

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

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**Havelock advances clear water initiatives
January 11, 2006
The New Bern Sun Journal**

HAVELOCK - Two N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund moves this week will preserve open land aiming to help the area environment and the future of MCAS Cherry Point.

Actions by trust members in Lake Lure Sunday and Monday authorizes the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust to buy a 42-acre tract of land behind Westbrook Subdivision, destined to belong to the City of Havelock and MCAS Cherry Point, and a 2,000-acre tract near Piney Island bombing range.

Trust members formally approved using some of \$3 million designated earlier for wetlands preservation to purchase the Havelock land from Bill Boulia of Newport, said Kyle Garner, city planning director, who got formal notice Tuesday.

The events are a win for the environment, the city, the base, and the landowner, Garner said, crediting work by attorney Frank Sheffield, N.C. Coastal Land Trust's Janice Allen, and Tyler Harris of Cherry Point Community Plans and Liaison office for making it happen.

"I am glad Havelock was able to be a part of it. It will make a difference later for the next round of BRAC," he said, referring to emphasis placed on local area accommodation of military installations in Defense Base Closure and Realignment considerations.

The land will most likely remain open, perhaps used for stormwater management, which will help keep clean water in streams and rivers, he said. It will aid the region and MCAS Cherry Point to comply with Joint Area Land Use and Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone goals by preventing encroachment.

"The Coastal Land Trust is now finalizing appraisal of the property and in discussion with the owner, who is a willing seller," said Sheffield. The board approved a bridge loan to acquire a Neuse River-Bay River tract near Piney Island bombing range.

Exactly which public entity take title and manage that land is still open pending consideration by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission in March, he said. It came up at the December meeting but commission members didn't have adequate information at that time.

Alito on Presidential Power
January 11, 2006
Chanel Lee
Village Voice

Considering President Bush's recent admission that he taped the private conversations of private citizens, it's no surprise that presidential powers topped abortion in significance the second day of Judge Samuel A. Alito's confirmation hearings.

The verdict on Alito's stance on the issue remains unclear: Despite Alito's assertions that he was only "stating the position of the administration," Senate Judiciary Leader Arlen

Specter nailed Alito for a 1986 memo in which he declared that "since the president's approval is just as important as that of the House or Senate, it seems to follow that the president's understanding of the bill should be just as important as that of Congress."

However, in response to Senator Patrick Leahy's (D-Vermont) pointed questions, Alito stated his position clearly.

"One of the most solemn responsibilities of the president—and it's set out expressly in the Constitution—is that the president is to take care that the laws are faithfully executed, and that means the Constitution," the nominee said. "It means statutes. It means treaties. It means all of the laws of the United States."

Alito has only ruled in three cases involving presidential powers, voting against the executive only once, and has never ruled against the government in a prisoners' rights case, and only once in an immigration case. However, he has ruled against the government in cases involving governmental regulation. Here's a sampling of his rulings over the years.

Specter v. Garrett (1993)

Alito wrote a dissenting opinion in this case, in which the Third Circuit Court of Appeals held that a shipyard workers' union and their supporters can enjoin the Secretary of Defense from closing the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard.

"I disagree with the court's decision insofar as it holds that some of the challenged administrative actions are subject to judicial review As I interpret the complaint and the appellant's brief, they seek review, not of Presidential action, but of actions taken by the named defendants, i.e., the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, and its members. Accordingly, I see no need to decide whether actions of the President are reviewable under the

Administrative Procedure Act or under administrative 'common law.' "

Egypt 'Has Proof' US Questioned Suspects in Romania."

Agence France Presse
(January 8, 13:43).

Bern, Jan 8 (AFP) – A fax sent by the Egyptian foreign ministry to its embassy in London stated that more than 20 Iraqis and Afghans had been questioned at a US-run base in Romania, a Swiss newspaper reported on Sunday.

SonntagsBlick said the Swiss secret services obtained a copy of the fax which said that the Egyptian embassy in London "learned from its own sources that 23 Iraqi and Afghan citizens had been questioned at the Mikhail Kogalniceanu base in the town of Constanza on the Black Sea coast".

The newspaper quoted a report written by the Swiss defence ministry which said Egypt believed there were "similar centres in Ukraine, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bulgaria".

The Swiss ministry reacted to the report with a statement saying it would open an investigation into how the information was leaked.

However, because the report is supposed to be secret, the ministry refused to comment on its contents.

A senior officer at the Mikhail Kogalniceanu base told AFP on Sunday that he categorically denied the report.

"I have been working at this base since 1995 and I have never been aware of such an operation," the officer, Dan Buciuman, said.

He added that the base was open to "anyone who wants to carry out an investigation".

Amid protests from European governments that their airports are being used by the Central Intelligence Agency to transport suspects, the United States has not denied the existence of alleged prisons in eastern and central Europe and

elsewhere, but has refuted allegations that it uses torture to obtain information.

US television network ABC reported in December that the US had held 11 senior members of the Al-Qaeda network in Poland but that they were evacuated to north Africa shortly before US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice toured Europe that month.

During a stop in Bucharest, Rice signed an agreement with Romania to establish permanent US military bases in the country, the first ever in a former Warsaw Pact nation.

The new US military presence will have its headquarters at Mikhail Kogalniceanu.

"Russian Military to Give Humanitarian Aid to Victims of Dushanbe Blaze."

Interfax News Service
(January 8, 09:32).

Dushanbe, Jan 8 (Interfax) – Russia's 201st military base located in Tajikistan has offered humanitarian aid to the children of the orphanage Chorbog in Dushanbe, destroyed in a blaze last night, Commander Sergei Yudin told Interfax on Sunday.

Thirteen children were killed in the disaster.

"We'll not stay on the sidelines and we are raising money to buy first-necessity good for the children – warm clothes and food," Yudin said.

The 201st base has been assisting Chorbog for several years now, supplying it with clothes and food, and bringing gifts on holidays.

The Iranian embassy and UNICEF earlier announced their preparedness to help.

Thirteen children were burnt to death in the blaze and one child was hospitalized. Overall, 79 children were evacuated.

"Switzerland Investigating Leak of Secret Document."

Associated Press Newswires
(January 8, 12:12).

Newspaper Reports It's a Fax on CIA Detention Centers

Bern, Switzerland (AP) – The Swiss Defense Ministry said Sunday it was investigating the leak of a secret document, reported by a Swiss newspaper to be an intercepted Egyptian government fax on alleged CIA detention centers in Europe.

The Zurich-based weekly *SonntagsBlick* reported that Swiss intelligence intercepted the fax, which alleged that the Egyptian Embassy in London had determined through its own sources that the United States had detained 23 terror suspects in Romania.

The fax said there were similar U.S. detention centers in Ukraine, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bulgaria, said the newspaper, which said it obtained the Swiss summary of the document.

Defense Minister Samuel Schmid “has ordered an investigation into how this secret document became public” and is considering taking legal steps against the newspaper for publishing a secret document in violation of Swiss law, said ministry spokesman Jean-Blaise Defago.

Defago declined to comment on the contents of the document, which *SonntagsBlick* said was intercepted from an Egyptian satellite transmission Nov. 15.

The newspaper said the fax was the firmest evidence yet of the alleged CIA detention centers.

“For the first time a state confirms that it knows of the existence of secret CIA prisons in Europe,” the newspaper said.

There was no immediate reaction from Egyptian officials in Cairo, where a weeklong holiday began Sunday.

The fax noted that newspapers have been reporting similar allegations about the CIA prisons, *SonntagsBlick* said.

But it said the embassy had learned on its own that 23 Afghan and Iraqi citizens had been interrogated at the Mihail Kogalniceanu military base near the Romanian Black Sea town of Constanta.

It noted Human Rights Watch had cited evidence that U.S. military aircraft had taken detainees from Salt Pit base in the Afghan capital Kabul to the Romanian base and to Szymany Airport base in Poland.

The fax was signed by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit and was sent to the Egyptian Embassy in London, *SonntagsBlick* said.

The Swiss Prosecutor's Office last month launched a criminal investigation into whether suspected CIA flights had violated Swiss laws by carrying terror suspects through the country's airspace.

But an office spokesman said Swiss authorities were aware they would probably have trouble getting information from Washington.

The Swiss Foreign Ministry has repeatedly asked the United States about allegations that clandestine CIA planes carried terror suspects through Switzerland's airspace, landing four times at Geneva airport.

But so far there has been no response, Swiss officials said.

According to the Swiss Federal Office of Civil Aviation, U.S.-registered planes suspected of being used by the CIA, have crossed Swiss airspace more than 70 times since 2001.

More than a half-dozen other investigations are under way elsewhere into whether European countries may have hosted secret CIA-run prisons or whether European airspace was used for CIA flights to countries where prisoners were tortured or transported to countries where torture is practiced.

Both Poland and Romania have repeatedly denied any involvement in the alleged practices and EU officials say nothing has been proven.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said the United States acts within the law, but has refused to address questions about clandestine CIA detention centers.

Allegations that the CIA hid and interrogated key al-Qaida suspects at Soviet-era compounds in Eastern Europe were first reported Nov. 2 in The Washington Post.

“Planners See Treasure in Bay’s Island.” Los Angeles (CA)

Maria L. La Ganga. 2006.
L.A Times (January 9)

Developers want to turn an abandoned military base near San Francisco into a model of new urban living. But many hurdles loom.

Here in one of America’s most densely populated cities, there are more than 15,000 people per square mile. Land values soar as high as skyscrapers. There is little room to grow in any direction except up.

But if all goes as planned, a 20-acre organic farm could be planted within the city’s bursting boundaries – part of a new open-space preserve a third the size of Golden Gate Park – alongside up to 5,500 housing units that would make neighbors of formerly homeless people and wealthy condo owners.

The proposed enclave would have spectacular views and rules so stringent that Manhattan would look car-friendly by comparison; local officials are already gushing about “the most environmentally sustainable large development project in U.S. history.”

Large, of course, is in the eye of the beholder.

This winter, after more than a decade of effort, San Francisco officials are unveiling proposals to create what amounts to a self-supporting miniature city on the former Naval Station

Treasure Island, a 400-acre island dredged from the bottom of San Francisco Bay.

Although decommissioned military bases often give cities enviable opportunities for development, Treasure Island is a case apart. On the plus side, it is a “flat pancake in the middle of the bay,” said Michael Cohen, the city’s director of base reuse, which makes it “a perfect palette to play out some of these cutting-edge concepts” with no neighbors to offend. On the minus side, well, it’s an island in the middle of the bay. Until a \$35-million to \$40-million ferry terminal is built, the only way off is the traffic-choked San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. It’s so windy that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers couldn’t get a single private dredger to bid on a contract to build the island even though work was scarce during the Depression. And it’s really, really small.

On less than two-thirds of a water-ringed square mile, a development team headed by Lennar Corp. is figuring out what amounts to the basic building blocks of smart growth:

How many people are needed to support a grocery store? How many commuters make a ferry line possible? How many rich owners of market-rate housing are required to enable a city to provide affordable homes? Can the bay’s ample sun and whipping winds be harnessed to power homes and businesses? Can food be grown in the middle of a housing development to help feed thousands of new residents?

“On islands, experiments can happen; they’re controllable because they have defined boundaries,” said Eric Antebi, national press secretary for the Sierra Club, who describes Treasure Island as a case study with effects that will go beyond San Francisco’s borders. “It’s rare that a city gets the chance to say ‘If we do it right, what does right look like?’ “

First envisioned as the site for an airport, Treasure Island was originally built by the Army Corps of Engineers, who dredged 30 million cubic yards of mud, sand and gravel to create the small, flat land mass. Local dredgers stayed away from the project, in part because of “their

fear of the weather conditions prevailing on the waters in which the work was to be done,” according to “Engineers at the Golden Gate,” an Army Corps history of the region.

