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REBECCA S. SKILLMAN
LT. GOVERNOR

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May 11, 2005

The Honorable James T. Hill
BRAC Commissioner
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Hill:

As Lt. Governor, I chair Indiana's Military Base Planning Council which was formed to insure that that the Naval Support Activity at Crane is fully supported by the State's infrastructure, is protected from any encroachment, and is well integrated into its surrounding community. As the leader of the State's oversight of Crane, I am fully aware of its military value and, also, of its strong attributes that should reflect into the "other considerations" of the BRAC criteria. I would like to share those attributes with you.

I believe it would be very difficult to obtain any significant cost savings by realigning functions from Crane to other installations. Due to the extensive stores of munitions at Crane, it would be very difficult to actually close the base. Therefore, the costs of security and maintenance will continue. Coupled with the fact that Crane's labor rates are among the DOD's lowest, makes realignment savings extremely unlikely.

Crane is the second largest employer in southern Indiana where the unemployment rate is quite high. Therefore, its economic impact on the surrounding communities is extreme. For example, in the three counties that Crane is located in; Martin, Greene and Lawrence, its contributed share of total wages is 37%, 26% and 12% respectively. In the towns of Loogootee, Bloomfield and Bedford, in those same counties, the contribution is 67%, 46% and 18% respectively.

While Crane is located in a relatively under-populated area of the State, it benefits from robust infrastructure including: proximity to North-South and East-West Intestates (I-65, I-70, I-64), including planned I-69 which will be adjacent to Crane; being within two hours of international airports in Indianapolis and Louisville with their major Federal Express and United Parcel operations; redundant natural gas pipelines and wholesalers; redundant electric suppliers; redundant telephone and high speed data suppliers; and, unlimited water supply with an on-base