attack on Independence Hall or the Liberty Bell.

Pentagon officials could not be reached yesterday for comment.

But efforts in the U.S. House of Representatives yesterday to stop the BRAC closings failed, 324-85. The closings could come as early as next month.

Targeted facilities would have up to six years to close their doors and shift forces elsewhere.

Locally, "There's a lot of concern... for how the base will be used, and quite a bit of confusion" about what will stay there and what will go, said Edward Strouse of the Suburban Horsham Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce. There are 1,200 full-time jobs at the base.

U.S. Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick, who represents Bucks County and parts of Montgomery County and Philadelphia, argued strongly before yesterday's vote that the closings would hamper homeland security.

Fitzpatrick said that Willow Grove was the largest joint-reserve base on the East Coast and that its strategic position allows jets from the base to protect the ports of Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore.

It also serves as a FEMA staging ground for the distribution of federal resources in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist attack, he said.

He said also that the base has trained different arms of the military jointly for more than a

decade, a training technique that was "one of the major objectives" of the Pentagon overhaul.

### **Simmons misses BRAC vote for Las Vegas trip**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Washington DC)  
Andrew Miga  
October 28, 2005

U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons fought hard to save the submarine base in Groton, Conn., from the federal base closing commission's hit list. But when the House overwhelmingly approved the panel's final plan Thursday, the congressman was in Las Vegas.

Simmons, R-Conn., missed the House vote because he was making a speech at the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department International's annual meeting in the city known for its gambling and glitter.

"He would have liked to have been there to vote," said Simmons' spokesman, John Goodwin. "He had set up this speech for a long time. It was a scheduling thing."

Simmons made the fight to save the Groton base part of his re-election campaign last year. He joined other officials last August in celebrating when the Base Closure and Realignment Commission took Groton off its list of proposed closures after a bipartisan lobbying effort by Connecticut lawmakers.

House members voted 324-85 Thursday against vetoing the commission's final 2005 report, making it likely the plan will take effect next year.

Simmons would have voted against the veto along with his Connecticut Republican colleagues, Reps. Nancy Johnson and Chris Shays, had he not been in Las Vegas, Goodwin said. Goodwin also said the congressman was not doing any fundraising on his Las Vegas trip. Simmons left Capitol Hill Wednesday night for his flight to Las Vegas and planned to return to Washington Thursday night, Goodwin added.

The unions at the Vegas meeting represent many of the workers in the congressman's eastern Connecticut district, which includes the submarine base.

"He's very concerned about jobs in the state," said Goodwin.

The base closing commission's report calls for closing 22 major military bases and reconfiguring an additional 33. Hundreds of smaller facilities from coast to coast also will close, shrink or grow, under a plan that the commission says will mean annual savings of \$4.2 billion.

## **House Vote Brings Saga Of Sub Base To An Official Close**

### **Attempt to overturn base-closure recommendations easily defeated**

New London Day (New London, CT)

Anthony Cronin

October 28, 2005

Breathe easier, southeastern Connecticut.

On Thursday, the U.S. House of Representatives took final legislative action that formally ended the federal base-closure process, ensuring that the Naval Submarine Base in Groton will remain open.

"It's official," said Gov. M. Jodi Rell. "Our base is saved."

The House soundly defeated a resolution that would have rejected the independent base-closure commission's report. Under the base-closure process, both chambers of Congress, the House and the Senate, would have to back legislation to reject the full base-closure report. Since the House defeated any such efforts, this year's base-closure and consolidation process, the fifth since 1988, effectively ends.

U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, who helped to rally influential congressional forces against the proposed base shutdown, welcomed Thursday's congressional action.

"The Department of Defense should not be authorized to execute another (BRAC process) anytime soon," Simmons said, adding that it was a mistake to undertake a base-closing process while the nation is at war.

"The biggest mistake was the recommendation to close Naval Submarine Base New London (the Navy's formal name), the world's greatest center of excellence for undersea warfare," Simmons said. "It would have been better never to have attempted this round of base closures. Our military is no better for it, and our nation is no safer."

In May, the Pentagon unveiled its list of military bases to be closed or "realigned" and stunned Connecticut by proposing the shutdown of the nearly century-old Groton base, the nation's first base dedicated to submarines. But after a lengthy, intense fight that enlisted some of the Navy's top retired brass and an influential letter from former President Jimmy Carter, the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission overruled the Pentagon's plans and voted in late August to keep the 687-acre base open.

The Pentagon had proposed closing the base and transferring its submarines and various commands to existing bases at Kings Bay, Ga., and Norfolk, Va.

The proposed shutdown sent economic shivers across the state, since the naval base provides an economic stimulus to both the southeastern Connecticut and statewide economies. Its shutdown could have resulted in a \$3 billion-plus shockwave reverberating throughout the state's economy and the potential loss of more than 31,000 jobs. The base itself employs nearly 11,000 active military and civilian employees and has an annual payroll in excess of \$450 million. It pumps about \$1.3 billion annually into the state's economy.

John C. Markowicz, chairman of the regional Subbase Realignment Coalition, said he was pleased by the congressional action. "Today the

sub base is a little bit safer than it was yesterday," he said.

Markowicz said the coalition, which continues to meet, is still concerned about any possible attempts in the Senate to tack possible BRAC-related legislation onto a pending defense authorization bill.

"There were a couple of senators a month ago who made statements about doing something from preventing the (final) BRAC list from being implemented," he said. Markowicz conceded that he doesn't think such efforts would be successful.

U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd said he would "continue to fight for every single dollar for submarines and this base to ensure that this base, and our nation's defense capabilities, are protected."

Rell thanked the efforts of state, congressional and regional officials, dubbed "Team Connecticut," who worked throughout the summer months to convince the independent base-closure commission that closing the base would be detrimental to the nation's military strength and security.

"It is not every day that we get together to save more than 30,000 jobs, \$3 billion in annual economic impact and come out on top against the Pentagon," Rell said.

The governor reiterated her call for the creation of more jobs and further diversification of the state's economy to prevent future economic disruption in the event another round of base closures were initiated that targeted the sub base.

Rell recently appointed a commission that will work to further diversify southeastern Connecticut's economy. The newly formed panel is headed by Dana Cosgrove, a former U.S. Navy deputy regional commander and federal security chief at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks. Rell said Cosgrove will collaborate with municipal officials, business leaders, state agencies and local chambers of

commerce on economic diversification efforts for this region's \$10 billion economy.

Markowicz and others have also called for a broadening of the Groton base's military role, saying that if the base were to become a broader naval installation that handles more than submarines, it could help forestall any future attempts to shut it down. That expanded mission could include new Navy vessels, such as its next-generation littoral combat ship, as well as possibly housing some of the larger U.S. Coast Guard cutters there.