“Their concern was justified,” the history continued, because the area “is indeed subject to severe winter storms as well as heavy wind and wave action during the summer months. As a matter of fact, there are very few months of the year which might be termed favorable for dredging.”

Which raises the question: What is the weather favorable for?

Although the airport never materialized, in 1939 and 1940 the island was the site of the Golden Gate International Exposition, which celebrated the completion of two monumental bridges that span the scenic San Francisco Bay.

When World War II broke out and American military forces began to mobilize, Treasure Island was turned over to the Navy. Although the base was selected for closure in 1993, the military has yet to give San Francisco permanent title to the property, which is a necessary step before development begins. Negotiations between the city and the Navy continue over the terms of the transfer and the routine environmental cleanup.

Today, the island is a motley mix of shuttered military buildings, a just-closed public school and a federal vocational training program. Around 850 units of refurbished Navy housing are rented out, some through a supportive program for the formerly homeless.

There are a few city offices, and some historic buildings. Some film production takes place on the island. A small cafe is open a few hours each day, and disposable cameras are sold from a hut so that bundled-up tourists can capture the panoramic views.

But the weather that kept dredgers at bay does raise questions about whether the winds can be tamed enough to make Treasure Island suitable for condos and crops.

Those involved in the project say the answer is yes. In unveiling its first land-use plans in November and December, the development team described streets mapped to deflect 30-mph gusts, rows of turbines to harness the wind’s energy and help power the island and high-rise residential towers built to shelter street-level activity.

“We used to joke that when we were looking at potential developers, we’d bring them out in the morning, not in the afternoon,” said San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, so they wouldn’t be frightened off by the strong gusts. Newsom said he views weather as a major challenge to developing “one of the great pieces of land in the world. ... The exciting thing about the design is how it takes advantage of the wind patterns.”

The developers also have researched what grows well in the rural enclaves that ring the Bay Area, and they acknowledge that weather and soil conditions will definitely affect what can be cultivated on any Treasure Island farm. Early proposals call for crops that include strawberries and lettuces, zucchini and artichokes and a large greenhouse operation for tomatoes and peppers.

“We have some challenges; we don’t have the answer yet to grow edible plants,” said landscape architect Kevin Conger of CMG, whose firm is creating the open-space plan. “Even if we couldn’t do that, we’d still pursue the idea of the farm as horticulture, cut flowers, a nursery site for habitat restoration.”

The biggest question facing Treasure Island is likely to be transportation, and the first concrete plans for addressing cars and congestion will be unveiled this week. But, prodded by local environmentalists, developers have already begun to lay out themes for a community where cars are more annoyance than convenience.

Treasure Island is connected to even tinier Yerba Buena Island, a natural isle once known for the goats that clambered around its rocky peaks. The Bay Bridge links the two small islands to San

Francisco and Oakland. At peak commute times, bridge traffic is often at a standstill.

It costs \$3 to cross the bridge heading west, but the toll plaza is in Oakland, so Treasure Island's current residents can drive from their homes to San Francisco and back without paying.

That will probably end after the new development commences. Residents probably will be charged to leave the island during peak commute times through a practice called "congestion management pricing."

In addition, parking will not be included in the price of a town house, condominium or apartment, and half of the island's residential parking spaces will be in communal garages a shuttle ride away from homes.

However, the public bus that connects the island to downtown San Francisco will run more frequently, and 80% of Treasure Island housing will be within a 10-minute walk of the ferry terminal.

"We have to be practical as developers, and it's hard to divorce people from their cars," acknowledged Kofi Bonner, Lennar Corp. executive vice president. "But we want to make it more difficult to use your car, more inconvenient, more expensive to park ... more expensive to leave the island."

Environmental advocate Ruth Gravanis has spent nearly a decade prodding planners and city officials to increase open space, density and ferry accessibility and decrease parking. Her mantra: "People need to get it into their head that it's an island. You leave your car on the mainland."

But she also worries about fairness on an island that will have 30% affordable housing and accommodations for formerly homeless people alongside pricey town houses and penthouse condominiums.

"One concern is that the bus will be the poor person's transportation and the ferry will be for the rich people," Gravanis said. "It is a design

challenge, creating community ... the mixing and mingling."

No one here is underestimating the hurdles that lie ahead, and the project is expected to take 10 to 15 years to complete.

The plans are still in their early stages. Treasure Island could be home to between 10,000 and 15,000 people, although it is unknown how much the planned housing would cost. But Emily Rapaport, a community organizer and co-chairwoman of the island residents' association, said she worries that the price tag for making the island seismically safe for high-rises could push people like her out.

Although she said she is impressed by many of the proposals, she also wishes that there were more jobs for island dwellers built into the development. "I understand we're surrounded by water and that they want to use this to have a lot of sport and recreational stuff and businesses that cater to that," Rapaport said. "But it seems to me that at some level, this is going to be Disneyland.... I'm not sure that San Francisco needs more of that."

There are other hurdles. The Navy has to transfer the land. The plans must conform to a complex state law that restricts how public waterfront properties can be used.

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors must give its blessing. And seismic and environmental cleanup issues must be addressed.

Still, "this is an unparalleled opportunity for San Francisco to do something that is really bold," said Jack Sylvan, Treasure Island project manager for the city. "There are huge challenges. We're confident we'll get there. We'll see what it looks like when we do."

"Warner Proposes Additional \$2.8 million for Military Affairs

Michael Felberbaum. 2006.
Associated Press Newswires
(January 8, 13:40).

Richmond, Va. (AP) – Gov. Mark R. Warner’s budget proposes nearly \$38.5 million for the Department of Military Affairs to increase the work force at Fort Pickett, provide recruitment incentives for the Virginia National Guard and maintain the state’s 49 armories.

Warner upped the department’s budget by \$2.8 million to further support the guard and other state agencies.

The 2006-2008 budget also includes an additional \$13.7 million in state and federal funds to build the new Winchester Readiness Center and Field Maintenance Shop in Franklin County. The state is kicking in \$3.2 million for the new armory, which will replace the oldest armory in Virginia, built in 1904.

The new armory will be home to about 215 guard members and provide administration, training, storage, maintenance and support for the 116th Infantry of Virginia.

Warner’s \$72 billion budget is \$6 billion larger than the two-year budget that expires June 30.

The largest part of the department’s budget – \$26.5 million – goes to defense preparedness, including operations and maintenance. The remainder includes more than \$12 million for support, including tuition and financial assistance for guard members and their families.

“The state’s contribution is very positive for us,” guard spokesman Lt. Col. Chester Carter III said. “I see some significant increases.”

The guard’s budget tops almost \$235 million, with the greatest portion of the funding from the federal government, Carter said. In fiscal year 2006, the state contributed \$8.5 million, with a majority of the money focused on work force and facility maintenance.

Warner’s proposed budget designates \$10.2 million for the guard.

Warner spokesman Kevin Hall said the guard has played a key role in the nation’s war on terror. Warner considers it a priority for the state

to “step up” funding for improvements at Fort Pickett and other training facilities, Hall said.

Fort Pickett would receive an additional \$1.2 million in funding under the proposal, bringing its budget to more than \$20 million per year. Camp Pendleton, the state military reservation in Virginia Beach, also receives money from the base funds.

In 1997, the state and guard assumed responsibilities at the Blackstone facility, which was shut down during the 1995 round of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission closings. The 42,000-acre base 60 miles southwest of Richmond serves both active and reserve components of the guard and provides facilities for various state and local agency training.

The additional money will be used to increase the police force at the base and provide additional work force at the base’s Maneuver Training Center. The center provides air, water and land training for the guard and other state and local agencies.

Warner is providing \$95,000 in recruitment incentives – offering a \$500 bonus to any guard member who successfully recruits a new person.

Carter said the guard is about 90 percent of the way to its September 2006 recruitment target. He said the war on terror and the guard’s transformation has made it a “tumultuous” couple of years for guard recruitment, but has “begun to work our way through that.”

To further help recruitment efforts, the budget includes \$3.7 million dollars for the Virginia Commonwealth Challenge Program. The program recruits 150-200 high school dropouts every six months to attend a residential “military style” school at Camp Pendleton to become “productive members of society,” Carter said.

“Hooligans Get Help with Transition.”

The Associated Press.

2006. Associated Press Newswires
(January 8, 12:28).

Fargo, N.D. (AP) – Members of the North Dakota Air National Guard’s 119th Fighter Wing say they are excited but worried as they prepare to take on a new mission.

The soldiers will be transitioning from a manned F-16 flying mission to a new mission involving the operation of unmanned aerial vehicles, in partnership with Grand Forks Air Force Base.

The change came after last year’s Base Realignment and Closure round.

“Anybody directly affiliated with the flying of those (F-16) aircraft is nervous, and worried about their future,” said Col. Bob Becklund, commander of the wing known as the “Happy Hooligans.” “This conversion that we’re going to go through now is unlike anything before.”

The Guard brought speakers to the Fargodome over the weekend to help put the change in perspective. Dale Henry, an author and corporate trainer from Tennessee, and Richard Smith, the command chief master sergeant of the Air National Guard, spent about two hours talking to the troops.

Henry, who spent nearly 30 years in the Guard himself, urged the soldiers to “commit to something that’s bigger than you.”

“Service is the greatest calling you can have,” he said.

Members of the 119th said the message hit home.

“I think it helped people say it’s OK for things to change; it will be better if you let it happen and if you’re part of that,” said Tech. Sgt. Samantha Clarke.

“I hope it helps people embrace the change and realize it’s going to make the Air National Guard and the Air Force a better place,” Staff Sgt. Shannon Clausen said.

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Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

January 3, 2006

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More jobs, cash coming to Fort Sam

Residents battle BRAC for bases

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More jobs, cash coming to Fort Sam

January 3, 2006

Express News

Sig Christenson

Fort Sam Houston is moving to become America's hub for joint enlisted medical training and will get new troops as the Army transforms — actions expected to bring 13,575 workers and students, 5,000 families and \$2 billion in new construction.

The post soon will launch a \$250,000 environmental impact study, a federal prerequisite for Fort Sam's dramatic expansion, and is preparing to accept the first of 5,000

military students from installations around the country.

Groundbreaking won't begin for another year, but Fort Sam will raise or revamp at least 46 buildings, one for the Directed-Energy Lab now at Brooks City-Base. The lab concept mirrors that base's goal of mixing and matching private and military research, but former Mayor Howard Peak said it faces hurdles — including funding and access to Fort Sam, once open to the public but closed since 2001.

"I think there's great potential for it," Peak said. "But it depends on what other activities and what other terms and conditions the Army will want. It was a little different at Brooks. We had a wide-open facility as a result of Brooks Development Authority taking over. It was no longer an Air Force base."

The 2005 base closure round is over, and with it the dread that communities across the nation were forced to endure for the fifth time since 1988. But the clock is ticking, and Fort Sam is mapping plans to accept realigned missions within the closure round's six-year window.

Brooks was among 21 installations ordered to close by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. And as part of the closure round, Wilford Hall Medical Center will become a clinic, costing the city one of its three Level 1 trauma centers.

Brooke Army Medical Center, which is to absorb 1,940 staffers from Wilford Hall's 59th Medical Wing, is one of the jewels in Fort Sam's new crown.

BRAC Commission Early Bird

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When the expansion process ends in 2012, the 3,010-acre post will have more concrete, less green space and a new service-neutral name for its hospital that may require an Army surgeon general's warning for anguished soldiers.

