

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2005

BRAC Commission

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Received

Mr. Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

We write to thank you and Commission members for listening to our team's presentation at the New England BRAC Hearings held in Boston, MA on July 6, 2005. The State's presentation demonstrated that Rhode Island is a vested partner with all military service branches located in our State. The Rhode Island delegation appreciates that the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) recognized the military value of its assets located in Rhode Island (both the Navy and various National Guard units) in its original BRAC list released on May 13, 2005. We support that original 5/13/2005 BRAC list, which contributed to a net gain for Rhode Island.

As demonstrated through our July 6 presentation, Naval Station Newport and its strategic educational and R&D Commands provide a unique center of excellence in sea systems technology and senior officer training, with access to the finest higher education and research facilities located in New England. The Naval War College provides joint professional military education (JPME) and an excellent selection of regional colleges and universities provides either pre-requisite or elective course work to complement the JPME curriculum.

The Rhode Island delegation supports the continued operation of the Naval Post Graduate School as recommended by the Pentagon in its 5/13/2005 list. We consider the Naval Post Graduate School, the Naval Academy and the Naval War College as the three pillars of the Navy's educational establishment. Therefore, we stand ready to help preserve this critical pillar of the Navy's educational establishment should other factors prevent its continued operation in its current location.

In order to preserve the current naval education structure, the BRAC Commission could consider repositioning NPS to serve its educational mission jointly and seamlessly with the Naval War College as follows:

- Select curriculum could be combined with and offered through NWC utilizing existing resources/facilities, and available distance/distributed learning platform.

- A portion of its curriculum could be out sourced to existing institutions of higher learning with whom the Navy already has an established relationship
- The availability of existing Federal laboratories and research facilities in the region (e.g., NUWC) in addition to the university network, would supplement the JPME course offerings, and allow research projects to continue.

The state has reviewed the data sets hosted on the DoD BRAC website, and Naval Station Newport has the physical capacity to accommodate additional educational commands. A realignment of the Navy's educational establishment along the lines outlined above would require a substantial period of time to implement. It is believed, however, that the foregoing provides a reasonable framework in which to approach such a prospective realignment, capture operating cost savings, while improving the military value through delivery of JPME services within the Navy. The State of Rhode Island is willing to assist the BRAC Commission and the US Navy achieve these goals.

Rhode Island is proud to be the home of such significant military facilities. We have worked hard to lower base operating costs – providing the Navy with significant savings in electricity and waste removal costs and water rate structures. In addition, the Rhode Island business community, under the leadership of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, created its own special program called “Rhode Island Salutes” to show support for the many military personnel and their families stationed in Rhode Island. Rhode Island Salutes consists of over 250 area businesses with a goal of 1,000 by year's end. The program provides cost savings through direct reductions at restaurants, theaters and many other retail services utilized by military personnel and their families. We will continue to work hard to ensure that Navy operations are cost efficient and military personnel are welcomed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



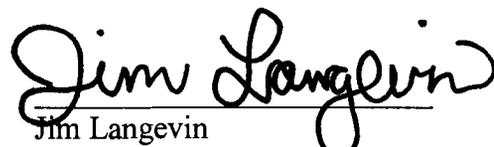
Jack Reed
United States Senator



Lincoln Chafee
United States Senator



Patrick Kennedy
Member of Congress



Jim Langevin
Member of Congress