"We know what we have to do," said Rell. "Our challenge is to protect those jobs — and build the ones that come next."

### **Oops -- Brown voted wrong on defense jobs**

Friday, October 28, 2005

Cleveland Plain Dealer (Cleveland, OH)

Sabrina Eaton

October 28, 2005

-- Rep. Sherrod Brown got his signals scrambled during a vote Thursday on whether to approve a military base realignment plan that will bring eagerly anticipated jobs to Cleveland.

The Avon Democrat mistakenly voted against the plan and realized his blunder too late to change his ballot.

"Basically, he voted in error," said Brown's spokeswoman, Joanna Kuebler.

He later submitted paperwork so that the Congressional Record will reflect his true support for the package that expands Cleveland's Defense Finance and Accounting Service office while shutting dozens of facilities around the country. "It is not uncommon for members of Congress to correct the record," Kuebler said.

The package passed the House of Representatives by a 324-85 vote. Members of Congress whose districts will lose bases argued the cuts send the wrong message to U.S. troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The vote was the last obstacle to implementing a base-closing package with an estimated yearly taxpayer savings of \$4.2 billion. Changes will be made over six years.

Cleveland Democrats Stephanie Tubbs Jones and Dennis Kucinich, along with GOP Rep. Steve LaTourette of Concord Township, argued in favor of accepting the report. They praised the commission that formulated it for rejecting an early Pentagon recommendation to eliminate more than 1,000 DFAS jobs in Cleveland. It instead sent the city more jobs.

"Cleveland didn't win because Cleveland had more political muscle," LaTourette said. "Cleveland won because of the facts."

DFAS officials have said they expect their Cleveland site will eventually employ at least 1,700 people. Thursday's legislative action frees LaTourette and other Cleveland civic leaders to negotiate for more jobs with DFAS.

If DFAS wants to transfer more employees to Cleveland than its current building can hold, the city is prepared to facilitate construction of a building to the agency's specifications, said Carol Caruso of the Greater Cleveland Partnership.

The group is discussing a site on the east bank of the Flats with Developers Diversified's Scott Wolstein, Caruso said. She said the deal would give DFAS a 20-year lease that is cheaper than its current rent.

### **'BRAC is over' Cramer says arsenal, city can get ready after rejection effort fails in House vote**

Huntsville Times (Huntsville, AL)  
October 28, 2005  
Shelby G. Spires

A vote to stop Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations failed in the U.S. House of Representatives Thursday, making elected officials confident that BRAC changes

will bring almost 5,000 jobs to Huntsville over the next three years.

U.S. Rep. Bud Cramer, D-Huntsville, said Redstone and Huntsville can start preparing to gain the military work the BRAC panel recommended shifting here during its August deliberations.

"We can pretty much declare this done," Cramer said. "BRAC is over, and efforts to (cancel) it are dead. The major components slated to come to Huntsville are coming."

The next step could be a full vote of Congress on the bill, but that's not likely to happen, Cramer said. If no action is taken before Congress goes on break in December then the BRAC bill becomes law.

By law, separate votes in both the House and Senate to reject the base closing plan are required to stop it. The House defeat of moves to reject the BRAC process puts an end to this round of BRAC, Cramer said. "There's nothing (pending) in the U.S. Senate now, and they are not likely to take it up," he said.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Mobile, confirmed there was no move in the Senate to change BRAC.

"It's not completely over, but there's no indication that things will change," Sessions said in a telephone interview Thursday. "I'm very confident that what is coming to Redstone Arsenal will be placed there, and this process is pretty much wrapped up."

On a 324-85 vote, House lawmakers rejected a resolution that was put forward by U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., Thursday morning that would cancel the BRAC round.

In August, the BRAC panel voted to relocate the Army Materiel Command, the bulk of the Missile Defense Agency and the headquarters of the Army Space & Missile Defense Command from the Washington, D.C., area to Huntsville.

Sessions said the number of jobs estimated to come to North Alabama has fluctuated over the past few months since the Pentagon released BRAC recommendations in May.

"That figure is at least 4,733 at present," Sessions said.

Even that estimate could grow, Cramer said. "In the beginning we were very conservative about the number of jobs that were slated to come because we didn't want to promise something that" wasn't scheduled to be located in Huntsville, he said. "We've seen that number grow and now a conservative estimate is about 4,800 personnel, and even that number might grow in the coming weeks."

Some will leave

That 4,800 jobs number is a net gain that factors in about 1,000 Redstone jobs that would go elsewhere under the BRAC recommendation.

Units slated to leave Redstone include the U.S. Army Munitions, Ordnance and Electronics School, to be consolidated with schools at Fort Lee, Va.; a joint robotics program to be consolidated with work performed at Detroit Arsenal, Warren, Mich.; information systems development to be consolidated with work done at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.; and supply work performed for multiple missile and aviation programs to be moved to Columbus, Ohio, and Fort Belvoir, Va.

Cramer cautioned in an interview with The Times Thursday that much work is needed to "prepare a place for the people slated to come here. I've been told by defense officials that before they can even think about beginning the relocation efforts people have to have a place to work on the arsenal," Cramer said.

"We want to get them here as soon as possible, but there's work to be done in military construction budgets and infrastructure work in Huntsville," Cramer said.

Construction money

Sessions said Alabama lawmakers would have to find \$419 million in military construction money over the next few years to build 1.9 million square feet of office and research space on Redstone to house the new units.

"We want to push to get this done as soon as possible, but it will take more than three years to get everything completed," Sessions said.

By law, the Pentagon has until 2011 to complete all moves laid out in the BRAC proposal.

Until office buildings are constructed on Redstone, an option would be to use leased office space in Huntsville to house defense workers, which more than likely would be cheaper and more secure, Cramer said, than the buildings now occupied in Virginia.

At the top of Cramer's improvement list is the southern bypass, or Patriot Parkway, that would improve access to and around the arsenal, he said. "Sen. (Richard) Shelby (R-Tuscaloosa) and I plan to meet with the state (Department of Transportation) soon and try to work out where we stand with the bypass," Cramer said. "We are going to need that road and don't want there to be bottlenecks going in and out of the arsenal."

The highway would cut across Redstone and has been in the planning stages for several decades. In July, Congress passed a transportation bill that included \$2.4 million for planning and engineering work on the proposed Patriot Parkway.

### **Rep. LaHood's vote fails to stop base closings**

Quad City Times (Quad City, IA)

Ed Felker

October 28, 2005

The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday effectively ushered the 2005 base closing round into law, sealing the fate of an estimated 1,743 Rock Island Arsenal jobs slated to move to other bases.

