

# NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO

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July 5, 2005



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

Dear Chairman Principi:

While it was certainly disappointing to learn of the Pentagon's recommendation to close Fort Monmouth as part of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Plan, I have been encouraged with the commitment you and the other BRAC Commissioners have displayed in ensuring that the final decisions made in this regard are best for the future military capabilities of the United States Armed Services, as well as for the communities most directly affected by the closings and realignments as they occur.

As a member of the Governor's Commission to Support and Enhance New Jersey's Military and Coast Guard Installations, I have had the opportunity to learn firsthand over the past 14 months about the very critical role Fort Monmouth plays in the support of our troops serving in conflicts overseas. The military value of this installation is second to none, and its proximity to Lakehurst Naval Base, McGuire Air Force Base and Fort Dix create an ideal environment to take advantage of shared service opportunities. Given these facts, it is difficult to understand the Pentagon's decision in this regard.

I am additionally concerned about the impact the closure of Fort Monmouth will have on New Jersey's workforce. With more than 5,000 civilian workers at this facility, and an additional 22,000 supported by Base operations statewide, the devastating effects of closing Fort Monmouth are clear. Furthermore, numerous studies have been conducted on this matter and have found that Fort Monmouth provides more than \$3 billion to the State's economy. While the real consequences of this decision may be unintended, they must be considered by yourself and your colleagues on the BRAC Commission.

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO is committed to using all of our available resources to protect the jobs of our members currently employed at Fort Monmouth while simultaneously partnering with the State of New Jersey to help the Department of Defense realize significant cost savings in the operations of this facility. We look forward to developing new, and building upon existing, relationships in efforts to bring higher education and workforce development programs to these workers ensuring that they continue to be the most highly skilled in the nation.

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As Commission members continue to consider the fate of Fort Monmouth, I hope that you will keep the above concerns in mind and react accordingly. If I can be of any additional assistance, or provide further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlie".

Charles Wowkanech  
President

CW:tec

c: Honorable James H. Bilbray  
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General James T. Hill (USA, Ret)  
General Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton (USAF, Ret)  
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