BAMC could become San Antonio Regional Medical Center North — SARMC. Wilford Hall would be San Antonio Regional Medical Center South.

Fort Sam's commander, Maj. Gen. George W. Weightman, conceded that the matter "will be an emotional issue" but said the hospitals might get other names and that he sees more opportunities than problems in the transition.

"I think the benefits for us are, we hope we will build synergy between different research facilities there, both amongst themselves and areas that can benefit the military in medical research," he explained.

"The challenges, of course, are, what do we have to offer to attract them there? And part of it is, we have a big medical center where we're already doing a fair amount of medical research, we've got a great location right off of I-35 and we've got ties in with other research facilities."

Fort Sam's most complex BRAC-related initiative will be creating the new Defense Department's Joint Enlisted Training Center. Perfect timing will be needed as the post expands its academic campus and builds dorms and support facilities while assembling a joint staff, writing a tri-service curriculum and doubling its student base.

Eight Army headquarters will move here as a result of BRAC.

Some, such as the Installation Management Agency in Crystal City, Va., have a deep reach. Other, more obscure outfits, one of them the Army Environmental Center, are expected to bolster the area economy because they're likely to bring new business to town.

"The environmental center is like the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence," said Mark Frye, 2006 chairman of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce's military affairs committee, referring to a site at Brooks City-Base. "Many of the businesses that do business with AFCEE have local offices."

Thanks to the realignment of smaller units not initially listed by BRAC, growth at Fort Sam will be greater than what was expected last summer, when the figures were 9,228 new employees for its 26,289-strong work force. Most of the surge will come from BRAC, but Army transformation efforts will also push expansion.

Now at Fort Sam's Quadrangle, the growing 5th U.S. Army will put some of its operations into temporary buildings but will later move into renovated structures — one of them likely the now-vacant 1930s-era South Beach Pavilion, a 124,000-square-foot building.

Fifth Army has managed National Guard and Reserve component training, readiness and mobilization, but soon will focus on homeland defense as part of the U.S. Northern Command.

The U.S. 1st Army, now at Fort McPherson, Ga., will take over 5th Army's old role by Oct. 1.

U.S. Army South, now in the old BAMC and responsible for military missions in 32 South and Central American nations, will be re-designated the 6th U.S. Army by fall. And Fort Sam's 470th Military Intelligence Brigade, which supports 6th Army, will get up to 700 new employees.

Many of the most visible changes at Fort Sam are driven by BRAC, with perhaps the most ambitious part of its expansion being the Directed-Energy Lab. It will move to a 240,000-square-foot building to be constructed on the post's Pershing Range, a 300-plus-acre field used for target practice until 1990.

Once cleanup work is done, it could be the vortex for a medical research park. Fort Sam commander Weightman outlined the idea during

a Dec. 7 meeting of the BRAC Steering Committee, a group of city, Bexar County and chamber of commerce leaders. Some at the meeting say he got strong support, but warn it won't be easy or cheap to bring the concept to fruition.

"What sounds good is, it solidifies San Antonio as the center for military medicine in the United States," said City Councilman Richard Perez. "The difficult piece of the plan is coming up with the infrastructure dollars to make that concept a reality."

Perez, chairman of the council's Military Affairs Committee, said a new exit off Interstate 35 would be needed for the research park.

Some infrastructure projects are on tap, including a resurfacing on Walters Street from I-35 to the post. It will include sidewalks under a \$4 million state-funded project. Other road and drainage projects on the drawing boards will cost tens of millions of dollars and require federal, state and local funding, he said.

Fort Sam, meantime, wants to expand existing academic links with the University of Texas Health Science Center, the University of Nebraska and Baylor University. Weightman envisions new alliances with UTSA and schools such as those in the Alamo Community College District.

Peak's experience with Brooks City-Base leads him to think it will be a long-term effort. Weightman is more optimistic.

"I think it's very much our intent to make it a long-term arrangement, but if you're asking, do I think it will take five or six years to develop, the answer is no. I think there's things we can do in the next one or two years that will greatly expand our cooperation between our various academic organizations."

Residents battle BRAC for bases

January 1, 2006
Texarkana Gazette
Aaron Brand

It began with a pledge to "fight like hell" and ended with a substantial victory: thousands of defense industry jobs remaining in the Texarkana area.

That's how the base closure process played out for Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant last year.

To the surprise of many here, in May both bases landed on the U.S. Defense Department's list of bases to shutter in this latest, and last scheduled, round of closures.

Many thought RRAD's surge in war-related workload would prevent it, at least, from making the hit list.

The forecast was grim: thousands of jobs lost, thousands more directly and indirectly affected and a complete fence-to-fence shutdown of the Bowie County defense plant.

Red River and Lone Star's inclusion set into motion months of brain and brawn to work on convincing the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to keep the bases open.

Locals who fought in 1995 to keep Red River open teamed with other local officials, a lobbyist and Texarkana's congressional contingent to piece together a fact-based case to present to the BRAC Commission at a San Antonio regional hearing.

Rallies and town hall meetings in local towns kept residents informed and energized in the months leading up to the final BRAC Commission decision.

And local citizens from across the Ark-La-Tex turned out in force to welcome the commissioners who came to Texarkana to tour Red River.

They re-created what will surely live on in Texarkana lore as a “sea of yellow” to show their unwavering support for local bases.

Lone Star, despite pleading politicians, was denied a visit by one of the nine BRAC Commissioners, four of whom visited Red River.

And at the regional hearing held in July in San Antonio, nearly 2,200 yellow-clad Red River and Lone Star backers showed up to fill an auditorium and symbolize the depth of support for RRAD and LSAAP.

Ultimately, the BRAC Commission recommended that Red River’s mission be scaled back, moving some missile work to Letterkenny Army Depot and munitions functions to McAlester Ammunition Plant and Blue Grass Army Depot.

About 350 jobs could be lost at RRAD, but many locals, seeing what could have been lost, were happy with the outcome.

The commission also recommended that Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant be closed. About

400 jobs could be lost there, but local defense complex backers are working to privatize the land and keep Day & Zimmermann, LSAAP’s operating contractor.

Still, the news was worrisome to Lone Star workers, some of whom have worked at the plant 40 years.

A ramped-up workload at Red River led to an announcement that as many as 1,000 new workers would be needed. Job fairs were held to gather the applications of potential workers, but by year’s end, new hiring had not begun.

And U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, came to RRAD in November to celebrate and meet with Red River workers and talk about what’s widely seen as a fortunate outcome of the BRAC process.

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ADD-ONS TO DEFENSE BILL ILL-SERVES TROOPS AND AMERICA

By Diane M. Grassi
MichNews.com
Dec 21, 2005

The U.S. House of Representatives wrapped up 2005 by adopting a \$453 billion budget for the 2006 Defense Appropriations Act. It is now left up to the U.S. Senate to decide which amendments to include or not include in its authorization of funding, intended primarily for the U.S. military in order for them to pay troops, continue operations in Iraq through March 2006, and for the military to maintain U.S. national security.

But it is hardly clear to Americans why there are all kinds of legal machinations going on in the last minutes of 2005 in the Senate, on a defense bill largely decided prior to Labor Day 2005. And the debate is not about the appropriations for our military but rather about items which have little to do with the armed services.

It has long been a practice on Capitol Hill to tack on amendments for funding legislation or special projects to other funding or budget bills if they do not stand a chance of being passed as stand-alone legislation.

Doing so with “must-have” legislation has been roundly criticized, allegedly forcing members of Congress to approve measures they would ordinarily reject. However, there is a criterion regarding the qualification for such amendments by virtue of Senate Rules.

The application of the Rules themselves has now been piled on top of the bill’s negotiations. Specifically, Senate Rule 28 is at issue, which states that once an Appropriations Conference report has been finalized in negotiations, additional projects may not be attached to such a measure. In addition, that item must be related to the substance of the budget bill being passed.

In this instance, Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK), Chairman of the Senates’ Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, has attached the controversial provision to allow oil drilling in the Artic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), stating that “Oil is related to national security. The largest consumer of oil in the U.S. is the Department of Defense.” According to many Democrats and some Republicans as well, Senator Stevens’ attempt at “back-door” legislation is disingenuous and holds the needs of American troops in abeyance.

The vote on inclusion of ANWR in the defense bill is to take place on December 21, 2005. The Democrats have threatened a filibuster in order to ultimately block floor votes if there are not enough votes in order strip ANWR from the defense spending legislation. But Senate Rules cannot simply be amended to the liking of one political party or another. It does, however, sidetrack

the issue at hand which is to provide necessary funding for the military, which was to have passed by October 1, 2005. Military paychecks have been guaranteed through December 31, 2005, only due to a stop-gap measure passed in mid-December by the Congress.

Simply because the calendar is running out does not take lawmakers off the hook from rationally voting on legislation. The ANWR issue has been a contentious one ever since the 19 million acres were purchased by the U.S. government in 1980. Environmentalists as well as oil companies are the two largest groups with opposing arguments, but more importantly is potentially how much ANWR will alleviate American dependence on foreign oil. It is estimated that the 1.5 million acres reserved for drilling could ultimately produce 10 billion barrels of oil with production of 900,000 barrels a day by the year 2025; hardly a dent in the needed supply for a country which devours 20.2 million barrels of oil per day in the year 2005.

And while ANWR is grabbing the headlines, the other attachments to defense spending, which the House has already ratified, includes more aid for the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast due to Hurricane Katrina and other storms to the tune of \$29 billion, \$3.9 billion for Avian Flu preparedness with a provision with liability protections for pharmaceutical manufacturers and \$2 billion for low-income heating and energy assistance (LIHEAP) due to heating costs for the winter expected to escalate in price by approximately 30%. And those are only the main items which have been reported, as the bill has been said to be over 1,000 pages.

will be given in offshoring military parts to India and China.

How many of the additional attachments to the Defense Appropriations Act are indeed relative to defense spending, we may never know, nor will many of our lawmakers, who have but skimmed through the bill. The 11th hour is not the time, it could be argued, to start familiarizing oneself with issues on such important legislation. However, what prevented them from doing so, say, on their recesses before Labor Day or the two weeks recess for Thanksgiving?

The good news is that the troops will see a 3.1% rise in salary, identical to the one which Congress passed for itself. Still not yet clear is how far health and pay benefits will be extended for reservists. The breakdown presently passed by the House is \$97 billion for military personnel, \$123.6 billion for operation and maintenance, \$76.5 billion for procurement, \$72.1 billion for research and development, test and evaluation, \$2.1 billion for revolving and management funds, \$22.7 billion for other Department of Defense programs and \$50 billion for emergency wartime appropriations.

With the recent acceptance by the Congress of the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission report and with the 2006 Defense Quadrennial Review due in February 2006 from the Pentagon, it has yet to be determined how much they will influence allocation of the funds from this legislation over the coming year. Still remaining under scrutiny are procurement contracts and how much leeway contractors

Whichever way the ANWR provision is decided upon, however, perhaps it has opened the eyes of the voting public as to how far U.S. lawmakers will go in putting their politics above those fighting a war on foreign soil and their lack of rationale in doing so. This latest defense bill grandstanding is only but one recent example of key legislation being held up not necessarily for the greater good of the U.S., but for individual posturing in an effort to score points within the two political parties.

While no one on Capitol Hill has an axe to grind with providing funding for our military, the funding for troops in the field for necessary equipment replenishment, body and Humvee armor as well as equipment upgrades was promised months and months ago. The behavior of the Congress all year long has not passed muster on many issues regarding the proper funding of our troops. For lawmakers now to use the last days of 2005 to exact attention upon themselves is distasteful at best. They should rather be focusing on appropriations oversight for our troops to ensure that the allocated billions will be properly spent, and that would perhaps curry them more favor from the American people as well.