On a 324-85 vote, lawmakers overwhelmingly rejected a resolution canceling the round, authored by U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Peoria. By law, the closings list could be stopped only if either President George W. Bush or both chambers of Congress rejected the round outright. Bush approved it last month, and the House vote removed the last obstacle to implementation, with no action expected in the Senate.

LaHood had acknowledged that his resolution was unlikely to garner much support, but he pursued it to object to the removal of 15 F-16 fighters from the Springfield-based Illinois Air National Guard 183rd Fighter Wing to Indiana.

He also contended that the closures, especially of National Guard stations, sent the wrong signal to soldiers during wartime. "This is not the way to say to them, 'well done,'" LaHood said.

During a sparsely attended debate on the House floor, opponents of the round complained that the round would not save substantial amounts of money and unfairly treated their local bases.

U.S. Rep. Lane Evans, D-Rock Island, reiterated his position that the Defense Department and the Base Realignment and Closure Commission failed to follow its own criteria in moving Arsenal-based tenants. He also contended that savings will not happen.

"The government will never receive a payback from this move," Rep. Evans said.

The round would yield a net job loss on Arsenal Island of more than 1,300. About 300 jobs will be transferring to the Arsenal from the Atlanta-based 1st U.S. Army and a potential of another 143 jobs could be created through the move of munitions production from two ammunition plants. The biggest loss would come from the transfer of 1,129 Tank-automotive Command jobs to Michigan. The other tenants to move are the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, 301 jobs, the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, up to 181 jobs, and the Installation Management Agency, 133 jobs.

Rep. Evans was joined in his opposition by an unlikely ally: indicted former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, who said he opposed the round over the removal of F-16 fighters from Ellington Field near Houston.

"The recommendations seem to be more based on bean counting than strategic significance," he said.

Iowa U.S. Rep. Jim Nussle, R-Manchester and candidate for governor, voted to cancel the round. He issued a statement in which he expressed "deep disappointment" with the base closure commission's final report, and noted that he and other Iowa and Illinois lawmakers had pleaded in writing with Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey to review the final list.

He, too, argued that the commission did not follow published criteria in considering the Pentagon's proposed closures and realignments.

Nationally, the round will close 22 major bases, realign 33 others and affect hundreds of individual offices and sites. It is to yield an estimated savings of \$35.6 billion over 20 years, according to the base closure commission, though the panel noted that some \$20.5 billion in savings would come from the reassignment of military personnel currently performing work that could be performed by civilians. That fact led some members of the commission, and critics of the process, to challenge the overall savings estimate.

Proponents of the round countered that the BRAC commissioners showed their independence by rejecting 13 major base closures and modifying others, and that the process was the only fair approach to needed military streamlining. They also argued that if the current round was rejected, the Pentagon would return with another, potentially broader round.

### **It's official, BRAC cuts now reality**

Quad City Times (Quad City, IA)

Ed Tibbetts

October 28, 2005

The U.S. House of Representatives put the stamp of finality on a massive realignment of Arsenal Island, voting Thursday to uphold a base closing commission's proposal to move three white collar agencies off the island, part of a nationwide plan to close 22 large bases and realign another 33 installations.

The action brings to a close a five-month battle for Arsenal jobs and the beginning of a multi-year process of relocating military missions across the country — at the root of which will be the dislocation of perhaps hundreds of Quad-City families.

"I wish it had gone the other way, but I'm not surprised," Terri Blackburn, vice president of the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 15, said after the vote.

There really was no question the proposal of the nine-member Base Realignment Closing Commission, or BRAC, would be ratified. Still, U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., sponsored a measure to reject the changes, which were forwarded to Congress last month by President Bush. LaHood and others, including U.S. Rep. Lane Evans, D-Ill., argued on the floor to kill the plan.

"The government will never receive a financial payback by this move," Evans said.

Both he and U.S. Rep. Jim Nussle, R-Iowa, voted for LaHood's measure. "I'm disappointed the way the commission arrived at its decision," Nussle said afterward.

The House rejected LaHood's resolution on a 324-85 vote.

The commission, a creation of Congress, voted in late August to ratify much of the Defense Department's plan to realign the Arsenal.

It approved moving the 1,130-person Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, or TACOM, to Detroit Arsenal and Columbus, Ohio, the 301-person Defense Finance and Accounting Service to Indianapolis, and the 130-

person Installation Management Agency northwest regional office to San Antonio, Texas.

It also sanctioned shifting the headquarters of the 1st U.S. Army from Georgia to the Quad-Cities, as well as changes in workload at the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center.

All told, the Quad-City Development Group says there will be 1,602 jobs lost, to be offset by the addition of 542 jobs, meaning a net loss of 1,060 positions. That would leave about 5,400 jobs still on the island.

The Arsenal did win one of the battles in front of the commission. The panel rejected a Pentagon plan to move the 235-person Civilian Human Resource Agency.

Gale Smith, a spokesman for the Arsenal, said Thursday the installation had no comment on the House's vote, but she noted a final decision means it will continue moving ahead with implementation of the changes.

It isn't clear precisely when the moves will begin. Initial estimates showed some people could be moved as early as 2007 and that it could take as long as late 2010 for full implementation. But much of that is preliminary, Smith said.

In TACOM's case, it largely will depend on the construction of a new building at Detroit Arsenal in Warren, Mich., where the bulk of the command's work will go. An initial timeline forecast the move would be phased in over 18 months, though it will depend upon the availability of funds and construction schedules, said Lucija Nickels, program manager for the TACOM-Rock Island base closing office.

Thom Hart, president of the Quad-City Development Group, said the phase-in of the moveout will give it time to try to replace the jobs.

"Obviously, we're looking at opportunities to bring other missions there," he said, but declined to be specific. There has been some discussion that the 1st U.S. Army headquarters could be a

platform for additional work. That mission, according to the initial timeline, would not move here until 2009.

Ever since the Pentagon announced its proposals in May, the lives of hundreds of Arsenal workers have been on hold. Now that the decision appears to be final, the military likely will start answering outstanding questions, such as what kind of job rights employees will have — and what kind of relocation incentives might be offered.

“People are starting to think about what they need to do about their futures,” said Blackburn, who represents TACOM workers. However, she said if the bulk of the move doesn’t happen for another five years “it’s hard to make plans that far out.”

Arsenal backers had argued that the realignment here didn’t make sense because the defense and accounting site on the island ranked higher than others that are being kept open — and gaining jobs — while the millions of dollars it would cost to move TACOM to Detroit would yield no financial payback.

