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10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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

July 21, 2005

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

Dear Chairman Principi:

I write today regarding the BRAC process in the northern Virginia area. My Virginia colleagues Representatives Tom Davis and Jim Moran and Senators John Warner and George Allen testified before the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) on July 7 and raised some important concerns which I urge the commission to consider.

I also want to emphasize a couple of points as the commission deliberates the BRAC recommendations by the secretary of Defense for several facilities in northern Virginia targeted for BRAC closure and realignment. I understand the issue of safety and security of federal facilities has been weighed as part of the BRAC decision-making process. Clearly, workplace safety is critical, and I would never encourage actions which would place federal workers in this area – many of whom are my constituents – in harm's way. But I would hope that safety and security concerns could be addressed in a way that could continue to allow the close proximity of DoD facilities in the region to other federal facilities. With the seat of the federal government located in this region, federal operations here span across many departments, and their locations near one another facilitate federal employees interacting on a daily basis with their counterparts in other agencies. I am concerned that relocating certain DoD facilities could have a negative impact on efficiencies of government operations.

When changes are proposed in federal policy such as the BRAC process, I have always believed that the issue of fairness must be considered because there is a human component involved – the federal employees who will be affected by any closure or relocation of a Department of Defense (DoD) facility. I understand that a large majority of DoD employees have said they will not relocate should their agency move. That is understandable; employees and their families have roots in their communities. I am concerned that moving agencies identified by DoD in the BRAC recommendations from northern Virginia could therefore create a “brain drain” within the DoD at a critical time when we fight the war on terror.

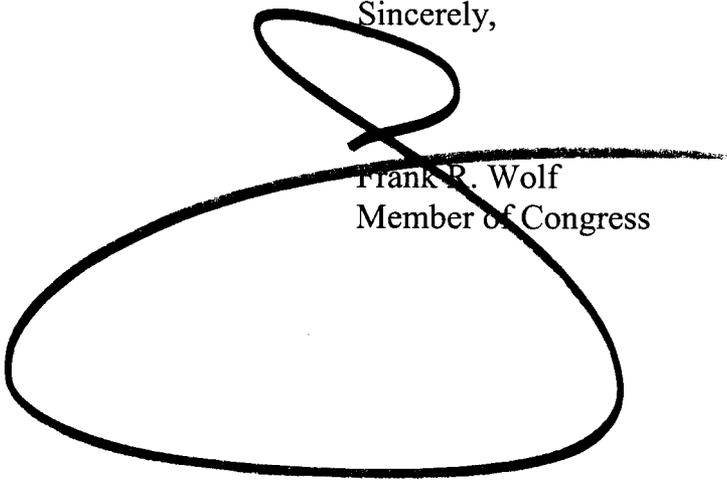
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An important point to consider, too, is that the northern Virginia area has a highly skilled, highly qualified workforce that cannot be easily replicated in other parts of the country. Should the BRAC recommendations be approved for northern Virginia sites, it will not be a simple matter of replacing employees. Their specialized experience and educational backgrounds would take years to develop in new employees. With the current backlog in processing security clearances, there is growing concern, too, that should the employee attrition rate be as high as DoD predicts, several agencies could be without employees for quite some time.

I appreciate the work the commission has before it, and thank you for your consideration of my views.

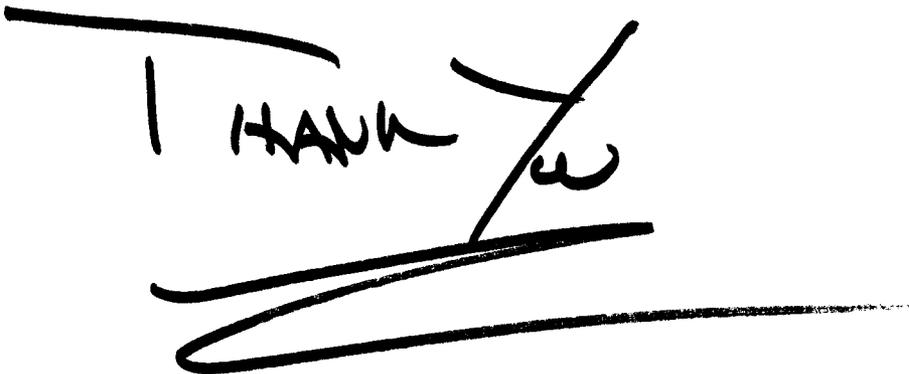
Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

FRW:jtg



I THANK YOU