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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 22, 2005

BRAC Commission

AUG 02 2005

Received

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

We are writing today with respect to your upcoming site visit to Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana. As you know, under current law, BRAC Commissioners are required to visit an installation that the Secretary of Defense or the BRAC Commission recommends for closure or realignment. Congress intended these visits to be informative and help unearth information that may otherwise go unnoticed. It is safe to say that there is a high level of importance placed on these visits.

Oceana is the U.S. Navy's East Coast Master Jet Base with approximately 10,000 military and civilian personnel supporting aircraft carriers deploying from the East Coast to theaters of operation. We respect the vote of the Commission to further review the Department of Defense's decision to retain Oceana and believe that you will do so fully.

Therefore, we respectfully request that when the BRAC Commission performs its lawful duty to visit Oceana that the seven members of the Commission – who voted to further explore realignment and closure of the base – be present at that site visit. We believe their presence at this site visit is important because they have decided Oceana should be on the list of considerations for closure and realignment, not the Secretary of Defense and the Navy. In addition, their attendance will give them a better understanding as to reasons why both Secretary England and Vice Admiral Willard state that, "NAS Oceana is the most suitable option of all East Coast tactical aviation bases for the present and is manageable for the foreseeable future."

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and we look forward to your prompt action. Please treat this letter in conformance with all applicable procedural rules and ethical guidelines.

With warm regards, we remain

Sincerely,

John Warner
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services

George Allen
United States Senator