Influx of defense jobs puts onus on localities

By Robert Salonga

Baltimore Sun

Originally published December 21, 2005

WASHINGTON // It was good news last month when Congress officially approved plans to send thousands of defense jobs to Maryland's two largest military installations, but before the economic boost is toted up, the adjacent communities must find a way to build and pay for infrastructure expansions. Anne Arundel County's Fort Meade and Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County are fast-tracking preparations for an estimated total job increase of 7,500, the growth resulting from base closures in surrounding states.

Under the Defense Department's base plan, the changes -- additions of about 5,300 military personnel at Fort Meade and 2,200 at Aberdeen -- must be initiated within two years and completed within six. The first deadline is no problem, but six years is a relative sprint considering what is needed to handle the additional thousands in families, businesses and contractors expected to follow the relocated workers.

The communities anticipated expansion when the latest round of the Base Realignment and Closure process began this year. Both bases were reasonably safe from major losses because Fort Meade is adjacent to the National Security Agency and Aberdeen Proving Ground is a straight drive on the interstate from Washington.

Obtaining funding is the foremost, but least certain, task in the early planning stages. The federal government has the biggest pot of money available for the expansions, so municipalities are aiming their best pitches

there to ensure minimal impact on state and county coffers.

"The demand on the federal dollar is pretty significant," said J. Thomas Sadowski, director of the Harford County Office of Economic Development. "That means we have to show how we're doing things in the most quick and efficient manner."

The state can reasonably expect a good return on whatever costs it ends up shouldering: Fort Meade and NSA, together the largest employer in Maryland, contribute \$4 billion annually to the state economy, and local officials estimate a \$1 billion boost in that figure when the expansion is complete.

APG is estimated to produce nearly \$2 billion annually.

At Fort Meade, Route 175, which runs along the post's eastern border, is a target for expansion. This fall, the state's congressional delegation secured \$12.5 million to widen the road that will become an even more important artery into the growing installation. The estimated \$100 million road project includes noise barriers around the base perimeter.

Also in the area, developers are constructing at least 37 new residential areas with 10 or more housing units. Odenton Town Center, a 1,600-acre site, is a mix of retail and residential developments under way that locals hope will help the area handle an growing number of services for the expected population influx.

On the work force front, community advocates are brainstorming incentives, from schools to jobs, to encourage reluctant workers to move from states such as Virginia and New Jersey. There is talk of establishing a homeland security curriculum

at local middle and high schools along with programs aimed at accommodating spousal employment needs.

Virginia Beach council considers plan to save Oceana jets

December 21, 2005
Associated Press

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. The city council of Virginia Beach, Virginia, votes tonight on a plan that would keep Navy jets at Oceana Naval Air Station without condemning thousands of homes near the base's runways.

The proposal would ban new development in accident-prone zones. That's the alternative to condemning and buying existing homes and businesses as the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission demanded the city do or risk losing the Navy jets.

The 20-part package being considered by the council also would limit development in other areas subject to jet noise. Loss of the jets may also lead the Navy to drop its disputed plans to build a practice landing field in northeastern North Carolina.

If the council approves the plan, Virginia Beach will ask the General Assembly next month for permission to use eminent domain to condemn about 40 acres of vacant land in the crash zones to prevent development.

(BW) Fitch Assigns Initial 'A' Rating to Yuma Union High SD No. 70, AZ School Bonds

Houston City Times

December 21, 2005

By Business Editors

AUSTIN, Texas--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 20, 2005--Fitch Ratings has assigned an initial 'A' rating to the Yuma Union High School District No. 70 of Yuma County, Arizona's (the district) \$34.375 million school improvement bonds, project of 2005, series A (2006). Additionally, Fitch has assigned the 'A' rating to the district's \$4.4 million outstanding school improvement bonds. The bonds are scheduled to sell the week of Jan. 9, 2006, via a negotiated offering through Peacock, Hislop, Staley & Given. The bonds are direct and general obligations of the district and are payable from an unlimited ad valorem tax levied on all taxable property within the district. Proceeds will be used to construct various district facilities and to pay issuance costs. The Rating Outlook is Stable. The 'A' rating reflects the district's modest debt burden, satisfactory financial position, and expanding tax base. The state, through the 'Students FIRST' capital program, has assumed a more prominent role in financing Arizona school district infrastructure needs. Fitch considers the state's expanded role in financing school facility needs a stabilizing factor which has helped strengthen the district's debt position. The district's financial performance has been typical of Arizona school districts, characterized by small operating margins. Ongoing residential development throughout the district is producing tax base and population gains, and the subsequent enrollment increases are driving facility expansion needs.

Located in southwest Arizona in Yuma County, the district totals nearly 2,500 square miles and contains the communities

of Yuma, San Luis, and Somerton. Enrollment presently totals nearly 10,000, and has been growing at a healthy 5% annually over the past several years. The residential component of the tax base has been increasing as a result of the healthy housing market and now represents 55% of the total market value. Local unemployment rates historically have been well above state and national averages, reflecting the large migrant worker population in the area. The county's October 2005 unemployment rate was 15.7%, compared to the state's 4.9% and the 5.0% national average.

The district's debt burden is expected to remain low, given the substantial capital financing provided by the state. The State Facilities Board (SFB) has approved funding of roughly \$50 million for the construction of two new high schools, one that opened in 2005 and one scheduled to open in fall, 2007. As a supplement to the SFB-funded projects, district voters approved \$70 million in class B bonds in November 2005 to construct performing arts, athletic and vocational educational facilities, as well as renovation and remodeling projects. These bonds are the first installment under this authorization, which is expected to finance facility needs through 2010 or 2011.

Direct debt per capita and as a percentage of market value presently are low at \$231 and 0.8%, respectively. Overall ratios are only moderately higher at \$647 per capita and 2.2% of full cash value. Above average principal repayment is a positive credit factor, with more than 65% retired in ten years. Given that the district's outstanding tax-supported debt is retired in fiscal 2006, officials do not anticipate any significant secondary assessed valuation (SAV) tax rate impact from the current authorization.

The district reported a modest operating loss in fiscal 2004 but is projecting a surplus for the year that ended June 30, 2005. State aid for operations remains the dominant operating revenue source, averaging between 70%-75% of total general fund revenues over the past five fiscal years. The fiscal 2006 budget includes 30 growth-related staff additions, and a salary increase of more than 3%. Annual enrollment growth is expected to continue in the 4%-6% range over the near term, and district officials anticipate growth to continue for the foreseeable future. Development projects reportedly are proliferating due to the increase in the service sector, expansion at local military bases, and the attractiveness of the area in terms of cost of living.

The area economy is anchored by agriculture, the military, light industry, and tourism. Located at the confluence of the Gila and Colorado rivers, Yuma boasts an agricultural sector that generates \$800 million annually. The U.S. Marine Corps Air Station and the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground employ more than 7,000 workers combined and contribute roughly \$600 million to the local economy each year. Neither facility is slated for personnel reductions through the current Base Realignment and Closure process; in fact, district officials report that both bases are expanding. Fitch views the military's significant presence a stabilizing factor, at least for the near term. The favorable winter climate attracts significant numbers of seasonal tourists to the area.

Fitch's rating definitions and the terms of use of such ratings are available on the agency's public site, www.fitchratings.com. Published ratings, criteria and methodologies are available from this site, at all times. Fitch's code of conduct, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, affiliate

firewall, compliance and other relevant policies and procedures are also available from the 'Code of Conduct' section of this site.

**BRAC effort gets \$100K boost
Money from state to bolster recruiting efforts in D.C. area**

Tuesday, December 20, 2005

By Shelby .G Spires

Times Aerospace

Plans to recruit military workers from northern Virginia to the Huntsville area got a major boost Monday from Gov. Bob Riley.

Riley presented a \$100,000 check to local leaders "so that we can get the word out about what a great place North Alabama - the whole state, really - is to live and work," Riley said during a ceremony at Redstone Arsenal.

The money will be used to bolster recruitment efforts planned for next year in the area around Washington, D.C., and northern Virginia - the current home of major Army organizations that soon will move to Redstone thanks to the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC.

Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer said the money is vital to the city's effort to convince people to move here. Local delegations plan several trips in the coming months to "put the word out about what a wonderful place Huntsville and Redstone is to live and work," she said.

Major organizations to be located at Redstone over the next five years include the Missile Defense Agency, Army Materiel Command and Space & Missile Defense Command headquarters.

Shortly after the presentation ceremony, Riley, Spencer, Madison County Commission Chairman Mike Gillespie, Madison Mayor Sandy Kirkindall and other officials met with Redstone's commanding officer, Army Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, about community and Army issues related to completing the BRAC moves.

The moves are expected to bring about 5,000 military, civilian and contractor jobs to the arsenal, and another 10,000 support jobs are projected to follow to North Alabama region.

Gillespie said the job numbers are still changing.

The Pentagon has up to five years to complete the relocations, but the moves are expected to take place before 2010.

Gillespie said the Washington area is the major focus, "but it's not just there."

"Other areas, like Atlanta, have people and jobs slated to come here," he said. "We are discussing where to go, what to do and planning for that now."

Examiner Editorial - Approve the lease, then really play hardball

The Examiner

December 21, 2005

We don't envy the 13 members of the D.C. Council, who will be voting on a 30-year baseball stadium lease. The dilemma they face is real: The city will not issue construction bonds - and Major League Baseball will not sell the Nationals - until the lease is approved.

However, if council members do approve the lease, they also will be agreeing to cover all construction overruns, which have already increased nearly 25 percent since the deal was announced by Mayor Anthony Williams last year. And if they vote it down, they'll be blamed for the sudden departure of a baseball team that's taken city officials three decades to lure back to the nation's capital.

It didn't have to be so hard. In his eagerness to entice baseball back to the city it abandoned, the mayor forgot a cardinal rule of negotiation: If you want it more than the other guy, you've already lost. While MLB officials were still coyly "considering" relocating the floundering Montreal Expos to Puerto Rico, Williams was all but offering to be the Nats' batboy himself if they picked Washington.

But that was the critical time when the mayor should have held something back. He then could have leveraged the euphoria of the Nats' inaugural season to hammer out a much better deal. At the very least, he should have demanded that the new team cover cost overruns beyond the generous \$535 million the D.C. Council agreed to spend - more public money for a professional sports stadium than has ever been spent anywhere in the country. MLB officials would have been fools to turn down such an offer. Even more so now, after the Nats proved they could sell 2.7 million tickets while playing in RFK Stadium.

Council finance committee Chairman Jack Evans, D-Ward 2, has called the lease "the best negotiated deal we could get from Major League Baseball." If that's the case, the city needs to hire some much better negotiators.

Estimates for the 41,000-seat stadium on the Anacostia River are now up to \$667 million. Under last year's agreement, the city is obligated to cover the \$132 million difference. MLB has agreed to throw in a paltry \$20 million more, a somewhat meaningless gesture since baseball will eventually get it all back in the form of extra off-game parking revenue.

Since an earlier council vote limited the amount of stadium bonds that could be issued to \$535 million, the difference has to come from another source. The D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute says that "a review of the current stadium budget reveals that the District does not have sufficient capacity from the capped bond amount and other revenues to pay for stadium costs," even though the city is "taking unusual steps to address the higher costs."

Those "unusual steps" include subtracting necessary infrastructure costs from the final total figure; using \$43 million in contingency funds that might be needed later to clean up the site, and tapping almost half of the District's rainy day fund. This in a city that can't even afford to renovate its dilapidated public schools.

Williams sold the stadium idea to the city as a way of attracting economic development along the long-neglected Anacostia River, which was a mess before the Senators moved away. The fact that the city didn't also automatically hand over development rights in the project's 21-acre footprint points to the one way out of the council's current dilemma.

