



**Testimony of the  
Honorable Felix P. Camacho  
*Governor of Guam***

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment  
(BRAC) Commission  
July 14, 2005**



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### Testimony of the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, Governor of Guam Before the BRAC 2005 Commission

July 14, 2005

Hafa Adai Mr. Chairman and Members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, thank you for allowing the Territory of Guam to testify on the recommendations that you are considering on changes to U.S. Military Installations. My name is Felix Camacho, Governor of Guam.

The Department of Defense has made the recommendation to “Realign Andersen AFB, Guam by relocating the installation management functions to Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, Marianas Islands, Guam.” While everyone would like to see an increase in military, we understand that national security and defense is always considered a top priority and we stand ready to assist the Nation in whatever way possible. With this in mind, we urge that every effort be undertaken to ensure that the 31 civilian employees who will be affected are afforded every opportunity to retain federal employment.

Guam appears before you today with a personal history of the 1995 BRAC realignment, which resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs for a total reduction of 43 percent of our military population. However, we as a government are more prepared to deal with the round of recommendations presented to us today. Our local government has received a \$500,000 BRAC National Emergency Grant to assist with any displaced workers who may be affected.

Despite the current BRAC recommendations, we recognize that Guam continues to be in the forefront of discussions about military movement in the region. **Commission members, I testify before you here today that Guam stands ready for increased permanent military presence on island.**

Our geographic proximity to potential flashpoints in Asia makes Guam the leading edge of America’s strategic triangle in the Pacific. We welcome the use of our island for U. S. forces in the Pacific and look forward to doing our part in homeland defense missions.

Guam’s strategic location in this theater provides excellent opportunities in operational cost savings and time response. The U.S. military is investing more than \$1 Billion in

facilities development on Guam over the next six years including upgrades to family housing areas and medical facilities and new Department of Defense schools and a Special Operations facility. We believe that these investments are based on the crucial role of Guam and the unique capabilities we offer to the U.S. military and to the nation, including the fact that:

- The U.S. military enjoys unencumbered air space with light and infrequent competing air traffic and has 7.5 million square feet of ramp space.
- Guam is a U.S. sovereign territory with no need for host nation consent to pre-position war munitions, deploy weapons or to conduct operations.
- The military owns more than 39,000 acres of land – 29 percent of our total land area – and has 17 million gross square feet of buildings for use.
- There is a deep harbor with 17,000 linear feet of wharfage with the ability to handle 3 million pounds of ordnance net explosive weight.
- We have a privatized ship repair facility capable of dry docking and repairing carrier strike force support vessels.
- Our home-ported attack submarines facilitate expeditionary strike group exercises and support the carrier strike force preparing for deployment.
- Guam hosts the largest U.S. Air Force Munitions Storage Facility in the Pacific.

But there is so much more to Guam. Our people are gracious hosts who welcome all with a warm embrace. Our community is built around strong family relationships, and our people hold our families in the highest regard. On Guam, you will find that “family” means everyone, including our military neighbors.

The People of Guam wholeheartedly support U. S. military presence on the island and encourage the expansion of U. S. military activity to meet the present and future national security interests of the United States. As such, the Government of Guam has begun the planning and implementation of the construction of new public schools and we are investing more than \$60 Million during the next two fiscal years alone to improve roads throughout the island. One of our priorities for this funding is a main thoroughfare that links Andersen Air Force Base with Naval Activities.

Our power authority has secured more than \$150 Million over the next five years for upcoming infrastructure improvement projects, including several that will place critical power lines underground. The power utility already produces enough energy to meet current demand and support future growth. We are closing our old landfill and designing a new facility that will meet solid waste needs for both civilian and military communities.

The Government of Guam recently privatized the last publicly owned communications system in the United States and now the island is enjoying improved service. The private company expects to invest \$100 Million over the next few years so that Guam will have one of the best systems in the nation with enough capacity for military use. Plans are underway to improve our water and wastewater systems maintenance, production, treatment and monitoring with more than \$140 Million in upcoming projects. Airport and seaport improvements are being undertaken as part of an overall package to satisfy homeland defense requirements and to accommodate increases in air and sea traffic. Our Port Authority of Guam is privatizing terminal operations and is currently in the design

phase of a new deep draft wharf, which could be used by a carrier and support vessels. Our Airport Authority will be investing more than \$300 Million over the next 10 years in projects and has the ability to handle military passengers and cargo. Meanwhile, in conjunction with military representatives, we have developed a long-range capital improvement planning process, to leverage limited financial resources, which will be part of Guam's three-to-five year Fiscal Recovery Plan.

