



DCN 1356

# Reserve Officers Association of the United States

"PRESERVING THE NATION'S DEFENSE FOR OVER 75 YEARS"



May 16, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman, Commission on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As President of the primary association that represents Reserve officers in the United States Armed Forces, Secretary Rumsfeld's announcement on BRAC conceals more than it tells for *all* Reservists and Guardsmen in this country.

Applying the term "realign" to many of the installations and facilities on Mr. Rumsfeld's list really means "closure" for many Reservists. With their units now 300 to 3,000 miles away, their commuting to monthly training assemblies, or "drills," would be completely impractical. If this list is adopted as published, this would translate into the loss of countless experienced Reservists and Guardsmen to the U.S. military.

The BRAC listing by state was an interesting technique to show DoD's recommendations as the closing and realignment numbers only reflected Reserve Component full-time manning figures for military and civilian specialists. The published numbers completely omitted the citizen-soldier corps assigned or attached to those closed or realigned facilities. Why? Are Reservists and Guardsmen no longer part of the force? And what of other studies, such as the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Commission on the Guard and Reserve? Are not the findings of these important commissions to be included in the decision-making process? Your quoted statement in the *Washington Post* to Secretary Rumsfeld was absolutely correct when you said, let's not make "BRAC the cart before the horse."

If the BRAC list is allowed to stand as recommended, I fear the nation's support for future military efforts will greatly suffer, and the umbilical cord that links the citizens of many communities to the armed forces as is called for in the Abrams Doctrine will be permanently severed. I wonder if this proposed shift is an attempt to change America's citizen-soldier concept by making service as a Reservist or Guardsman so cumbersome that few will join, thereby mandating increases in active duty end strengths. Mr. Chairman, our military and communities must remain linked if we are to have public support. Let us not be guilty of repeating past mistakes by sending our uniformed men and women into future conflicts without strong public support behind them!

ROA is eager to engage in further information with the BRAC Commission. We do this because BRAC is a vital issue to our Reserve Component, and, therefore to our nation's security. ROA's purpose, as mandated in its congressional charter, is to help promote the development and execution of military policy for the United States that will provide

*"Serving Those Who Serve"*

Army ★ Marine Corps ★ Navy ★ Air Force ★ Coast Guard ★ Public Health Service ★ NOAA

One Constitution Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20002-5655

Telephone: (800) 809-9448 or (202) 479-2200 ★ FAX: (202) 479-0416 ★ E-Mail/Website: [www.roa.org](http://www.roa.org)

adequate national security. Policies made on BRAC and all issues must fairly represent the long-term needs of our nation.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Nester  
Major General, U.S. Air Force Reserve (Ret.)  
President

320