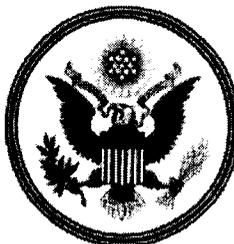
The new city-financed glass, steel and limestone ballpark will attract millions of fans each year. Those fans in turn will attract numerous commercial enterprises that should be willing to help pay for the infrastructure that will literally bring millions of customers to their doors. At this late date, the council's best option is to approve the stadium lease at the agreed-upon price - and demand that it stay within the budget. It must also make sure - in writing - that the same negotiators who gave away far too much to MLB do not make the same mistake twice.

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“Virginia Plan Keeps Cecil in Navy’s Eye.”

The Florida Times-Union
December 22, 2005

But Mayor Peyton Says He’s Not Interested in Resuming Attempts to Reactivate the Former Base

Virginia Beach’s plan to save a major Navy jet base doesn’t go as far as a federal panel ordered, prompting some Florida lawmakers to suggest Jacksonville is still in the picture.

But Mayor John Peyton, who abandoned a bid for the fighter jets in October, remains adamant that he is not interested in reopening the pursuit to return jets to Cecil Field, a former Navy base that became a business park after its 1999 closure.

“Listen, I think this community evaluated the opportunity and has made a decision that we want to move forward with a commerce center,” Peyton said Tuesday as Virginia Beach finalized its plan. “I heard that loud and clear. I didn’t hear a groundswell of support.”

With final judgment still uncertain, supporters of reopening Cecil say the city could reconsider its bid for the 11,000 jobs at Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia. Peyton and the City Council, where a strong

majority opposed reopening, have the ultimate say.

But other key politicians say an opportunity still exists if the Pentagon decides by summer that Virginia Beach did not comply with the order by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to have plans in place to address encroachment. If Virginia failed, the jets would be sent to Cecil Field as long as Florida did its part, according to the commission.

An inspector general for the Pentagon is required to certify by June whether Virginia meets the requirements.

“Let me judge that at the time,” said U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., about pushing again for Cecil’s reuse. “The master jet base is going someplace else if Virginia Beach can’t comply by March. And Cecil Field, under the law, has the first crack at it.”

State Rep. Stan Jordan, R-Jacksonville, who leads the Florida House committee on the military, said “an intellectually honest revisit” of the Navy’s return to Cecil would be appropriate. Jacksonville and the state would have to pay the \$200 million cost for relocation of businesses and turn over the land.

“I think the state would have a vested interest,” he said.

Gov. Jeb Bush has said he believes the Cecil proposal was justified. But his top military lobbyist, retired Adm. Robert Natter, said Bush would defer to local leaders.

“I haven’t heard of any movement to pressure the mayor if Virginia Beach doesn’t meet the criteria,” Natter said.

Even with Peyton’s opposition, his aides have kept watch on Virginia’s progress. Chief military aide Dan McCarthy e-mailed several top advisers and a Chamber of Commerce official a Virginia newspaper account Wednesday of the city’s plan.

John Daigle, former political consultant for the Better Westside Project opposition group, said he sensed nothing that would worry him about the proposal having a serious chance at new life.

Virginia Beach’s plan this month includes most of the BRAC order. One condition, however, was a program to condemn properties incompatible with Oceana’s operations – an order that could affect 3,400 homes.

Instead the Virginia Beach City Council approved a program Tuesday that could condemn only vacant land. Existing homes and businesses – even though they fail the compatibility test – would not be at risk.

Banking on repeated support from Navy brass and Jacksonville’s exit, Virginia Beach officials decided not to go as far as BRAC ordered.

The condemnation issue was the riskiest political part of the order, because residents feared losing their homes. Many houses had been there for decades. The Virginia General Assembly also must approve the new condemnation power, and the city also wants the state to chip in half of the \$15 million minimum cost per year. The BRAC deadline to complete the program is March.

“Virginia Beach has a steep hill to climb and until they get to the top, everything is pure speculation,” said U.S. Rep. Ander Crenshaw, a Jacksonville Republican who pushed the Cecil proposal.

Times-union writer Gregory Piatt contributed to this report.

“Could Incentives Keep C-17s Aloft for Long Beach?” Los Angeles (CA)

Business Journal
January 9, 2006

In a novel approach to battle defense cuts, Boeing Co. and Long Beach officials are finalizing an incentive package they hope to take to Washington D.C. next month to convince lawmakers and Defense Department officials to spare the C-17 military cargo plane from budget cuts.

The incentive package, which could include reductions in Boeing’s lease rates and water and electricity bills, as well as state tax credits, is aimed at knocking several million dollars off the production costs for each C-17 in the hopes that defense officials would be less willing to end the program.

Last month, an Air Force official indicated that the Pentagon was leaning toward ending purchase orders for the C-17. In response, Long Beach officials assembled a “red team” of city, utility, regional and state officials who have come up with about two dozen ways to cut costs for Boeing at its facility near Long Beach Airport. Among the more unusual proposals: Long Beach would assume control of the facility’s fire department, which is currently operated by Boeing.

“We’re treating this just as if we were trying to woo a business into the city. We’re looking for any way we can find to shave operating costs, to make the program more attractive,” said Robert Swayze, economic development bureau manager for the city of Long Beach.

On a separate track, Boeing, Long Beach and other elected officials are mounting an all-out push to convince both the Defense Department and Congress on the military value of the cargo transport plane.

All this is aimed at maintaining C-17 production at Boeing’s Long Beach plant. About 6,500 Boeing employees work on the C-17 program, which pumps an estimated \$1.4 billion a year into the local economy. That figure does not include the hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact from the nearly 500 Boeing suppliers in California that provide parts and initial assembly for the plane.

But Long Beach’s red team approach is admittedly a long shot. The Pentagon is looking to cut billions of dollars from parts of its budget; at best, any package of incentives that the city and state put together would be in the tens of millions of dollars, far less than the production cost of even one C-17 plane.

“This is clearly an uphill struggle,” one official on the red team said privately.

Mounting pressures

Since the program’s inception in 1988, Chicago-based Boeing has produced 144 C-17 planes, with the 145th plane due for delivery later this month. Initially, the planes cost more than \$200 million each to produce; now, Boeing has whittled down the cost to about \$185 million per plane, according to Dan Page, director of airlift business development for Boeing.

The C-17 is currently funded through 180 planes, which would keep the production lines rolling in Long Beach until early 2008. Boeing and local elected officials are trying to push legislation now in both houses of

Congress that would fund 42 additional planes, which would keep the production lines humming through 2010.

Faced with mounting costs for the war in Iraq and overstretched military deployments, Pentagon officials indicated last fall that they were seriously considering axing the program.

In late November, Long Beach officials, including Mayor Beverly O'Neill, went to Washington to meet with members of Congress and Defense Department officials to rally support for the C-17. They focused primarily on the military value of the plane and the economic benefits that the C-17 program brings to Southern California.

In the event that President George W. Bush follows the recommendations of his Defense Department advisers and cuts funding for the C-17 in his 2006-07 budget proposal, Congress could act to restore some or all of the funds, which is why local officials met with members of Congress.

The Washington trip represented the more traditional lobbying approach to beat back defense cuts; Southern California officials used it successfully last year to save the Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo from the latest round of base closures. It's been followed up by a letter-writing campaign to President Bush, including letters from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and from members of Congress.

Boeing even went one step further, encouraging its 700 suppliers for the C-17 program in 42 states to write their members of Congress and urge them to show support for the program.

The company has even more to lose than future C-17 orders. In a risky gambit,

Boeing has ordered parts from suppliers for seven more planes beyond the 180 authorized.

"We must pay our suppliers for those parts even if the program is stopped," Page said. He did not provide details on how much Boeing is paying for those parts, but the costs likely run into the tens of millions of dollars.

But the post-Thanksgiving Washington trip apparently did not sway Defense Department officials. Last month, Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne said the Air Force supported an internal recommendation to halt the C-17 program at 180 planes. The internal Air Force report favored buying new combination tanker-cargo transport planes instead of the C-17s, which are not equipped to carry additional fuel. The C-17 ferries troops, tanks and various military equipment.

"We are feeling not uncomfortable" with the current planned inventory for the C-17, Wynne said at a mid-December Defense Department briefing.

That's when Long Beach officials launched their unconventional approach of a cost-cutting campaign focused on incentives and tax credits. Such a strategy, which is usually aimed at attracting new companies or facilities, has rarely, if ever, been tried in an effort to keep a defense program.

Unique Strategy

Long Beach officials assembled a "red team," the code name once given to strike teams in the aerospace industry and subsequently adopted by economic development officials. This red team is composed of officials from several city departments, the County of Los Angeles, the

state Business, Transportation and Housing agency and Southern California Edison (a unit of Rosemead-based Edison International).

Long Beach has taken similar actions before, but always for private companies with no taxpayer-funded programs like defense contracts at stake. Two years ago, the city assembled an incentive program for Boeing in an attempt to have the aerospace giant locate production for its 7E7 commercial jet in Long Beach; that effort was ultimately unsuccessful as Boeing decided to set up its final assembly plant in the Puget Sound region of Washington State.

“We prefer to look at this as job creation and retention,” said Reggie Harrison, deputy city manager for Long Beach. “We’re bringing people to the table and asking them to look at anything they can do to make Boeing’s pricing as competitive as it can be.”

Over the next two weeks, the red team will meet with Boeing executives to finalize the list of incentives. City officials will then present the list to the Long Beach City Council at a Jan. 24 hearing. Then, Boeing and city officials will jointly present the incentive package to the Department of Defense sometime in February.

“We have a window of about a month before funding decisions get locked in,” Page said.

Among the two dozen incentives being considered: cuts in the lease rate that Boeing pays for the portion of its facility on city-owned land; cuts in electric bills; a reduction in rates paid for city-supplied water; waiving of gate fees and other fees for use of the adjacent Long Beach Airport; a rebate of some county property taxes for

improvements made to the facility property; and having the city fire department take over from Boeing at a sharply reduced cost.

There is also talk of trying to find one or more tenants to fill some unused space in Boeing’s Long Beach facility. The lease payments to Boeing could then be used to lower Boeing’s overhead for the C-17 program even further.

City officials are also pressing the state to extend its enterprise zone tax credit program beyond the 2007 sunset date. And the city is also drafting legislation it hopes to unveil later this month in Sacramento to expand an existing tax credit program developed for the Joint Strike Fighter program to include the C-17 program.

State Sen. George Runner, R-Lancaster, carried the Joint Strike Fighter tax credit legislation and has said he is not opposed to expanding it to the C-17.

Whether this effort will be enough to sway Defense Department officials is an open question. At most, whatever combination of incentives is agreed upon this month will only shave a few million dollars off the cost of each plane – hardly enough to aid the Defense Department in its search to cut billions of dollars from its budget.

More substantial savings would likely depend on additional state funds and whatever Boeing can do internally to make its production lines more efficient.

While a state package resembling the \$200 million incentive deal that Tennessee put together to woo Nissan Motor North America’s headquarters from L.A. County last fall is out of the question, Long Beach and Boeing officials are clearly hoping the

state can do more than is currently on the table.

“What would really be nice is if the state could kick in some more money,” Swayze said.

Calls to the governor’s press office requesting information on Schwarzenegger’s plans to help save the C-17 program were not returned. But one state official said there really isn’t a whole lot more that the state can do.

“We don’t have a very rich array of tools,” said Barry Sedlik, undersecretary of the state’s Business Transportation and Housing agency. “We used to have the manufacturer’s tax credit; now we no longer even have that,” he said, referring to the move by former Gov. Gray Davis and the Legislature to eliminate that tax credit during the 2002-03 budget crisis.