Those points were echoed by several legislators, from both parties, who pleaded their own specific cases Thursday, but it was in vain.

“The recommendations seem to be based much more on bean counting than strategic value,” said U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Texas, the ex-majority leader.

U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii, said the process was transparently political. “This has nothing to do with whether or not there’s some rational process that’s been undertaken and everybody here knows it,” he said.

The commission has defended its work. It says the moves nationwide will mean \$4.2 billion in annual savings. And Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colorado, said, while painful, if there was no base closing process, Congress wouldn’t be able to find the will to rid the country of excess military infrastructure.

Earlier this summer, there was greater sentiment in Congress to oppose the base closings. However, commission decisions to reject Pentagon recommendations and keep some bases open lowered the temperature of the opposition and made passage appear certain.

In addition to the lopsided result in the House, there was no move afoot in the Senate to reject the proposal. All four of the senators representing the Quad-Cities had said they would vote to reject the plan, but with the House’s vote there will be no need.

### **House vote ends latest base closing round**

The Enid News and Eagle (Enid, OK)

Jeff Mullin

October 28, 2005

BRAC 2005 is over.

The latest Base Realignment and Closure round, authorized by Congress in December 2001, officially ended Thursday when the House defeated a measure designed to stop BRAC commission recommendations from becoming law.

House Joint Resolution 65, which would have rejected the entire BRAC report accepted by President Bush and sent to Congress in September, was defeated 324-85. The vote removed the last obstacle to the BRAC recommendations becoming law. The military must begin implementing those recommendations in two years and must complete them in six.

"It felt good today to put the final nail in the BRAC coffin," said 3rd District Rep. Frank Lucas, R-Okla., who voted against the measure. "Residents of Enid and Altus can now know that there is no chance of a reversal of the BRAC Commission's decision to maintain both Vance and Altus Air Force Bases."

"I am relieved. I'm glad," said Mike Cooper, chairman of Vance Development Authority and Oklahoma Strategic Military Planning Commission. "It has been a long time."

Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., a member of Senate Armed Services Committee, said the end of the last effort to overturn BRAC came as no surprise to him.

"I felt very confident," said Inhofe. "I had no doubt about it."

Vance not only will remain open but will grow. The commission approved Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendation to move the undergraduate pilot training mission from Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Ga., and divide it among Vance, Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi and Laughlin Air Force Base near Del Rio, Texas. Vance also will receive some of Moody's Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training and Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals training for pilots and weapons systems officers.

In all, Vance is slated to pick up at least 99 new jobs (93 military and six civilian) along with 13 T-6 and 12 T-38 aircraft.

Vance also has been selected as home of an \$8.7 million Armed Forces Reserve Center. The commission voted to close 53 state National Guard Armories and create seven reserve centers, construction of which is supposed to begin in 2009.

"The community leaders of Altus and Enid and the state and federal leaders should be proud of our years of work on securing our Oklahoma military bases," said Lucas, whose district includes Altus. "Our efforts have paid off."

"The state's military bases are critical players in the Oklahoma economy," said Gov. Brad Henry, "and it's good to know that they have weathered another BRAC review and will continue to contribute thousands of jobs and billions of dollars to the state."

Cooper said he understood the need for a BRAC round but was glad the commission recognized Vance's value to the military by never even considering the base for closure.

"With the new weapons and new methods of fighting and winning wars, if you have too much infrastructure it is like carrying a big anchor on your overall budget," said Cooper. "It is tough to close them, but they had to do it. It is unfortunate to be one of those cities whose base has to close, but this is a good day for us."

Vance was added to the defense department's 1995 BRAC list by the commission but was later removed. That BRAC round revealed several deficiencies local civilian and military leaders rectified, strengthening Vance's position as BRAC 2005 approached. Those efforts, stressed Enid Mayor Ernie Currier, will continue even without the threat of another BRAC round looming.

"I assure you as long as I have anything to say about it, we will try to maintain our relationship at Vance at the highest level," said Currier. "We are strong community partners, and we don't want that to be any other way."

Protecting and enhancing Vance, Cooper said, has been a 15-year effort that is far from over.

"If you really want to continue growth and expansion out there we need to coordinate our efforts to protect and enhance that base," said Cooper. "We can't stop. We have to sit back and assess what our strengths and weaknesses are and how we can move forward."

"To supporters of Vance I say, don't let down," said Inhofe. "Just continue to do the work you've been doing, and I will do my end of it here."

For his part, Lucas doesn't think we will see another BRAC round anytime soon.

"I think we've seen our last BRAC round for about 20 years," Lucas said. "But we will continue our decades-long effort to secure the readiness and military value of our Oklahoma bases."

Inhofe, whose effort to forestall the 2005 BRAC round was defeated by just two votes on the Senate floor, agrees.

"We will win any efforts (of establishing a new BRAC round) in the foreseeable future," he said, "and by foreseeable future, we are talking about a long ways away. We don't have to worry about BRAC anymore."

### **Despite local opposition, House OKs BRAC demands**

The Virginian-Pilot (Hampton Roads, VA)  
Dale Eisman  
October 28, 2005

WASHINGTON — The House overwhelmingly gave its blessing Thursday to the work of the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, putting the full weight of the federal government behind demands that Virginia and the city of Virginia Beach halt development around Oceana Naval Air Station.

The 324-85 vote defeating a "resolution of disapproval" was the final legislative hurdle for the commission's proposal to close 21 major bases nationwide and reshuffle forces at dozens of others.

President Bush already has endorsed BRAC's plan, so action in both houses of Congress would be required to stop it.

All four Hampton Roads representatives — Republicans JoAnn Davis of the 1st District, Thelma Drake of the 2nd District and J. Randy Forbes of the 4th District and Democrat Robert C. Scott of the 3rd District — supported the resolution and were on the losing end of Thursday's vote.

Drake said she had "serious reservations" about how the commission did its work, citing evidence that some recommendations may have been based on "less than accurate" information.

The commission decided that the Navy should move more than 200 fighter aircraft from Oceana to Cecil Field, a base near Jacksonville, Fla., that was closed in 1999, unless state and local governments spend at least \$15 million annually to roll back commercial and residential

development in high-risk "crash zones" near Oceana.

But Jacksonville officials, who had been enthusiastic about the potential move, announced last week that they do not want Cecil Field to reopen after all. Jacksonville also has acknowledged that claims by its representatives that there are no homes or businesses in Cecil Field's crash zones were erroneous.

BRAC Commission Chairman Anthony J. Principi was unavailable for comment Thursday but has repeatedly defended the panel's handling of Oceana. The number of homes in dangerous areas near Cecil Field is a fraction of the total at risk around Oceana, he argued in an essay submitted to several newspapers last week.