These are just some of the critical projects that the local government has undertaken for the benefit of every man, woman and child living on Guam today and for those who will be living here in the future. We are and will continue to commence initiatives that make Guam the best possible platform for hosting additional military missions. I am presenting to you today a working copy of the *Government of Guam's General Capital Improvement Plan*, which details our work to improve our island for everyone and accommodate an expanded military role on Guam.

It is our belief that Guam is uniquely positioned to play a much bigger role in our country's defense, and we expect that the military transformation will add significant value to our nation's ability to deter aggression, defend freedom and promote stability world wide.

In closing, in about one week the people of Guam will celebrate the 61<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of our island. This amazing remembrance takes place every year and honors the U.S. forces that liberated our people from more than two years of brutal occupation. The pride and patriotism of the people of Guam is as evident today as it was more than 60 years ago – a true shining example of dedication to our country and the American spirit.

Please accept my gratitude for the opportunity to present testimony on this important issue. I thank you for your critical work on this Commission and I assure you of the continued dedication of the people of Guam to the defense and preservation of our freedom and our Great Nation.

May God Bless the United States of America.

**Prepared Statement**

**Hon. Madeleine Z. Bordallo**  
**Member of Congress**  
**Guam**

**2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission**  
**Regional Hearing - Los Angeles, California**  
**July 15, 2005**

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Hafa Adai. My name is Madeleine Bordallo and I represent the people of Guam in the United States Congress. I thank the BRAC Commission for extending me this opportunity to provide my views on the impact of the current Department of Defense BRAC recommendations as they relate to Guam. Before continuing, I would also like to welcome the Honorable Felix Camacho, Governor of Guam, the Honorable Mark Forbes, Speaker of the Guam Legislature, and Mr. Lee Webber, Chairman of the Armed Forces Committee of the Guam Chamber of Commerce, who I have invited to provide additional information to the Commissioners.

Today, the United States and our allies are faced with the challenge of responding to the threat of global terrorism. As American men and women are fighting in the streets of Baghdad and on the high peaks of Afghanistan, our nation's warfighting capabilities and force projection must adapt to address new threats. Amid this climate of change, the U.S. Department of Defense has undertaken a fifth round of Base Realignment and Closures, this time under greater duress and with an increased responsibility to account for global challenges.

In the previous four BRAC rounds, Guam experienced significant military cuts. Peacetime cutbacks and a stable outlook in Asia permitted the United States to reduce its presence on Guam. In this fifth BRAC round, the Department of Defense has recommended no closures on Guam and only limited realignment. The recommended realignment of base operating services to consolidate Naval and Air Force services under the Navy makes both economic and strategic sense. The reemergence of Asia's strategic significance, highlighted in large part by China's economic growth and North Korea's nuclear positioning, has increased the importance of American military presence in the region. The recommendations acknowledge this change, the strategic location of Guam, as well as the significant capacity of Guam to base American forces whether they be land, sea or air.

To be clear, I am pleased with and support the Department of Defense's recommendations for Guam. Therefore, it is my hope that the commission will adhere to these recommendations.

I would encourage the commission, however, to consider and recommend the most efficient manner in which to consolidate base operating services. While the Navy will

assume full control for Andersen Air Force Base's management, this does not mean that Air Force systems or contracts are automatically inferior to the Navy's. For example, in the case of telecommunications, it is my understanding that the Air Force's system is highly favorable to the Navy's particularly in its interaction with civilian structures such as those managed by the Guam Telephone Authority. Consolidation alone will not ensure true efficiency.

These expressions of support nonetheless do not remove the sting, however small, of the loss of military and civilian positions on Guam. I hope that the BRAC commission and the federal government will continue to work with Guam to mitigate these losses. I stand ready to work with the commission and the government to assist in this process.

Let me briefly highlight several specific reasons I believe Guam has fared well in the BRAC recommendations. The first and most important, as I have already stated, is Guam's strategic location. First on the list of the criteria utilized by the BRAC commission is the consideration of "the current and future mission capabilities and the impact on operational readiness of the Department of Defense's total force." Plainly stated, Guam's military bases are vital to the operational readiness and mission capabilities of American forces in the Pacific. Most importantly, the strategic location of Guam's bases permit American forces to quickly reach the waters and lands in and around Asia. Consider these statistics: Guam is only a two-day steam to the heart of Asia while Hawaii, the western most American state is a 9-day trip. Guam is a 3-hour flight for bombers, Hawaii an 11-hour flight. General William Begert, former commander of the Pacific Air Forces, acknowledged other geographic elements of Guam's inherent strategic value when he stated, "It's about 1,500 miles, a little less, from Korea; 1,500 miles from the Taiwan straits, and not far from other places in Southeast Asia. The ability to project forces from Guam is very valuable to us."