In the meantime, Page said Boeing is working on ways to make its C-17 assembly line more efficient.

“With each plane we make, the unit cost is going down,” he said.

“Owens Requests \$83.3 Million.”

The Baltimore (MD) Sun
January 11, 2006

About Half the Money Would Fund School and Road Improvements around Fort Meade
Legislative Preview

Bracing for a defense job boom at Fort Meade, Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens yesterday asked the county legislative delegation for \$83.3 million from the state, about half to help fund school and road improvements around the Army post.

As General Assembly was preparing to convene today, Owens told the county’s delegation and other county officials at a breakfast meeting in Annapolis that Anne Arundel needs financial assistance from lawmakers to begin vital infrastructure projects.

The money she requested yesterday would fund the expansion of Route 175 along Fort Meade’s perimeter and provide the foundation for a math and science magnet program at Meade High School.

“The BRAC is coming,” Owens said, referring to the Base Realignment and Closure Act that was approved by Congress and President Bush late last year.

About 5,300 defense jobs will be relocating to Fort Meade, in addition to at least 10,000 related private-sector jobs. “We have real work, substantial work, yet to pursue,” she said.

Maryland officials have said that the influx of tens of thousands of defense workers into the state over the next decade would require billions of dollars in infrastructure improvements.

Owens, a Democrat, said the demands are such that she has apprehension about the county’s ability to help fund the redevelopment of the shuttered Crownsville Hospital Center and help pay for a proposed state horse park in Gambrills.

An environmental assessment of Crownsville released yesterday by the county said the asbestos cleanup and demolition of 34 buildings would cost \$17.5 million. Other capital costs could push the price to more than \$25 million.

Owens said that if she doesn't receive assurances from Van T. Mitchell, deputy secretary for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, by the end of next week that the state will foot most of the bill, the county will step away from assuming control of the site.

"I don't know how I could commit to that and leave a white elephant to my successor," she said.

She said she has similar reservations about the proposed horse park. The Maryland Stadium Authority selected the Navy Academy's 857-acre dairy farm in October over Fair Hill in Cecil County. The facility is expected to cost tens of millions of dollars, and some of the funding is expected to come from the county if the park is built in Gambrills. The stadium authority will finish a feasibility study on the horse park within a few weeks.

Owens, who did not lobby for the horse park, said the county would have difficulty affording the project.

"[If] the horse park is coming, the state should pay for it," she said. "We need to start focusing on schools. We have a long-term demand on county infrastructure that must be a higher priority."

House Speaker Michael E. Busch, an Anne Arundel Democrat, said that Republican Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. must address the funding concerns about the horse park.

"The administration needs to take a lead role to find out if it's compatible here or elsewhere in the state," Busch said.

Among the recommendations, Owens is seeking \$36 million for the expansion of Route 175 around the perimeter of Fort

Meade, in western Anne Arundel. This is on top of the \$12.5 million of federal funding approved last year for planning the project, from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway to the proposed Odenton Town Center on Route 170.

Owens also asked for \$2.5 million to plan for the widening of nearby Route 198, which could provide access between the Army post and a possible commercial development of nearly 900 acres that's now occupied by the Oak Hill youth detention facility.

On the schools front, the county executive requested \$32 million in state school construction dollars, on top of the \$7 million the county has received this year.

The county executive is also seeking \$2 million in seed money for a science and technology magnet addition at Meade High School. Owens hopes to build a facility that mirrors the math and science magnet at Aberdeen High, which received nearly \$700,000 in federal funds in 2003. The National Security Agency, headquartered at Fort Meade, employs thousands of mathematicians, and Owens said students could benefit from their expertise.

"How can you not have a math and science center in a place that has more mathematicians than anywhere else in the world?" Owens said during a discussion of her agenda Monday.

Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy, the installation commander at Fort Meade, said yesterday that a math-science extension at Meade High would help toward "raising expectations and raising the profile of the school."

McCreedy said building the academic reputation of Meade High would go a long way toward enticing families to move to

Anne Arundel and enroll their children in the public schools.

"We want people to choose to relocate to Anne Arundel County," he said.

DeLoach speaks with reservists

By: JO3 Steven Feller

01/12/2006

More than 100 naval reservists listened to Rear Adm. Jay DeLoach, Deputy Commander, Submarine Forces, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, talk about their role in the fleet's shaping during an all hands call at Naval Submarine Base New London's Lewis Hall Jan. 7. For more than an hour, DeLoach talked about SUBASE's next move, joint task forces and the need to win the "long" war.

"A lot went on here this past year," said DeLoach. "This base and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard got saved by BRAC [Base Realignment and Closure]. We have made a big investment in this base over the years. \$750 billion has been invested in the Submarine Learning Center, the schools, the equipment, the training, etc. That helped turn some of the tide in the thinking of BRAC."

DeLoach also mentioned that this wasn't the first time SUBASE has dodged the BRAC bullet and that things will need to change in order for the base to remain off future BRAC lists.

"One of things we have noticed since 1995, was this is a single-mission site," he said.

"We need to move past that and expand. We need to consider other opportunities and functions for this area."

DeLoach spent a lot of time telling the audience about the trip he took to Central and Southwest Asia as part of his flag officer indoctrination training. It was there he said, where he really saw the importance

of joint task forces and how all Sailors need to get smart on what JTFs are all about.

"There is a big difference between education and training," he said. "Military training is that program of instruction that gives you the skills to operate the machines of war. Military education develops the critical thinking capability for the employment of the machines of war and the ability to handle the concept and theories of war.

"As you progress throughout your careers, I need you to go from the tactical to the operational strategic level of warfare in your thought process, in your education, in your training and in your experience. If you are stuck at the tactical level, then we are not doing the nation a favor. It's vital for us as a service and as Sailors that we work our way up to that level of knowledge and understand warfare. The ultimate goal is to be a skilled joint war fighter with service expertise," said DeLoach.

"As you go along in your professional development, you need to learn about joint task forces," he added. "As you rotate from this job and think about where you might go next, think joint and think about how you might serve your country in this Global War on Terrorism."

DeLoach also said that in his travels, service members experienced frustration with naysayers who feel the U.S. needs to pull its troops out of the Middle East.

"I heard from the troops that were there that they were doing a lot of good work that wasn't being reported in the media, and they were concerned that we would be pulling out too quick without getting the job done," said DeLoach. "We had a meeting with three main ministers in Afghanistan, Defense, Interior and National Security, and they were all on target. They said they were our brothers in arms and they felt a kinship with us. They also said they wanted to help us get their country stabilized to the point where

they could send their soldiers to help us in other places of the world.

"That's the Afghanistan government's view right now of where they want to go in the future, stand shoulder to shoulder with us on the battlefield in the Global War on Terrorism. We can't pull out here soon," he continued.

While DeLoach talked at length about the work being done overseas, he also addressed the problems that have been plaguing the submarine force for quite some time. He noted that the big question being asked focuses on the submarine culture.

"The submarine flag officers and major commanders will soon get together and talk, and this is going to be the main focus of our discussion," he said. "There are number of reports that have been put together and every one of your commands is trying to get their arms around this issue. What is it about our career path that causes these problems? "I'll tell you, we are having a tough time," continued DeLoach. "Budgets are cut because of the Global War on Terrorism, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita sucked up a lot of dollars this year, and all of the submarines, ships and planes we are buying cost a lot of money. When we have a submarine that takes damage, it costs money. About a year and a half ago, we had to deactivate two subs early to pay for some future builds. We've been put on notice for the cost of building the Virginia submarines. We have got to figure out a way to drive the cost under \$2 billion; the nation just can't afford it."

As he prepared to wrap up his speech with an awards presentation and fielding question from audience members, DeLoach thanked everyone of their hard work but cautioned the end is really nowhere in sight.

"We need to win the long war," he said.

"What we are doing in Afghanistan and Iraq is just the start. We have a long war ahead of us. These are not singular operations, though

they appear and the media plays it up so. But there are a number of countries out there that are fostering and harboring bad guys and they all have us as a target.

"There are still people who want to come to the U.S. and wreak havoc," continued DeLoach. "That is why we wear the uniform, to make sure that doesn't happen. As [Naval Reserve Forces Commander] Vice Adm. [John] Cotton likes to say, 'we'd much rather have an away game than a home game.' And that is why we are here, that is why we drill; to take the game to the bad guys. Keep up the good work."

Beach overreaching on lobbyists

The Virginian-Pilot

January 13, 2006

Hampton Roads needs better representation in Washington. From Homeland Security money, to highway funds, to fighting for our military facilities, the region and the state's lawmakers don't bring home the area's fair share of attention or tax dollars.

Even at a time of Washington's biggest lobbying scandal, that means hiring somebody to watch the region's back at the Capitol. Sadly, with Congress as fractured and fractious as it is, lobbyists are a necessary part of getting anything done.

Hampton Roads cities all have a stake in D.C.'s decisions, so you'd think that a unified regional approach — representing the million-plus people here — would move us up a weight class in Washington's boxing ring. It would, that is, if the region's heavyweight could be counted on.

But Virginia Beach, as it does so many times when the region's welfare is at stake, appears ready to go it alone, even as it prepares to join a regional effort. According

to a story by The Pilot's Jon Glass, Virginia Beach is considering spending \$360,000 a year on a Washington lobbyist to protect Oceana Naval Air Station and other military facilities. The Beach would also contribute to a regional effort, at a price of \$170,000 a year, to do pretty much the same exact thing.

Virginia Beach has the money to hire vast herds of lobbyists if it wants, so the cost isn't necessarily the issue here. The coherence of the message, however,

After it got outmaneuvered by F... lobbyists, and then got spanked by Defense Base Realignment and Commission, Virginia Beach is understandably interested in avoiding another slap down at the hands of politicians. Still, though Oceana is within Virginia Beach, BRAC's impact that goes far beyond the borders, and its coffers.

The leaders of other cities under "As we sat back and looked at F... became apparent that we had no one in the region speaking on behalf of Roads for the military and federal said Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim.

But where Fraim and other leaders need for a regional approach to regional interests, Virginia Beach need to protect itself first, despite that a regional approach would p... Virginia Beach and everyone else bargain.

That municipal myopia is a shame. It's hard to argue that two lobbyists are better than one, especially if they're not necessarily singing off the same page. And, regardless of how it is designed, the two lobbying efforts will be perceived to have disharmonious missions, one representing

Virginia Beach, and the other representing the rest of Hampton Roads.

Given what happened in the last BRAC round, that's something Hampton Roads just can't afford. This region needs to speak with one voice on regional issues. Because while what's good for the region is demonstrably good for Virginia Beach, the reverse isn't necessarily true.

New 'greatest generation' now on duty at air base



BRIG. GEN. KIP SELF
By Ed Galucki
Staff writer

Progress in the War on Terrorism and the outlook for the future at Little Rock Air Force Base were some of the areas touched upon by Brig. Gen. Kip Self, commander of the 314 Airlift Wing as he spoke Thursday to the Lonoke Area Chamber of Commerce. Of those areas, one is bright and the other might not be very well known, he said in his remarks.

“Your sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, are winning [the war on terrorism]. You don’t necessarily see that in the news,” Self said. “I apologize for that, but part of the freedoms we protect in this nation, is the freedom of the press,” he added.

“I am here to tell you that we are winning that war. Your sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, are winning that war ... I can tell you that I’ve been there and watched what that place looked like in January of ‘03 and what it looks like now - big difference,” Self exclaimed.

