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May 25, 2005

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RICK PERRY  
GOVERNOR

ORIGINAL

Mr. Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman  
Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
Polk Building, Suite 600  
2521 South Clark Street  
Arlington, Virginia 22202-3909

Dear Chairman Principi:

I was surprised to learn today that the Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission cancelled one of the two regional hearings that had previously been announced to be held in Texas. I understand all impacted communities in Texas and Arkansas will now have only one opportunity to testify before the Commission in the regional hearing scheduled for July 11 in San Antonio.

Canceling the June 22 Dallas regional hearing will cause an undue hardship on the North Texas communities that would have been heard on that day and may result in less time that each community will have to present their cases in support of their military bases that the Department of Defense (DOD) has recommended for closure or realignment. One of the most significant recommendations made by DOD is to close Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, resulting in a potential job loss of 4,405 direct and indirect jobs in the Texarkana area. This represents more than 6 percent of the area's economic employment. It will be much more difficult for the civilian employees of these facilities to actively participate in the BRAC regional hearing if they have to travel an additional 271 miles to San Antonio. They are already being asked to travel 178 miles from Texarkana to Dallas. In addition, Sheppard Air Force Base ranks third highest among the bases recommended for realignment and sixth among all bases recommended for closure and realignment. Direct and indirect job loss to the Wichita Falls area is 4,400, or more than 4 percent of the Wichita Falls' local area employment.

I am not aware of any other regional hearings being canceled. I urge you to explain why the Dallas hearing was cancelled, and more importantly, I ask that you reconsider this decision and reinstate the June 22 BRAC regional hearing in Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rick Perry".

Rick Perry  
Governor

RP:tgp