The second criterion for BRAC consideration provides further insight. The commission is instructed to consider "the availability and condition of land, facilities and associated airspace (including training areas suitable for maneuver by ground, naval or air forces...)." The U.S. government has ownership of thousands of acres of land on Guam. The facilities at Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Station Guam provide ample space for training and have significant capacity for expansion.

Andersen Air Force Base includes not one but two 2-mile runways. Andersen holds the largest fuel storage facilities in the Air Force. Few stateside Air Force bases have the runway and flightline space that Andersen offers and none have the strategic location.

Naval Station Guam is also a notable facility. Currently homeporting 2 attack submarines, the Congressional Budget Office reports that it could hold up to 11 submarines. The Naval Station is also poised to host an American aircraft carrier and ancillary forces. This says nothing of the naval industrial base located within the privately owned Guam Shipyard. The shipyard is currently underutilized and has significant capacity for expansion. Now you may ask why we would need to expand a naval shipyard at a time when your commission is charged with closing several. Once more the answer is location. The Guam Shipyard can support not only ships homeported in Guam but the many more ships that operate in the Pacific. Whether it is emergency, operational or routine maintenance needs, the proximity to Asian maneuver water makes the Guam Shipyard an indispensable resource.

Lastly, Guam has the ground based maneuver space to facilitate any number of Marine, Army or Special Operations military exercises. While Guam does not currently host any ground based troops, something I fully expect will change in the near future, Guam has long been sought for its maneuver space particularly by the Special Operations forces that have become the centerpiece of the global war on terror. Furthermore, the Commanding General of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force has indicated a desire to base Marines on Guam.

The third criterion for the BRAC commission to evaluate requires consideration of the base's "ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization and future total force requirements." A few words are particularly important here: "contingency" and "future." With ever-increasing concerns over developments in Asia, the potential for contingency operations in the region consistently remain high. Guam's strategic location and the excess capacity of its bases to support troop mobilizations and subsequent contingency operations are vital to American security plans. I have already highlighted that Andersen Air Force Base has the largest fuel storage capacity in the Air Force, capacity vital to contingency operations and mobilizations in Asia. In fact, Andersen has a history of playing a large role in contingency operations. The air base was home to the most massive buildup of air

power in history when in 1972 more than 15,000 people and 150 B-52 bombers deployed to Andersen to undertake Operation Linebacker 2. Those bombers would go on to fly 729 sorties in just 11 days.

Andersen has relevancy and capacity for non-combat contingencies as well. During Operation New Life following the fall of Saigon, 40,000 refugees came to Andersen and another 109,000 were processed for onward movement to the United States mainland. Andersen was also the base of operations for humanitarian relief missions following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991 and received 6,000 Kurdish refugees in 1996 as part of Joint Task Force Haven.

Most importantly, the increasing value of forward basing American forces in the Pacific makes Guam's ability to accommodate future "total force requirements" essential. Guam's bases stand ready to gain Naval formations as large as a carrier group, as much or more than a carrier air wing, the Marines and equipment associated with a Marine Expeditionary Force, and any number of Army formations.

Part of each BRAC round has been the consideration of property transfer and disposal following closures. While in this BRAC round the Department of Defense will not be closing any bases on Guam, past rounds included closures for which property transfer and disposal of military lands has not been completed. I urge the commissioner's to review the status of past closures and the associated land transfers and to provide instructions for the most expeditious disposal of lands on Guam as is reasonably possible.

Guam has fared well in the initial BRAC recommendations for sound reasons. The realignment of base operating services as part of BRAC will further prepare Guam to assume a greater role in American military basing. Guam stands poised to receive additional troop and equipment assignments and, in the process, to become the tip of the American military's spear in Asia. Guam, to use military slang, is "ready, willing and able." We should fully expect that the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review and recommendations from the Overseas Basing Commission will result in additional forces being located in Guam. I encourage the Commissioners to consider further positioning Guam for this likely growth as you make your final recommendations.

I thank the commissioners. Let me now introduce the Governor of Guam, the Honorable Felix Camacho. Governor Camacho.

**CLOSING STATEMENT:**

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Governor Camacho, Speaker Forbes and Mr. Webber for their comments and for their efforts in representing the people of Guam. As you can see, the leadership on Guam is united in our support for the military, in our view on this BRAC round and in our preparedness to assume an even greater role in America's national security.

Ever since Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, the military byword has been jointness. Guam represents a place where jointness has truly taken hold. Naval submarines ship out to sea while U.S. Air Force planes provide overhead cover. U.S. Marines conduct maneuver exercises on Guam's land with the support of Naval Gun Fire and the close air support of Air Force jets. The consolidation of base operating systems between Anderson Air Force Base and Naval Station Guam is only an outgrowth of existing jointness. The next step in making Guam America's most forward joint military operating base is welcoming an increased naval surface presence and a Marine Expeditionary Unit. There is no U.S. sovereign soil more fit, more capable and more strategically located to achieve this joint feat than Guam. Simply stated, Guam is the only American land where the military can create this remarkable joint combination where the forces are at the same time homeported *and* forward deployed.

