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DCN 4672

BRAC Commission

JUL 15 2005

Received



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Date: **7/14/05**

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515-4329

July 14, 2005

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
 2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
 Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi and Commissioners,

I am writing you to express my support for the proposal, included in the Secretary of Defense's 2005 Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) recommendations, to realign the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Denver, located in Colorado's First Congressional District, which I am honored to have the opportunity to represent in Congress. The Secretary and the Department of Defense (DOD) have conducted a rigorous and thoughtful analysis to derive their recommendation regarding the realignment of the DFAS Denver facility, and it is my sincere hope that the Commission seriously considers their guidance.

As you are aware, DFAS Denver, housed in the Buckley Air Force Annex on the former Lowry Air Force Base, maintains the largest pay system in the world, paying 2.2 million military members and 295,000 DOD civilians. Since its activation in 1991, DFAS Denver has become one of the largest DFAS locations in the country, employing nearly 2,700 military and civilian employees, overseeing five field sites and performing centralized administrative, accounting and payroll services for the DOD agencies. DFAS Denver has become a model for other DFAS facilities and is therefore an ideal site to manage the proposed consolidation of DFAS' accounting and administrative services.

In addition to its proven ability to manage administrative and payroll services for the DOD, DFAS Denver is uniquely positioned as it relates to the Military Value criteria established by 2005 BRAC Selection Criteria. In fact, the Military Value analysis conducted by the DOD ranked the Buckley Air Force Base Annex third of the 26 DFAS locations. As you know, the 600,000 square foot Buckley Annex is located on 73 acres of land owned by the DOD. Currently, the Annex is not fully occupied with approximately 30,000 – 40,000 square feet vacant, which does not account for the space that is expected to come available when the Air Reserve Personnel Center, which is also currently located at the Buckley Annex, moves to the Randolph Air Force Base in Texas.

DFAS Denver not only provides an invaluable service to our country's servicemen, but also provides a great economic benefit to the city of Denver and its surrounding suburbs. DFAS is a significant employer in Denver and provides an annual economic benefit of nearly \$150 million in wages, purchasing and military costs. The jobs and commerce associated with DFAS' presence in Denver are especially important now, when the city's economic recovery is in its nascent stage. While it has improved, Denver's unemployment rate, as of May 2005, was 5.7% compared to the national average of 5.3% for the same period.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to voice my support for the Secretary of Defense's recommendation to the BRAC Commission to realign DFAS Denver. I look forward to hearing from you and welcome any questions from any members of the Commission.

Sincerely,

 Diana DeGette
 Member of Congress