With Jacksonville apparently out of the picture, the Navy may have little choice but to retain Oceana as its East Coast master jet base. But service leaders have held open the possibility that they'll seek to build a new base elsewhere along the East Coast and there have been signs that Florida Gov. Jeb Bush may push to reopen the Jacksonville bid.

One opponent of the BRAC recommendations, Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., cited the Oceana-Cecil Field struggle Thursday to buttress his claim that the closing process is flawed.

Had a past commission been blocked from closing the Florida base, Taylor suggested, the Navy would not now be having to consider building a new facility, a potential \$2 billion drain on an already-strained budget.

While Oceana has been the focus of most local attention on the BRAC Commission's decisions, the panel also agreed to close historic Fort Monroe in Hampton. The Army's Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe's principal tenant, will be shifted to Fort Eustis in Newport News.

The commission estimates its full package of closures will save about \$15 billion over 20 years, money the Pentagon hopes to invest in new weapons systems.

But the projected savings are far less than defense officials had hoped for, in large part because the commission rejected several major Pentagon closure plans. And some House members argued Thursday that Congress and the administration shirked their responsibilities by turning key decisions about the military over to the commission.

“I didn’t run for Congress to delegate my responsibility,” Taylor said. “Let’s do our job. Let’s not hide behind some commission.”

“I’m not sure we would get any better results, no matter what process you use,” retorted Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo. He warned that any effort to block the planned closings would simply push the Pentagon and the Bush administration to call for a new commission.

“I don’t think we want to go through another process next year,” Hefley said.

**Sherman Votes 'No' on Base Closings**  
Congressman Opposes Decision to Take Jobs from Naval Base Ventura County  
American Chronicle  
California Political Desk  
October 27, 2005

WASHINGTON - Congressman Brad Sherman voted Thursday against closing and reconfiguring hundreds of military bases and letting the Pentagon shift thousands of jobs from Naval Base Ventura County to the Naval Air Weapons Station at China Lake.

The House cleared the way for the first round of base closings in a decade when it rejected by a vote of 324 to 85 a resolution to disapprove recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

President Bush last month went along with the commission that voted to move the armaments research, development, acquisition, testing and evaluation functions from Point Mugu to the Navy station 150 miles away at China Lake. More than 2,200 military and civilian

government jobs and as many as 3,500 private sector jobs could be affected by the transfer.

"The unfortunate consequence of this decision will be a brain drain," Sherman said. "Most of the civilian workers simply will not move from Ventura County to China Lake. It is a shame that the Pentagon is willing to waste the skills of so many talented people in Ventura County."

Sherman also questioned the estimated savings projected by the Pentagon, and said U.S. military bases in Germany should be closed before shutting or reconfiguring installations critically important to the economies of communities across the United States.

China Lake is located in the district of Congressman Bill Thomas, the influential chairman of the House Ways and Means committee. "Apparently, logic doesn't count when a powerful Republican is involved," Sherman said.

"The commission concluded that skilled technical experts will move from Ventura County to China Lake in the Kern County desert," Sherman said. "Obviously they haven't been to Ventura County or China Lake."

Naval Base Ventura County includes a naval air station, naval air warfare center, naval satellite operations center, and naval surface warfare center. It is credited with generating over 15,000 direct and indirect jobs, and is important to the economy of the entire San Fernando Valley and Ventura County region.

**House vote ends hope of saving BNAS**  
Maine Today (ME)  
Bart Jansen  
October 28, 2005

The U.S. House voted overwhelmingly on Thursday to support the closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station and other bases nationwide, ending any hope of derailing the base-closing process.

The House voted 324-85 not to veto the final report of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Rep. Mike Michaud, D-Maine, joined the majority in supporting the commission's report while Rep. Tom Allen, D-Maine, opposed it.

The vote means the report will become law. No similar resolution is pending in the Senate. President Bush endorsed the list on Sept. 15 and Congress had 45 days to reject it.

In Allen's district in southern Maine, the commission decided to close Brunswick and keep open Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery.

"Closing surplus military infrastructure makes sense, but only if it is done in a proper strategic context and through a rational, deliberative and fair process," Allen said. "The 2005 base closure round does not meet these tests."

In Michaud's district in northern Maine, the commission decided to nearly double the size of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service office in Limestone. Despite strongly disagreeing with the Brunswick decision, Michaud cited the importance of keeping Portsmouth and expanding Limestone.

"This has been a very difficult BRAC round for the state of Maine," Michaud said. "As we approach the end . . . it is important that we remain focused on promoting the best interests of the entire state and that we continue to work as one Maine."

All three decisions about Maine differed from what the Pentagon recommended. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld sought to close Portsmouth and the accounting service, and to reduce Brunswick by moving its surveillance planes to Jacksonville Naval Air Station in Florida.

Overall, the report calls for closing 22 major bases and reducing 33 others. Hundreds of smaller bases will close or shrink. The Pentagon expects to save \$4.2 billion per year from the changes.

Maine stood to lose 7,000 jobs - the second highest number in the country - when Rumsfeld announced his list on May 13. But the independent nine-member commission that reviewed the recommendations decided that Portsmouth's submarine maintenance was too important to lose and that Limestone's work force was valuable enough to expand.

Allen argued that Rumsfeld sought closures before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, then failed to change course in response.

Brunswick's biggest selling point was its status as the last operational military airfield in the Northeast. "Its loss will hamper our capability to perform homeland defense and maritime patrol missions in the region, leaving a vulnerable flank for the entire nation," Allen said.

Portsmouth will keep 4,233 jobs. Limestone's office will grow from 360 jobs to at least 600.

The Senate won't conduct a similar vote, but Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, both R-Maine, have opposed the closure process from the start.

Collins, a member of the Armed Services Committee, said the time has come to plan for redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station, which employs 3,275 workers.

A 13-member Brunswick Local Redevelopment Authority will begin meeting as early as next month to create a zoning plan for the 3,200-acre property. The group will spend 12 to 18 months deciding how best to use the land.

"I continue to believe that this is a flawed and unwise process. I am not optimistic that the process will be halted in any way," Collins said. "At this point, our focus has to be on assisting the people of the Brunswick-Topsham area in coping with what will be a considerable economic effect to the area."

Snowe is pursuing amendments to a pending defense policy bill that would give the base to the community for free and prevent an early

shutdown. The base must be closed within six years, but is not expected to begin transferring equipment and manpower before 2009.

"I hope this is the last BRAC process that we see, because they're arbitrary. No state in the country should have to endure what the people of Maine had to endure," Snowe said.