“Schools, hospitals, water, oil, money – all flowing in that state. And you can understand the difference if you are a terrorist, living underneath a rock, versus a government that’s been elected, people there supporting it.” Self remarked.

“The point is, in two years we have made enormous progress. But you don’t see that. How long did we stay in Germany after World War II? How long were we in Japan after World War II? We are still there! It takes a while,” Self exclaimed.

The high-tech, high-information-flow world creates the anticipation that such accomplishments can be done in six months, self remarked. “Because of this, it makes it difficult, sometimes, for us to go ahead and

share the progress we are making in this combat situation,” he explained.

Afghanistan, the “hottest topic in the world” following 9-11, has nearly been forgotten, “And we pretty much put those guys in a can,” Self stated. “If you want to be a bad guy living in Afghanistan, you live in a cave or a rock. That’s progress, and that was done in less than four years,” he declared.

“What I am telling you ... is that we love your support. Do not waiver. Our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters are still over there, and they are doing a great job. They are saving people’s lives each day at the peril, sometimes, of their own.

“As a wearer of the uniform, I couldn’t be prouder to serve,” Self stated. “Those sons and daughters coming up, they are my heroes,” he declared.

The outlook for Little Rock Air Force Base is good, although not as grand as was touted about six month ago. Manning at the base, through decisions by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), will not reach the levels once thought, Self said.

It is estimated that about 280 will be coming to the base due to the recent BRAC decisions, Self said. “Back in June, we were talking about 4,000 people with the BRAC decisions – it’s not going to happen to that degree,” he said.

However, Self continued, there is going to be great activity at the base in 2006. “We are facing dwindling resources, our C-130 legacy aircraft are being grounded because it has achieved the end of its life expectancy. The ‘J’ model is coming on,” he stated.

Self said that he is convinced that the J is the future of tactical airlift. “It’s got all sorts of great electronics, heads-up displays. It’s a marvelous airplane; goes faster, climbs

higher, gets farther than the old legacy model,” he remarked.

“We have seven, and I am not convinced that that is the last. I think the Air Force will make the decision that will determine the J model as the active duty mainstay for combat, tactical airlift. So, the future is bright, because I think Little Rock will remain the C-130 Center of Excellence for all of that,” Self said.

The seven of the J models at Little Rock are the only ones on active duty, Self explained. The remainder of the 42 purchased by the Air Force have gone to National Guard and Air Force Reserve units in other states.

Every other month, we lose an older C-130 when it reaches the end of its service life, Self said. Some are 50 years old, and when they reach 45,000 flying hours, they are “put down.”

“What makes more sense? Continue replacing and repairing parts on old airplanes at the end of their service life, or take the money and invest in new airplanes with a new service life ahead of them? This is the struggle going on in Washington,” Self said.

Though he expects the base to remain strong, the role it will play will change. The Air Force is facing the prospect of “doing more with less,” with only 350,000 people in the Air Force, the likelihood is that it will be reduced 10 percent more, he said.

Privatization will play a greater role in operations, Self said. Security and housing are two areas already seeing that, he said.

Contract security will make a greater presence at the gate, but security will be not

be lowered at the base. Security is one of the greatest in-demand resources, and the drain from threat areas is great enough that forces in the U.S. are drawn down.

“To be honest, gate security does not hold the highest priority,” Self explained. Active duty resources are first used to secure the aircraft, “Because that is where the rubber meets the road, I have to be sure the airplanes are safe. So, with minimum resources, I start at the flightline, and work my way to the gate,” Self explained.

Base housing has been turned over to a private company. The company is to build 1,200 renovated units; some will be brand new because they are beyond repair, he said.

“But that is good news for the community, because they have a lot more than 1,200 people, and they have to live someplace,” Self remarked.

Though the Air Force, as a whole, might shrink, the presence of Little Rock Air Force Base is expected to grow. That growth will place a greater demand on the community, Self remarked.

“Our facilities are pretty much maxed out. We’ll be living in your community; we’ll be shopping in your stores ... and that’s a good thing. I think that’s probably one of the good reasons we have Chambers of Commerce, to understand that, and anticipate it, and get ahead of that game,” Self remarked.

Little Rock Air Force Base will continue to be a major part of the economy of the area. It is estimated that about \$580 million annually goes into economy of central Arkansas, through the base, he remarked.

Pentagon should pay for workers’ move
Pallone, Holt
January 13, 2006

Area congressmen ask for disclosure of closing and relocation timelines

Two area lawmakers are lobbying the Defense Department to pick up the tab to move Fort Monmouth employees who accept government jobs elsewhere in the nation.

U.S. Reps. Frank Pallone (D-6) and Rush Holt (D-12) have delivered a formal request to U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, asking that the Pentagon pay for permanent change of station (PCS) costs for Fort Monmouth workers who find jobs at other federal agencies.

The Aug. 24 decision by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission to approve the Pentagon's recommendation to shutter the 88-year-old U.S. Army base, located in Eatontown, Tinton Falls and Oceanport, has resulted in a "difficult time" for the fort's civilian work force and their families, Pallone and Holt wrote to Rumsfeld.

Those employees must now decide whether or not to move their families out of state or instead seek new employment, the two congressmen went on.

Without a reliable relocation deadline or guaranteed PCS costs, it is "difficult for families to plan for their futures," they went on.

Under the Pentagon's announced plan, the bulk of the fort's 5,500 military and civilian workers would be transferred to the Aberdeen (Md.) Proving Ground (APG) once the base shuts down as scheduled in September 2011.

Depending upon their specific job duties, other Fort Monmouth workers could be

relocated to military installations elsewhere in Maryland, as well as Virginia, Ohio and West Point, N.Y.

"Fort Monmouth workers have been kept in the dark with regard to the timeline and costs of relocation," Pallone and Holt told Rumsfeld.

"Currently, most Fort Monmouth workers who have other job opportunities within the federal government are not being afforded permanent change-of-station costs," the congressmen continued. "These costs would make relocation for many workers less stressful."

"We therefore request that the Pentagon guarantee PCS costs for workers displaced by BRAC and expedite the public disclosure of the relocation timeline to give the workers at Fort Monmouth a chance to adjust their plans accordingly," Pallone and Holt wrote.

"We hope that the Pentagon will do all it can to ensure that the relocation of Fort Monmouth will go as smoothly as possible for the soldiers who rely on the fort and the employees that work there."

The BRAC Commission's recommendation to close Fort Monmouth and more than 30 other military installations nationwide and to restructure the operations of as many as 100 others was signed into law by President George W. Bush on Sept. 8. The recommendation was passed into law by Congress on Nov. 9.

Pope Air Force Base realignment planning begins

Fayetteville Times

By Justin Willett

Staff writer

A team of nearly 100 Air Force planners is at Pope Air Force Base this week to determine how best to realign Pope according to mandates in the 2005 base realignment and closure plan.

The site-activation task force is made up of representatives from the Air Mobility, Air Force Reserve, Air Combat, Air Force Special Operations and Air Education and Training commands as well as leadership from the 440th Airlift Wing from Gen. Mitchell Air Reserve Station in Wisconsin.

The team is consulting with Pope and Fort Bragg officials about the changes mandated in the base realignment plan, which became law Nov. 9.

The plan calls for Fort Bragg to take ownership of Pope and for the active-duty 43rd Airlift Wing to be replaced with the Wisconsin Reserve wing.

An active-duty operations group will be established to coordinate with the Army.

It is unclear how the changes will affect the overall Air Force population on Pope, which will be renamed Pope Army Airfield.

The 23rd Fighter Group will move its 36 A-10 Thunderbolt II attack jets and 1,100 personnel to Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, and the 43rd Medical Group will be replaced with a smaller medical unit.

Jack Peters, a retired Air Force colonel who works for the Air Mobility Command, said the team is studying how many people will be needed to support the changes.

"We're identifying those requirements necessary to support each one of those actions," Peters said. "We're identifying the

facilities needed and the manpower needed to accomplish those actions."

Peters said that Pope will eventually have two active-duty groups: The 18th Air Support Operations Group, which is already at Pope, and the Air Mobility Command group called for in the base realignment plan.

There will also be an Air Force Reserve Command wing with a couple of squadrons, he said.

"There's going to remain at Pope a significant active-duty Air Force presence over and above the Air Mobility Command presence," Peters said.

"The folks who are currently here, other than the (23rd Fighter Group), they will be retained here."

Lt. Col. Mark Lewandowski said the 440th Airlift Wing's leadership positions will come to Pope, though not necessarily the people who are in those positions now.

Lewandowski is the C-130 program manager for the Air Force Reserve Command headquarters at Robbins Air Force Base in Georgia.

Pope will get eight C-130H model cargo planes from the Wisconsin unit. It would get eight more similar planes from other Air Force units, Lewandowski said.

Peters said many decisions remain to be made.

"We're still in discussions about what additional support needs to remain here to support not only (Army) operations but also to support the active-duty people that will be remaining here at Pope."

Peters said the team would produce a report in March that outlines its findings from this week's trip.

A programming plan would follow in six to eight months. That plan would outline exactly how the Air Force will carry out the base realignment changes.

Peters said the Air Force is working closely with the Army to ensure that its needs are met.

"Most of that's going to be transparent," Peters said. "This will ultimately become an Army installation with several Air Force tenants on it.

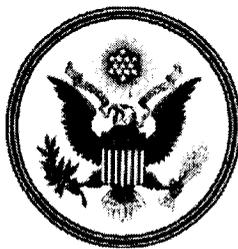
"While we will have some internal capability to do some things for ourselves, much of the support that is provided by the 43rd Airlift Wing as the host for all the agencies living here will be the Army's responsibility

Opinions/ Editorials

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Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

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Base is not up for grabs just yet Naval Station winding down

January 17, 2006

By Karen Nelson

PASCAGOULA - The frigates and cruisers are gone, the base is down to 175 military personnel and the Navy is advertising it to other branches of the military and federal government that might be interested in the location.

Naval Station Pascagoula is still a base, but just barely as it goes through a process that started four days before Katrina when the Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended to the president that it be closed, local development experts say. Some lament that it would be nice to have the 437 acres with 324,000 square feet of office and other space to redevelop posthaste, especially since Katrina created such a demand for business locations that Northrop Grumman Ship Systems recently converted retail space at the Singing River Mall into office space.

But George Freeland, with Jackson County's Economic Development Foundation, said the base and its assets aren't up for grabs. Not yet.

"The Navy retains ownership," Freeland said. "There's a process, a timetable for

closure. We have to be careful about making assumptions."

The Navy was scheduled last week to begin notifying military and other federal agencies that the base property is available. That part of the process ends in May, Freeland said.

Hopes are high that entities such as the Coast Guard and Homeland Security will step up to the plate, he said. There is a Coast Guard station with four patrol cutters at the base, and it has been steadily growing.

A major expansion there would mean more military jobs in the area.

"We hope the Coast Guard will express an interest in expanding," Freeland said. Some of the best opportunities for replacing the jobs lost to the closure lie in the federal sector and with federal agencies, he said.

A recent development, signed into law by the president at the end of December and announced by the governor last week, will allow Mississippi to reclaim the island and all the Navy's improvements at no cost. That includes 46 buildings, piers and docks.

Freeland said that the single causeway already owned by the state, with its limited access to the island, means the property will not be of interest to a broad range of industry.

Katrina stepped up clearing the base of Navy ships. The Aegis cruiser Thomas S. Gates with a crew of 400 and the two frigates, the Stephen W. Groves and John L. Hall, each with a crew of 216, evacuated to Mayport, Fla., never to return.

All three were permanently assigned to Mayport in November and the Gates was decommissioned in Mayport on Dec. 14. There are still 150 civilians at the base, bringing the total work force to 325, not including the Coast Guard employees.

