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 LABOR & EMPLOYMENT
 NATURAL RESOURCES

Assembly
 California Legislature

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Received

JOHN LAIRD
 ASSEMBLY MEMBER - TWENTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL
 P.O. BOX 942849
 SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0027
 (916) 319-2027
 FAX (916) 319-2127

DISTRICT OFFICES
 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
 701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 318B
 SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
 (831) 425-1503
 FAX: (831) 425-2570
 MONTEREY AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES
 99 PACIFIC STREET, SUITE 555-D
 MONTEREY, CA 93940
 (831) 649-2832
 (408) 782-0647
 FAX: (831) 649-2935

August 11, 2005

Anthony J. Principi, Chair
 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
 2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
 Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairperson Principi:

I am writing to express my support of the three military installations in Monterey, California, that are currently under review by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission: the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLI) and the Presidio of Monterey (POM). All three installations are critical parts of our nation's security infrastructure, and the success they are currently achieving is directly related to the fact that they are located in the city of Monterey.

First, I'd like to thank the Commission members who visited these installations and participated in the recent West Coast regional hearing in Monterey. I believe it was a helpful and informative hearing that provided commission members with first-hand knowledge of the integral role that these installations play in the defense of our nation.

As you are aware, there is high demand for officers who are either experts in their area of training or are fluent in specific foreign languages. These three facilities play a matchless role in training officers who will help the military adapt to ever-changing national and international security conditions. Enhancing this fact are integral partnerships and coordination that exist between the communities of the Monterey Peninsula and their military neighbors.

The facilities' close geographic proximity to innovative high tech companies and education institutions; their support from the City of Monterey and other local jurisdictions; and the established intellectual benefits they receive from becoming established in the Monterey Bay Area have allowed for a cost-saving, effective form of military training that does not exist elsewhere in the country. As unique institutions that have benefited from long-standing and productive local relationships, it would be detrimental to both the surrounding region and the nation if these facilities were to be closed, privatized or consolidated elsewhere.

It is estimated that if either installation closes or is transferred, it could take 15 to 20 years to recreate the productivity and benefits these facilities provide locally. I am also concerned the loss our military and our country would experience during any transition period would be irretrievable.

As an elected official serving the Monterey Bay region for over thirty years, I have supported these unique facilities and the adaptive role that the surrounding community has played to aid in their development and responsibility to provide for our nation's security. Their loss would be devastating to a region and its economy still recovering from the closure of Fort Ord during the 1991 BRAC process.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide my thoughts and comments on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any additional information that may be needed.

Sincerely,


JOHN LAIRD
Assemblymember, 27th District

JL:cr