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Who stood up for the Arsenal?**

Quad-City Times (Quad City, IA)  
October 28, 2005

No last-minute reprieve for the Arsenal. No 11th hour word from the White House sparing the Rock Island Arsenal from the Base Realignment and Closing Commission cuts.

"This is the wrong message to send while we are at war," said Ray LaHood, Illinois' Peoria-based Congressman who cut his political teeth here in the Quad-Cities. His district includes a base in Springfield, Ill., that stands to lose 15 National Guard fighter jets.

It was LaHood who made a last-chance effort to derail the BRAC cuts. He and eight co-sponsors, including Rep. Lane Evans attempted to pass a resolution that would have kept the BRAC recommendations from becoming law. His colleagues wouldn't hear of it. They shut him down with a 324-85 vote

Among those joining LaHood? U.S. Rep. Tom Delay, the former majority leader who was looking after an Air Force base in Texas that's targeted for cuts.

House Speaker Denny Hastert, whose district includes Arsenal workers, declined to vote. House traditions — not rules — allow the speaker to abstain in all but the closest votes.

We'd have liked to have known his vote. The House' action means BRAC's recommendations move on full speed ahead, leaving the Arsenal and our community with a net loss of 1,060 jobs.

Restructuring our military is absolutely essential, not only to save money, but to improve efficiency, readiness and response.

We wish we had the confidence that the rest of the restructuring made more sense than the seemingly arbitrary Arsenal Island shuffling.

### **Additional Notes**

#### **U.S. Rep. Green: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Mark Green (R-Green Bay) issued the following statement Thursday after voting against legislation that would have prevented the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations from taking effect.

"First and foremost, the implementation of these Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommendations will provide badly-needed cost savings to our nation. With the current state of our federal budget, the enormous estimated spending reductions of over \$35 billion achieved through this new BRAC round are necessary to help put our fiscal house in order. These recommendations will also better enable our military services to confront the new threats our nation faces today -- increasing efficiency and effectiveness, and improving our national security.

"That said, I still firmly disagree with some of the specific BRAC recommendations, such as the closure of the 440th Airlift Wing at General Mitchell Field in Milwaukee. The closure of the 440th is the wrong decision, and I have done everything in my power to try and convince the BRAC Commission that keeping the 440th up and running is an important priority. The 1,100 brave men and women of this unit have proven themselves often in recent missions to Honduras, Haiti, Somalia, Rwanda, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and several trips to Iraq. I believe their continued operations would have enhanced the security of our country.

“Today, however, we were faced with an up-or-down vote on the BRAC Commission recommendations as a whole. On balance, I found the recommendations to be worthy of approval, and voted – with some reservations – against the motion to disapprove the final BRAC report.”

### **U.S. Rep. Hulshof: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Kenny Hulshof, R-Mo. (9th CD), issued the following statement:

The following is a statement from Rep. Kenny Hulshof regarding the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) vote in the House:

"In principle, I support the BRAC process as a way to promote efficiency and streamline our nation's military. That being said, I am unconvinced that the BRAC commission's recommendations in their final form will improve our nation's defense capabilities. For these reasons, I have voted to reject the BRAC report.

"I am particularly troubled by the proposal to strip the 15 F-15 fighters from the 131st Fighter Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard. This proposal is detrimental to not only the St. Louis region, but to our nation's overall military readiness. As a result of the BRAC recommendations, our nation could stand to lose some of the most qualified pilots in the Air National Guard.

"The original goal of BRAC was to phase-out unneeded, outdated military infrastructure. Past BRAC rounds have by and large achieved this goal. In contrast, the 2005 BRAC round has provided little in the way of cost savings, mostly because the Pentagon used this opportunity to address objectives unrelated to the stated purpose of the BRAC process. In fact, some of the commission's final recommendations would actually increase costs to taxpayers.

"It has also been noted that the Pentagon used flawed assumptions in calculating the savings achieved by this round of BRAC. When these assumptions are removed, as the Government Accountability Office believes they should be, BRAC saves taxpayers less than the 1995 round, despite impacting more bases.

"Because of these flaws and weaknesses, I cannot support these recommendations, and cast my vote accordingly."

### **U.S. Rep. DeGette: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo. (1st CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) today voted for a proposal that seeks the repeal of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's (BRAC) 2005 base closure recommendations.

These recommendations included the closure of the Denver Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) site despite its receiving the top rating in the Pentagon's evaluation of such facilities.

"Our city has suffered significant losses because of previous base closures. Now, despite a proud history of supporting our nation's armed forces, if these recommendations are carried out the military will have virtually no presence in Denver," said Rep. DeGette. "I support the military's efforts to streamline its infrastructure and reduce its operating budget. The Pentagon, however, rated the Denver site as having the highest military value of any of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service locations. It simply runs counter to the mission of the BRAC Commission to close this site."

The BRAC Commission announced its decision to close the DFAS site at Buckley Annex in Denver on August 25. The facility employs nearly 1,500 people and contributes \$150 million per year to the Denver area economy in

wages, purchases and military expenses.

### **U.S. Rep. Drake: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Thelma D. Drake, R-Va. (2nd CD), issued the following press release:

Today, Rep. Thelma Drake (R-VA) voted to reject the recommendations made by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission. Rep.

Drake voted in favor of H.J. Res. 65, a resolution to disapprove the Commission's recommendations.

"Although I support the core mission of the BRAC Commission and their objective of creating a more efficient military at a greater value to the American taxpayer, I have serious reservations concerning the manner in which this process has been conducted," said Rep. Drake. "In light of evidence that the Commission may have predicated their recommendations upon information that has since been proven to be less than accurate, I cannot, in good conscience, vote to allow the process to move forward."

The motion, sponsored by Rep. Ray LaHood (R-Ill.), was defeated by an 85-325 vote. Having already been approved by the President, the law stipulates that the BRAC commission's recommendations go into effect unless they are rejected by both the House of Representatives and Senate in separate votes.

### **U.S. Rep. Wilson: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Heather Wilson, R-N.M. (1st CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. Heather Wilson today voted for H.J. Res. 65 to disapprove the base closing

recommendations from the Department of Defense.

The measure failed by a vote of 85-324, and this year's round of base closings and realignments efforts will proceed.

"I've opposed BRAC from the beginning. We are at war, we're increasing the Army and Marines by a combined 39,000 over the next three years, and we're bringing 70,000 troops back from European bases. If BRAC had gone forward as initially planned a few years ago, we might be trying to open new bases right now. Now is not the time to eliminate infrastructure," Wilson said.

