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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives**

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RECYCLED PAPER

Commissioner Anthony Principi
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark St, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Commissioner Principi:

Some of my constituents have contacted me to express their concern about additional clarification that may be warranted in one of the Commission's recommendations. The recommendation in question is #146, "Joint Basing." This recommendation includes formation of Joint Base Lewis McChord from the distinct bases of Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base.

First, let me say that I strongly endorse this recommendation. I expect to see it deliver real value for the Department of Defense as it is implemented. In fact, the area of concern raised by constituents relates exactly to clarifying the commission's intent regarding implementation. In the Commission's deliberations of this recommendation, you included in the record the following statement:

"And further, as pertains to the entire joint basing recommendation, the Commission states that manpower savings shall not be directed, as they are in the DOD proposal, but must be derived from standard manpower and functional analysis studies and cooperative joint determinations between the affected installations. Moreover, the Department of Defense must provide DOD-wide standards for delivery of services and common definitions for those services before installation management functions are relocated from the losing activities."

I applaud the Commission in recognizing that the implementation of joint bases should not follow a "cookie cutter" approach in determining exactly what functions to make joint at each site and what the expected personnel savings would be. The sense of the Commission on this matter was included in the section of Volume 1 of the Commission's report, Recommendation #146 labeled "Findings". However, similar wording did not appear in the section of Recommendation #146 labeled "Recommendation," nor does it appear in the text of the recommended legislation included in Appendix Q of the Commission's report. This appears to be causing some confusion and difference of interpretation among those who read it.

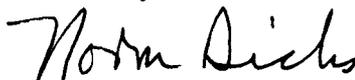
In contrast, in its hearings the Commission also developed clarification of its intent concerning the implementation of the realignment of medical facilities at McChord AFB

(Recommendation #171) by including specific wording in the recommendation itself. That is, the wording in the proposed bill language of Appendix Q includes the Commission's intent that the "medical functions will be reorganized and relocated as directed by the Commander, Madigan Army Medical Center." Given that no corresponding wording about implementation appears in the bill language for Recommendation #146, some are concerned that the Commission's intent could be interpreted to be to revert to the "formulaic" approach that was imbedded in the recommendation from the Secretary of Defense.

In light of the importance of properly implementing the Commission's recommendations, I am asking that the Commission review this matter and consider how best to document and clarify its intent so that there is no confusion about how the Department of Defense is to proceed in determining the functions and numbers of jobs impacted in implementing this recommendation. I believe that such clarification will help in moving forward on all of the actions included in Recommendation #146.

In closing, I want to thank you, the entire Commission, and your staff for having done a superb job on an extremely difficult task. Thank you also for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Norm Dicks