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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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BRAC Commission

AUG 23 2005

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To: Chairman Anthony Principi	From: Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
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August 22, 2005

Chairman Anthony Principi
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As the BRAC Commission prepares to make final recommendations on installation closures and realignments, we want to make sure you are fully aware of the sincerity and strength of Louisiana's commitment to build and finance a long-planned, new, state-of-the-art complex called Federal City at the Naval Support Activity (NSA) New Orleans.

We know that Senator Mary Landrieu has spoken to you briefly about our exciting Federal City plan. We also hope that the BRAC commissioners and Commission staff who have visited New Orleans and attended the BRAC Commission Regional hearing in Louisiana have given you some feedback on our proposal. We are absolutely convinced that the Federal City plan provides higher military value and is more transformational and saves \$230 million more than the DOD recommended plan that would close NSA New Orleans.

In case there is any concern about the State of Louisiana's ability to develop and finance the proposed Federal City complex, let us give you the following information. About six years ago the State of Louisiana spent \$61 million to construct a four-building headquarters complex for the Navy's SPAWAR Systems Center New Orleans. We lease the buildings to the Navy for a dollar a year and also manage the maintenance and force protection/security of this self-contained complex. This arrangement continues to work exceptionally well for all parties and has given us great experience managing this type of State/DOD partnership.

Concerning the financial resources required, the Louisiana Legislature this year unanimously passed a joint resolution that supported funding for the Federal City plan. A letter was sent to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld guaranteeing that Louisiana would ensure the funding of the Federal City plan if the Naval Support Activity remained open and we were allowed to go forward with the project. In addition, under oath at the BRAC Commission Regional Hearing in New Orleans, we promised to Commissioner Hill that the State -- with assistance that has already been pledged by the City of New Orleans -- would fund Federal City if we were given the chance to implement the plan.

Mr. Chairman
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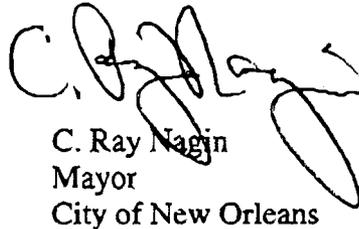
Although ground has not been broken yet, we have already put years of effort and almost a million dollars into developing the Federal City. We do not know how we could give you any more ironclad guarantees than we have given about our commitment to build the Federal City.

You have our best wishes as you and the other BRAC Commissioners make the very difficult and extremely important decisions on base closures. We hope that our arguments persuade the Commission what we are certain of – that realigning NSA New Orleans and implementing the Federal City is by far the best available option for our national defense and for Louisiana. Please rest assured that Louisiana will honor its commitments and stand ready to immediately begin the efforts to make the Federal City a near-term reality.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor
State of Louisiana



C. Ray Nagin
Mayor
City of New Orleans

Cc: Senator Mary Landrieu
Senator David Vitter
Representative William Jefferson
Representative Richard Baker
Representative Jim McCrery
Representative Rodney Alexander
Representative Charlie Melancon
Representative Charles Boustany
Representative Bobby Jindal