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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 18, 2005

BRAC Commission

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Received

Mr. Anthony Principi
Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

As the Base Realignment and Closure Commission considers possible changes to the status of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and the Defense Language Institute (DLI), we urge you to endorse Secretary Rumsfeld's decision to retain both installations due to their high military value.

In its consideration of these two institutions, the Education and Training Joint Cross Service Group ranked both schools highly for their military value. In fact, NPS was the highest rated among all facilities in the Professional Development Education Subgroup.

The specialized military content of their programs and location along the Monterey Bay makes DLI and NPS unique and irreplaceable in the civilian world. Surrounded by institutions of higher education, extensive native foreign language resident speakers, and a local network of businesses and activities that have grown up specifically to service the military community, recreating these schools elsewhere is unfeasible. The intellectual capacity of Monterey Bay drives the success of the schools. To separate the schools from that capacity would destroy them.

These schools provide a critical service to the military services that must continue without interruption or diminution. While there are promising opportunities to further strengthen the ability of NPS to serve joint, interagency and combined requirements, any consideration of consolidating other education or training commands with NPS cannot come at the expense of the unique academic programs that NPS conducts for the Navy-Marine Corps team.

While military value is the most important consideration for retaining these institutions, it is important to note that both schools have made tremendous strides toward reducing costs and eliminating non-essential expenditures.

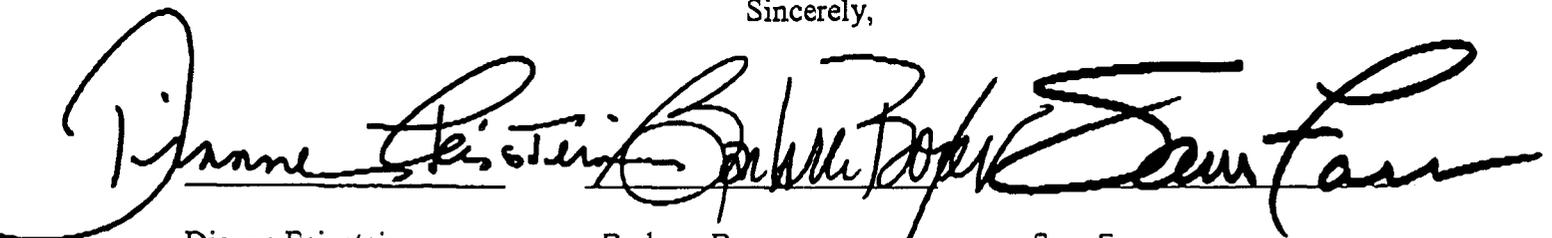
For example, under broad authority granted by Congress, the DLI has contracted with the City of Monterey for many of its operations and maintenance (O&M) activities. This has saved the DLI upwards of 49 percent of its base operating costs. Given that the same authority is available to the NPS, similar cost savings are achievable. Bringing management under a single command - perhaps as part of the Commission's idea of consolidation - could further streamline costs.

We urge the Commission to realistically assess projections of potential cost savings from the closure of NPS. There are serious doubts that any potential savings reflect the full scope of NPS student enrollment, program load, or revenue from outside sources. For example, we are aware that the COBRA for NPS shows that the \$1.12 billion in savings includes those salaries that are reimbursable to the school. Such savings are illusory at best and paint an inaccurate picture to the Commission of potential savings through closure. Similar questions surround the COBRA figures that detail student enrollment at the school and whether the revenue to the school from these students was included in the COBRA calculations, even if the courses they take are not required as part of the school's core curricula. Accordingly, we urge the Commission not to exclusively depend on the COBRA figures as a finite measure of the institution.

In conclusion, the DLI and NPS are model institutions for Secretary Rumsfeld's transformation efforts. They have proven their strong military value to the services. They have established linkages and joint programs between themselves, with the local community, and with numerous federal agencies and international institutions. They are flexible and adaptive enough to develop training programs for the war on terrorism. These qualities could be enhanced, and costs reduced, by bringing the schools under a single administrative umbrella, or even combining the schools into a larger National Defense Research and Training Center.

There is no doubt in our minds that you and the Commission will see the value of retaining the DLI and NPS in Monterey. We also believe you will understand the increased value that could result from more formalized joint operations between the two schools. We look forward to your recommendations to retain and enhance these schools for the benefit of the Army, the Navy, and all of DOD and its services, as well as the greater good of our nation's defense.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

Sam Farr
Member of Congress