

23 May 2005

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2005 Base Realignment And Closure Committee
2521 S Clark St
Suite 600
Arlington VA 22202

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Veronika Benavidez and I am a GS-201-12 Personnel Staffing Specialist at the US Army Civilian Human Resource Agency (CHRA), North Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center (NCCPOC), located at Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, IL. As I am sure you know, my office is on the BRAC listed with the jobs slated to go to Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD or Fort Riley, KS.

My request is simple. Remove the NCCPOC from the BRAC list. I am not going to go into all the personal or local economical reasons why the NCCPOC should be removed. Every affected person has a story and I'm sure you've heard them all. I also know you cannot base your decisions on emotion. I will be focusing on why I think the removal of NCCPOC from the BRAC list was an oversight based on a business and customer service viewpoint.

The NCCPOC is statistically the best civilian personnel office in all of Army. In fact, the NCCPOC is named as number one in all of DoD on the military values list for personnel offices in the Headquarters and Support Activities Joint Cross Service Group, Volume VII Final BRAC 2005 Report. NCCPOC is a very well run organization. The two locations where it has been suggested that our jobs move to are much further down the list. Fort Riley (SWCPOC) is number 11 and Aberdeen Proving Grounds (NECPOC) was number 9. Our leaders are the most knowledgeable staffers and classifiers in all of Army, if not all of DoD. We are the CPOC that others look to for a standard of how to run their own office. When a new or controversial personnel situation arises, the other CPOCs check with NCCPOC to see how we are going to handle the situation. The Army would be loosing the majority of the NCCPOC employees as historically only 20% of BRAC affected employees move with their jobs. I realize that new and current employees in Aberdeen and Ft Riley can be trained to do the work, but the work was originally entrusted with NCCPOC because we are the best, and this would be shifting the work to those who were not entrusted with the most complex personnel situations to begin with.

Our office hires the civilians who support the Army in South West Asia. This is a difficult task and our office has risen to the occasion providing high quality employees to help support the war effort in Iraq. The NCCPOC was chosen for this duty because of our excellent record of excellence.

The MEDCELL is located at NCCPOC. This is the office that recruits for the hard to fill medical positions. They do an excellent job of filling these hard to fill positions. The MEDCELL was placed with NCCPOC rather than another CPOC because of our excellent record.

We have the best Information Systems Division (ISD) of all the Army CPOCs. Our ISD employees are the brightest and most inventive of all CPOC ISD employees. It is easy to see the number of programs that have been designed by the ISD employees at NCCPOC that are in use throughout the Army CPOCs today.

We have heard from several of our supported activities and they have expressed concern at the possibility of losing our organization as their CPOC. They have expressed that the NCCPOC provides the best customer service of any CPOC they have dealt with and they don't want to lose us. I am sure you'll be hearing from them as well on this situation.

Rock Island Arsenal will always have to have at least a caretaker force as it is on the National Historical Registry. Not just a couple of buildings, almost the entire post is on the registry. Nearly every building is from the Civil War times. We have the first bridge to cross the Mississippi. RIA has Indian mounds and parts of our building were made from melted down artillery from Civil War times.

Our office is a tenant on Rock Island Arsenal. We are part of CHRA which is located in MD. If our office closes, the overhead costs for those remaining at RIA goes up to compensate. That doesn't reduce the overhead costs in any manner. It is possible that not removing NCCPOC was an oversight when RIA was removed from the BRAC list since we are collocated with RIA and our home base is in MD.

The locality rate at NCCPOC is on the Rest of US pay chart, the lowest locality rate (10.90%). If the jobs are moved to Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD, the locality rate is much higher (14.63%) and therefore the cost of salaries will be higher than they currently are for NCCPOC.

It is not in the Army's best interest to take the best CPOC (based on CPOC records and on BRAC documents) and split it up between two CPOCs rated number 9 and 11. I understand that Rock Island Arsenal was originally on the list to be closed, but before the final list was released, it was removed from the BRAC list. I believe it was an oversight that the NCCPOC was not removed as well. I believe the only reason we were on the list to begin with was because Rock Island Arsenal was slated to close and we happened to be co-located. Once RIA was removed from the list, the oversight occurred as we should have been removed as well.

I ask that you help us remove the North Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center from the BRAC list. Thank you for your support.


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