Wilson is an outspoken opponent of BRAC. The New Mexico delegation worked together with the state to convince the BRAC Commission to keep Cannon Air Force Base open and search for a new mission.

Today's bill would have disapproved the administration's final recommendations to close and realign bases throughout the country. Wilson has opposed BRAC at every step, and has supported efforts to delay the closings and improve the Pentagon's criteria for measuring the value of bases.

### **U.S. Rep. Hefley: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo. (5th CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo., urged colleagues to vote against a resolution on the House floor today that would prevent implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations.

Hefley, who chairs the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee that oversees the BRAC process in the House, helped manage debate on the House floor for H.J. Res. 65, Disapproving the Recommendations of the

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

The bill failed by a vote of 324-85.

Hefley said while he doesn't believe the 2005 BRAC process was perfect, passing the resolution would not guarantee better BRAC results in the future.

"The 2005 BRAC process was perhaps the smoothest and best we've had, but that doesn't mean I want to go through another round of BRAC any time soon," said Hefley. "To those of my colleagues who are still on the fence about today's vote, I would point out that disapproval of the BRAC 2005 recommendations would guarantee yet another round of base closures in the near future. Bases on today's closure list would likely appear again on that future list, and those bases that escaped closure would again be at risk of closure or realignment.

"Whether or not you support any given closure or realignment within BRAC 2005, I hope that all of my colleagues will recognize that the alternative - another round of BRAC in the near future - would be even worse."

According to the commission's report, the recommendations will result in a net savings of \$35.6 billion over 20 years with annual savings of \$4.2 billion.

On Sept. 15 the President agreed with the commission's recommendations and sent them to Congress for review. The House Armed Services Committee considered H.J. Res 65 on Sept. 27 and adversely reported it out of committee by a vote of 43-14 with the recommendation to the House that it not pass the measure.

### **U.S. Rep. Herger: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday** October 27, 2005

Rep. Wally Herger, R-Calif. (2nd CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. Wally Herger (CA-02) today voted in opposition to a House measure to disapprove the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations.

The measure of disapproval failed by a vote of 85-324, thereby in essence approving the recommendations. The House vote finalizes the BRAC process, and makes certain that Beale AFB will remain open through this BRAC round. The congressman had the following reaction to today's development:

"I am enormously pleased that Beale Air Force Base will remain open and continue its critical reconnaissance mission," Herger said. "Today's House vote completes the BRAC process, and confirms that Beale will continue to play a vital role in our national defense and be a critical economic presence in Northern California."

Beale is the largest employer north of Sacramento to the Oregon border. Employment is forecasted to exceed 5,000 as the Global Hawk mission continues to grow in the coming years. The economic impact for the neighboring eight counties exceeds \$700 million.

Herger added, "I want to again thank the entire SAVE BEALE team for working diligently in support of our base. Their incredibly hard work helped promote Beale's high military value, which the Department of Defense, the BRAC Commission, the president, and Congress repeatedly acknowledged. The SAVE BEALE team can now celebrate this tremendous victory," concluded Herger.

### **U.S. Rep. Larson: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday** October 27, 2005

Rep. John B. Larson, D-Conn. (1st CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. John B. Larson (CT-01) voted Thursday for a joint resolution rejecting the 2005 round of base closures and realignments, saying that "this

is the wrong process at the wrong time for our nation." The resolution was defeated 85 to 324.

Larson has maintained since 2002, when plans for a 2005 round were announced, that major changes in the nation's military infrastructure should not be undertaken during an extended period of war for an all-volunteer military that has repeatedly fallen short of its recruitment goals. Since then, Larson has consistently voted to repeal or delay further restructuring. He also has criticized the restructuring as backward, occurring before the completion of the Quadrennial Defense Review that assesses national threats and the force structure needed to meet them for the next two decades.

While Larson said he was proud that Connecticut's delegation succeeded in saving Sub Base New London from the list, Larson also objected to final recommendations that fell disproportionately on Air Force National Guards excluded from the Department of Defense's assessments.

The BRAC Commission upheld the removal of the Connecticut's Air Force National Guard's A-10 flying mission. Larson joined Connecticut Governor Rell, Attorney General Blumenthal and Senators Dodd and Lieberman in filing suit to prevent the removal of the 103rd Fighter Wing. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals vacated a federal court restraining order against Bradley's inclusion in the final recommendations that went to President George W. Bush on Sept. 8. However, the appeals court upheld the right to sue if the transfer of the planes went through. Congress has 45 days to approve or reject the recommendations.

Larson released the following statement:

"Rather than conducting an inclusive process - as in the case of the Army National Guard recommendations - the Pentagon chose to craft their Air Force proposal by shutting out the very people that both the law and common sense dictate need to be included in changes to state Guard units.

"As a result the final Air Force recommendations disproportionately impact the Air National Guard, with 37 of the final 42 Air Force recommendations making changes to Air Guard units in states across the nation. Governors and Adjutants General widely opposed this plan, citing the impact on recruiting and retention of Guard members, lack of consultation, and reduced availability of personnel for vital state emergency response and homeland security functions. Although the Commission ultimately approved a scaled down version of the Pentagon's Air National Guard plan crafted in the final days of their work, the final BRAC report states that the lack of coordination between the Pentagon, Governors and Adjutants General 'unnecessarily cost the Commission additional time and resources and damaged the previously exemplary relationship between the Air National Guard and the Air Force.'

"This misguided recommendation hits home in my district and state, where the 103rd Fighter Wing at Bradley Air National Guard base is slated to lose their A-10 Warthogs - leaving Connecticut as the only state in the nation without an air national guard flying mission. In presenting our case to the Commission, our message was simple: the Pentagon not only used flawed data that did not take into account many of the unique capabilities of Bradley, but failed to consult our Governor in major changes to our state's militia. While Adjutant General Thaddeus Martin, the staff of the 103rd and the state delegation made a strong case for Bradley, the base was unfortunately included in the final realignment plan. The men and women of the 'Flying Yankees,' and indeed all the members of the Air National Guard, deserve better than an ad-hoc transformation plan that has the potential to seriously impact the future of these citizen soldiers and their mission.

"We are forced to take legal action because the law is simple and clear: the Bradley A-10s cannot be removed without the consent of our Governor. Regardless of the result of today's vote, Connecticut has the law on its side and I am confident that we will secure the future of the 'Flying Yankees.'

"One of our most important duties is to provide for the defense of our nation. We should not be closing and realigning our bases at a time when our nation is engaged in the Middle East and faces unprecedented threats from abroad. Rejecting BRAC 2005 is simply the right thing to do for our men and women in uniform the security of our nation, and for the future of our Air National Guard."

