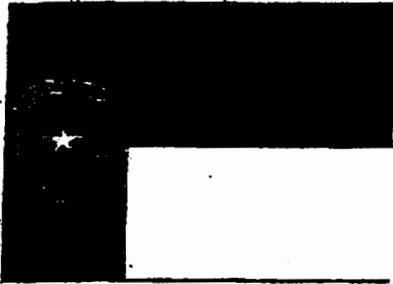


Executive Correspondence
DCN 5773



United States Senator Elizabeth Dole

United States Senate • Washington, DC 20510
202.224.6342 phone • 202.224.1100 fax

FAX COVER SHEET

TO: CHAIRMAN PRINCIPAL

ORGANIZATION: _____

FAX: 703 699 2735

FROM: SENATOR DOLE

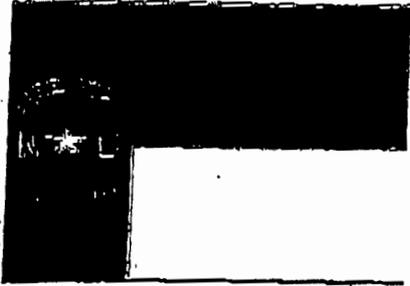
DATE: JULY 29, 2005

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MESSAGE: IT WAS A PLEASURE SPEAKING WITH
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NOV 15 2005

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
 ARMED SERVICES
 BANKING, HOUSING, AND
 URBAN AFFAIRS
 SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

July 29, 2005

Dear Chairman Principi:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about the important BRAC issues in North Carolina. I am writing to follow up on our conversation. In my role as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have been extremely supportive of the Department of Defense's efforts to increase efficiency, streamline operations and promote jointness. As your Commission makes its final site visits and holds its last hearings, I hope the Commission will closely consider a number of key points about the critical value North Carolina bases offer to our national security.

Earlier this week, joined by fellow members of the North Carolina delegation, I wrote to you outlining our concerns about the Department of Defense's BRAC recommendation to relocate the C-130 aircraft of the 43rd Air Lift Wing at Pope Air Force Base. We are troubled about the ability of the Army Forces at Fort Bragg to be airlifted in a timely manner and about the costs that the Army would incur to operate Pope Air Force Base. We also highlighted the irreplaceable close working relationships forged in joint training, and the critical role the 43rd Airlift Wing plays in the rapid deployment and training of the XVIII Airborne Corps. I strongly believe the most prudent step is to establish a joint base with Pope and Bragg to maintain and enhance our premier power projection force.

As I mentioned yesterday, I also have concerns about the Department of Defense's recommendation to close the Army Research Office in Durham. The Army Research Office (ARO) has built strong relationships with Research Triangle Park, which is the largest research park in the world, housing over 40,000 scientific, engineering and technical employees. Likewise, the ARO also built strong ties with Duke University, the University of North Carolina and North Carolina State University. In fact, ARO program managers are also professors at the universities, allowing a flow of ideas from the theoretical to the practical arena, which is a key contributor to the success of the research office. Additionally, the value added to the ARO by the universities and Research Triangle Park can not be replicated within the constraints of the ARO's budget alone.

I understand the Department of Defense wants to co-locate the service branch's research offices in Washington D.C.; however, the Army already has a Washington office which serves as liaison to the other services. Relocating the Durham office will result in a loss of superb intellectual capital and resources with nothing gained.

Finally, I have watched with keen interest the Commission's deliberations on Naval Air Station Oceana, and I am aware of the enormous encroachment issues that the

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base is facing there. As you know, North Carolina prides itself on being a military-friendly state, and we welcome any expansion of our military community. With that said, I want to assure you that Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point has the capacity and community desire to absorb at least four more squadrons, in addition to the two squadrons already scheduled to move to Cherry Point in 2007, in order to relieve pressure from Oceana. Moving some squadrons to Cherry Point will not only reduce congestion at Oceana, but would also position these squadrons only a couple minutes flight away for training ranges and aircraft carriers.

Thank you for the time and effort you are devoting to consideration of these important issues. I applaud your dedication to stationing our forces to best serve our strategic national security needs.

With warmest best wishes,



Elizabeth Dole
United States Senator

Cc: Mr. James H. Bilbray
Mr. Philip Coyle
Admiral Harold W. Gehman Jr., USN (Ret.)
Mr. James V. Hansen
General James T. Hill, USA (Ret.)
General Lloyd W. Newton, USAF (Ret.)
Mr. Samuel K. Skinner
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