Let me close with an adage Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld often uses when talking about our global force posture: "We go where we're wanted." The people of Guam are loyal Americans who stand ready to do their part to help promote the National defense. The military is wanted on Guam. Thank you.



**BRAC 2005 COMMISSION REGIONAL HEARING**  
**Thursday, July 14, 2005 • Los Angeles, CA**

**TESTIMONY OF THE GUAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE**

Good afternoon Chairman Principi and members of the Commission. My name is Lee Webber and I serve as Chairman of the Armed Forces Committee of Guam Chamber of Commerce. The membership of the Guam Chamber of Commerce generates \$2 billion in economic activity or approximately 70% of Guam's Gross Island Product.

Our Chamber has an ambitious Armed Forces Committee. Our purpose is to establish, enhance, and facilitate communications between the military, the business community and the Government of Guam. During the past 10 years we have been very successful in facilitating many interactions among these elements of the Guam community.

The people of Guam resolutely demonstrated their patriotism to the United States while being occupied by a foreign power. Since its liberation in 1944, and especially after being granted citizenship by virtue of the Organic Act in 1950, Guam has continued to demonstrate great patriotism for America, particularly in its wars.

In the past, no like-sized community on the mainland compared equally with our people's willingness to serve, their level of sacrifice, and their casualties. Indeed, in our War on Terrorism, Guam currently has 361 or nearly 33% of its National Guard strength of 1,120 troops deployed.

The greatest concentrations of reservists as a proportion of population stateside are in the District of Columbia, Hawaii, North Dakota, Vermont, Alaska, and South Dakota. In those states, about 1 of every 100 residents over the age of 17 is a reservist. By comparison, Guam's ratio is roughly 1 of every 85 residents serving in the reserve components, making Guam the highest per capita concentration of reservists among the combined states and territories.

In two separate surveys, one commissioned by our organization and another conducted by Gannett Company for the Pacific Daily News confirmed that there remains broad-based island-wide support for U.S. Military activity on Guam. Eighty-three (83%) and eighty-one percent (81%) respectively, felt the military not only makes a positive contribution to Guam, but they would be in support of an increase in military activities and presence.

As the Commission well knows, since Guam is in Asia and 7-10 days steaming time from Hawaii, the presence of the U.S. military on American soil is of significant strategic, economic, and political importance.

Our prominent location in Asia not only offers an essential stabilizing influence, but in the global sphere, the U.S. military's presence on Guam is strategically, economically, socially, and politically very important. U.S. military presence on Guam provides the region as a whole with a stabilizing presence and offers a strategic launch platform providing a strong deterrent capability in the region. It also overcomes the tyranny of distance by providing launch platforms without creating an air of provocation.

Home-porting on Guam creates cost reduction and efficiencies because of being forward deployed, as well as morale enhancements which in many ways, especially travel, are unsurpassed when compared to other ports.

In addition Guam and the Mariana Islands offer a variety of virtually unencumbered land, sea, and air training space that includes one of the last live-fire ranges in the Pacific – a capability everyone is recognizing as invaluable for qualification and certification, skills enhancement, and cost containment for our military range (located 180 northwest of Guam in the CNMI) allowing our military to hone its live-fire skills.

As mentioned earlier by Governor Camacho, we have and continue our work on the development of Guam's economic and infrastructural base to ensure there is ample capacity to support future logistical and other non-combatant requirements of military in our region through the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have and will continue to work to fully leverage Public/Private Partnership Opportunities.

In the area of training, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps leaders have expressed that Guam's weather, environment and R&R assets make it an ideal training venue. This affords our great nation the ability to exercise deterrence without provocation throughout the Pacific Rim.

Additional military activity on Guam will have the added benefit of investing in America and broadening Guam's economy. This in turn will reduce our economic dependence on Asian-driven tourism which is often volatile.

Investing in Guam should also abridge certain security issues as, contrary to other jurisdictions who also have military assets, this investment will dissuade us from placing such a heavy emphasis on embracing, as well as the rush to embrace China's long-term tourism potential.

Guam is a very compassionate society and in closing I think it is critically important to note that Guam is the only piece of U.S. residential soil that has ever been occupied by a foreign aggressive force. And when you come to visit Guam, and you meet with our elders, you will never have to ask the definition of freedom and liberty. Through the occupation, they have lived it and understand first hand that without freedom and liberty we will live in tyranny. And because we are America, you will never have to ask "For whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee."

Thank you very much and I wish you God Speed in your decision making process.



**GUAM – AN ASIAN TIGER WITH AMERICAN STRIPES**