### **U.S. Rep. Herseith: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Stephanie Herseith, D-S.D. (at-large), issued the following press release:

Rep. Stephanie Herseith today voted against H.J.Res 65, a resolution to reject the entire set of recommendations by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), including their recommendation to keep Ellsworth Air Force Base open.

The resolution failed.

Herseith said, "While I still have concerns about the BRAC process, particularly during a time of war, I am pleased that this resolution failed. This is one more step in ensuring that the Pentagon's misguided decision to close Ellsworth Air Force Base is indeed overturned. This victory was a result of determined, bipartisan teamwork from folks across South Dakota, and we should all be proud of our work to ensure that Ellsworth is kept open for generations to come."

Herseith has been working to encourage new missions at Ellsworth, including a military financial services operation that would bring an additional 700 jobs to the Base.

### **U.S. Rep. Lucas: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Frank Lucas, R-Okla. (3rd CD), issued the following press release:

U.S. Third District Rep. Frank Lucas voted today against a measure designed to stop the Base Realignment and Closure decision from becoming law, and declared the process officially completed.

"It felt good today to put the final nail in the BRAC coffin," Lucas said. "Residents of Enid and Altus can now know that there is no chance of a reversal of the BRAC Commission's decision to maintain both Vance and Altus Air Force Bases."

In May, the Department of Defense announced its recommendations to close or realign some installations in order to reduce overhead and match infrastructure with future military needs. The BRAC Commission approved 86 percent of these recommendations, and in September, President Bush approved the commission's recommendations and forwarded them to Congress for review.

"When the Defense Department announced that our bases weren't on the BRAC list, the champagne corks were popping in Enid and Altus. When the BRAC Commission agreed to keep our bases off the list, we breathed another sigh of relief. But this vote today signifies the end of the road for the BRAC process. Finally, after years of preparations, exhortations, and appropriations, this process is finally over."

Both Altus Air Force Base and Vance Air Force Base in Enid emerged from the scrutiny of the BRAC process unscathed. Vance Air Force Base will expand its pilot training mission, resulting in an additional 99 civilian and military jobs and an additional 25 military aircraft for the base. Altus Air Force Base will not lose a single civilian job or a single plane, and all of Altus' major base missions remain.

"The community leaders of Altus and Enid and the state and federal leaders should all be proud of our years of work on securing our Oklahoma military bases," Lucas said. "Our efforts have paid off."

The bill that failed today, H.J.Res. 65, would have rejected the BRAC report in its entirety. It failed today by a vote of 85 - 324. Congress had a 45-day deadline to enact legislation disapproving the report to stop it from becoming law.

Lucas believes this BRAC round will be the last for some time.

"I think we've seen our last BRAC round for about 20 years," Lucas said. "But we will continue our decades-long efforts to secure the readiness and military value of our Oklahoma bases."

### **U.S. Rep. LaTourette: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

Rep. Steven C. LaTourette, R-Ohio (14th CD), issued the following press release:

Rep. Steven C. LaTourette (R-Concord Township) today opposed a measure in the House of Representatives intended to overturn all Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendations. The resolution of disapproval, H.J.Res. 65, failed by a vote of 85-324 with one voting present, meaning all the BRAC recommendations will go forward, including the recommendation to keep the Cleveland Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) office open.

LaTourette spoke on the House Floor today about the group effort it took to save Cleveland DFAS, and cited working with Reps. Kucinich and Tubbs Jones, Cleveland Mayor Jane Campbell, and the business and labor communities. All came together to save DFAS, he said.

"Cleveland didn't win because Cleveland had more political muscle. Cleveland won on the facts," LaTourette said on the House Floor.

The Department of Defense (DoD) wanted to close down Cleveland DFAS office, where the

average salary is \$54,000. LaTourette's staff conducted an exhaustive study of more than 5,000 pages of internal DoD documents and was able to find many flaws that landed Cleveland on the closure list. Those flaws included overstating Cleveland's operating costs by up to 85 percent and penalizing the Celebrezze Federal Building for not meeting DoD anti-terror standards years before they take effect. It would have cost \$29 million to close the office.

LaTourette thanked the BRAC Commission for not just looking at numbers, but also the human cost of closing the Cleveland DFAS office, which has a highly skilled and effective workforce. LaTourette said he has been contacted by many families who work at DFAS and are thrilled they won't have to move.

"One constituent said his sons were elated they didn't have to move and change schools since they had just started junior high and high school. A grandmother thanked me for keeping her grandchildren close by," he said. "Saving DFAS took a lot work, but it's been an incredibly rewarding process."

LaTourette said today's vote will free him to discuss the future transformation of all DFAS offices with the head of DFAS, Zack Gaddy, who has not been at liberty to discuss the issue while BRAC was pending before Congress. One issue LaTourette will discuss is the possibility of a new building for DFAS Cleveland to accommodate more workers. LaTourette today renewed his request for a meeting.

"I think if you look at the existing office space available at other DFAS facilities and the cost to expand or retrofit those buildings, it makes sense to look to Cleveland as a place for even more job growth," LaTourette said. "We had our first taste of victory in August when the BRAC Commission voted to keep Cleveland open. Now we can crack out the champagne because Congress has made it official."

### **U.S. Rep. Hutchinson: Statement on BRAC Vote in House Thursday**

October 27, 2005

The office of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, issued the following press release:

Following a request made by Texas' senior sen., Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), General Peter Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the Army, has agreed to visit Red River Army Depot in Texarkana. Sen.

Hutchison made the request in an effort show what a great workforce we have at Red River. The date of the visit has yet to be finalized.

"I am pleased General Schoomaker has agreed to visit Red River Army Depot," said Sen. Hutchison, who led the effort to defend and, ultimately, save Red River from closure during the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. "Now that BRAC is behind us, we must begin to look toward the future and improve Red River. General Schoomaker is taking a personal interest in possible infrastructure improvements that would enhance Red River's ability to modernize and grow into an elite 21st Century depot facility."

The visit was secured by Sen. Hutchison during a recent meeting with General Schoomaker at the Pentagon. Sen. Hutchison hopes to accompany the general on his visit to the base. During the BRAC process, Sen. Hutchison worked with Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) and Congressman Ralph Hall (R-TX) to encourage BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi to visit Red River - a turning point that undoubtedly contributed to the unanimous Commission vote to keep Red River open.

"I look forward to General Schoomaker seeing first hand the critical work conducted at Red River and meet the dedicated and skilled workers who proudly serve our nation," Sen. Hutchison said. "Red River is a vital component of our nation's military and makes an incredible contribution to the War on Terror."