The base is still functioning, said Kim DeJong, spokeswoman for the base, which has completed its recovery from Katrina.

"We're conducting normal base operations," DeJong said. That includes security,

administration, the post office, the public relations office and maintenance to the buildings.

Navy Secretary tours Portsmouth Shipyard

By Jerry Miller

Union Leader Correspondent

Saturday, Jan. 21, 2006

KITTERY, Maine — Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter yesterday toured the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, his first visit to the nation's oldest Navy base, and came away impressed.

Winter, the Navy's 74th secretary, was sworn in Jan. 3 and is making a swing through New England, visiting Navy installations and other facilities doing business with the Navy.

"I was very impressed and very pleased by what I saw," especially the "attitudes" of yard workers, he said.

With an extensive background in industrial manufacturing, winter said of yard employees, "People clearly understand what it means to engage in a lean (manufacturing) process."

Earlier in the day, members of the New Hampshire and Maine congressional delegations, joined by New Hampshire Gov. John Lynch, met with the secretary. Topics discussed included future levels of work and the possibility of hiring additional workers.

"We should be growing," said U.S. Sen. Judd Gregg, R-NH, especially in what the Navy calls the out-years, after 2008.

"I intend to follow up with the congressional delegation," concerning future workloads,

Winter said, while avoiding making any commitment. "I recognize the concerns."

While U.S. Sen. Olympia Snow, R-Maine would not specify the extent of potential new hires, she did not shy away from the figure of hiring as many as 300 new workers. Snow did say the congressional delegations of both states must take steps to be certain there are enough people hired to do the work required and that as many as 300 workers might be needed to meet expected attrition and to cover the anticipated workload.

New Hampshire Sen. John E. Sununu said the congressional delegation must be certain the yard's infrastructure is maintained, adding, "To have the secretary here will lay a very strong foundation for the future."

Sununu said the joint congressional delegation has also "pushed back" at the Pentagon over the implementation of new personnel regulations, which local shipyard union officials fear would be unfair to its members.

While members of the congressional delegations repeatedly referred to the recent decision of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to keep the yard open, defying a Pentagon closure recommendation, Winter said he did not pay much attention to BRAC deliberations.

Rather, he said, his concern is "where do we go from here," asking, "how do we best use the assets we have?"

Winter also declined to speculate about the possibility of another round of base closing. "I'm not the best person to comment on that."

Base-closing recommendations influenced by technology advances

January 19, 2006

By Daniel Pulliam

dpulliam@govexec.com

Advances in information technology influenced the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations to close 22 major military facilities and realign another 33, said Anthony Principi, the chairman of the panel, on Thursday.

The base-closing process is creating both opportunities and challenges for the IT community, Principi said in a speech at a conference hosted by the Information Technology Association of America, an Arlington, Va.-based trade group.

"Vast leaps in information technology in the areas of intelligence, surveillance, command and control as well as precise kinetic and nonkinetic weapons systems are dramatically reshaping warfare," Principi said. "That in turn served as the basis for resizing our military infrastructure."

Kinetic weapons, which are for the most part in the developmental stage, rely on high velocities to destroy the intended target.

The Air Force, for example, is built around industrial-age military concepts, and that structure must be updated for information-age warfare, Principi said.

"My challenge as chairman of the 2005 BRAC Commission was to ensure that I and the members of the commission understood the role IT played in the transformation strategy that served as the foundation of the Defense Department's base closure and realignment proposals," Principi said.

He acknowledged the BRAC process was agonizing for some, but said he believes it struck a good balance between "precipitous action and counterproductive procrastination." He said decisions were

based on broad national concerns as opposed to "limited parochial issues."

Negative reaction to the Defense Department's proposals to relocate certain Air National Guard aircraft was the result of poor communication, according to Principi. The commission modified those proposals substantially.

"The Air Force complied with the statutory requirement to inform the head of the National Guard Bureau, but beyond that, [they] developed their proposal internally," Principi said. "The Army's BRAC process involved National Guard leaders at every stage and every level ... and Army recommendations were accepted without change or controversy."

A final report from the commission concluded that the Bush administration's decision to shrink the nation's military infrastructure was premature and that the base-closing process should have waited until the Quadrennial Defense Review -- due in February -- is complete.

Al'tille Chamber hears from BRAC officials

By George Jones
The Reporter

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Alberville Chamber of Commerce held its first noontime luncheon of 2006 at the Alberville Recreation Center Thursday.

Special guests were Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Committee of the BRACC [Base Realignment and Closure Commission] Joe H. Ritch, and Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the Huntsville and Madison County Chamber of Commerce Michael D. Ward.

Chamber President Jennifer Palmer introduced Ward, who spoke to the audience on the impact of BRAC in Alabama.

Ward told the businessmen and women about what will happen as a result of this latest round of the BRAC.

Ward said, "The military feels like they have more property than they need."

Ward told of a meeting he attended where a Navy spokesman, responsible for all the Navy's property, said, "At the height of World War II, the Navy had more than 5,000 ships in their fleet. In the intervening years, the Navy's fleet fell below 400 ships."

Ward said, "You could see the infrastructure to support 5,000 ships wasn't needed anymore." Adding, "The same is true for the Air Force and the Army. So, following WWII, they were closing military bases. Huntsville Arsenal was put up for sale in 1948, but fortunately there were no takers."

In the 1960s and '70s, Ward said, "Military value was not driving a lot of those decisions about which of those military bases to close."

According to Ward, the idea arose that "Maybe politics had something to do with some of these bases that were being closed, so Congress put an end to it. They said the only way you could close a military base in the future is if you get Congressional authority."

"Of course," Ward said, "getting Congressional authority was the challenge. In the late '80s, the excess infrastructure was really eating into the defense budget, so Congress devised this system called BRAC

to create an independent commission to evaluate recommendations by the Secretary of Defense to close military bases based on their military value ... without any political consideration.”

Ward said, “There have been four previous rounds of BRAC. We had rounds in 1989, 1991, 1993 and 1995, and you’ll note they were in non-election years.

Previous BRACs, Ward said, have been favorable for Redstone Arsenal. Ward described Redstone Arsenal today as approximately one-third the size of Huntsville consisting of about 40,000 acres with a daily workforce of 32,000 people.

Redstone’s annual operating budget in 2004, Ward said, was \$27 billion.

Ward then began an overview of what he believes will be BRAC’s future economic impact on the area.

“First, it will bring a lot of clout.” Ward said.

Before continuing with facts and figures, he cautioned, “These numbers are subject to change at least every week, and sometimes every day, even more than once a day. With that understood, I’m going to give you some numbers, but they could change, too.”

Ward described the military’s impact will include the moving to Redstone Arsenal of the Army Material Command [AMC], the Security Assistance Command, an Aviation Technical Test Center, the 2nd Recruiting Brigade, units of the Missile Defense Agency and the U.S. Army Missile and Space Command. Accompanying these units will be six to 11 generals, including a four-star general.

Ward said he believed that number of generals added to the five already in place would make Redstone one of the “top three military bases” in the country.

Ward believes all of this movement will bring with it an increased visitation of national and international corporations and governments seeking to do business with the United States government that will benefit Alabama.

The changes will also bring approximately 4,700 additional jobs. A number, he said, while subject to change is a “pretty firm number.”

“Those new people,” Ward said, “will require office space that will generate an estimated \$417 million in new construction alone over the next 5-6 years. The additional furniture and equipment costs to make the offices usable could push that figure to \$600 million. So, a lot of money is going to be spent in preparation for these new jobs.”

Ward said the timetable for all this activity is, at present, unknown.

“I hope we will get our congressional delegation involved in trying to accelerate that process as much as possible,” Ward said

The cost of implementing the BRAC program, which was approved last year and finding the money to finance the construction of these facilities is going to be a challenge. And the timing of it is going to be a challenge, because the Army wants to move the operation arm that carries the guns and shoots things, before they move the support army.”

Exactly how that will all be accomplished is being worked out, Ward said.

Lastly, Ward talked about the Tennessee Valley Regional BRAC effort which he gave Ritch credit for doing "a brilliant job getting us this far."

According to Ward, Ritch and the BRAC committee went to great lengths to promote Alabama, Tennessee and the Redstone Arsenal, and the benefits to the military and government agencies in moving their operations to this area.

The focus of the Tennessee Valley Regional BRAC committee today, Ward told the group, is to convince all the individuals involved why they should move to the Tennessee Valley.

In February, 70 individuals will begin moving into the area.

An additional 400 will begin the transition throughout the summer.

Ward said the remainder of the jobs, specifically the BRAC jobs, will begin their move in 2007, but the bulk of them may not be moving in until as late as 2010.

This fact, Ward said, "Will give us ample opportunity to present our case to the AMC and BRAC employees as to why a move to North Alabama will increase their quality of life."

Ft. Meade Growth Inspires a Tussle Robey, Merdon Claim Credit for Idea Of Task Force on Coming Expansion

By Susan DeFord
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, January 19, 2006

The anticipated expansion of Fort George G. Meade in Anne Arundel County already is

having an impact on neighboring Howard County -- at least in local politics.

The Democratic county executive and the Republican chairman of the County Council are claiming credit for first pursuing the idea of a task force to prepare for an expected surge of new jobs and residents as a result of Fort Meade's growth. Last year, the Pentagon's base realignment plan called for moving more than 5,300 jobs over the next six years to the Army post in western Arundel, the biggest expansion among military installations in Maryland. Council Chairman Christopher J. Merdon (Northeast County) issued a news release Jan. 6 saying he planned to introduce legislation to form a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) task force.

Last Thursday, County Executive James N. Robey announced in his eighth and final State of the County speech that he was forming a BRAC executive task force and hiring a BRAC "czar" to lead it.

After addressing more than 300 people at a Howard County Chamber of Commerce gathering, Robey dismissed Merdon's proposal.

"Wow, I'm already doing that," he said. He said he has been "actively planning" to appoint a task force and name someone to oversee BRAC developments during the last three months in conjunction with the county's Economic Development Authority.

"I'm not throwing my plan out the window," said Robey, who's leaving as county executive this year because of term limits and running for the 13th District seat in the Maryland Senate.

Merdon, who's running to succeed Robey as county executive, said this week that he

intends to move forward with his proposed legislation. Robey "wasn't moving at all" on a task force until he raised the issue, Merdon said.

"It's a reaction to the resolution I proposed," Merdon said. "I hope he's successful in getting the committee formed."

Council member Guy Guzzone (D-Southeast County) said he and Merdon attended meetings of the development authority's strategic planning group, where BRAC was a major focus.

Guzzone said planning for BRAC "should be done by the County Council, the county executive, the Economic Development Authority, all the major players. We should do it together. That's the way it was headed."

Richard W. Story, chief executive of the Economic Development Authority, said Fort Meade's growth ultimately could produce up to 20,000 jobs, including defense contracting work and service jobs. Story said the expected regional stimulus from Fort Meade's expansion is unprecedented.

"There's never been a single episode as large as BRAC will be," he said. "It will be a five-to seven-year playout. That's rapid."

One of the biggest worries for Howard officials is that Fort Meade's expansion will dramatically underscore the lack of reliable mass transit serving the region. Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens (D) said she's worried about that as well.

"We are decades behind. Literally decades behind," said Owens, who chairs the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, responsible for long-range planning in central Maryland.

The possibilities for mass transit for central Maryland include more bus service, MARC commuter trains and extending Washington's Metrorail lines to Fort Meade, Owens said.

"We've got to have more of those," she said.

Barbara Herron, a communications officer for the Baltimore regional board, said it had not addressed any BRAC-related transportation planning.

School representatives to meet on federal funding strategies Leaders from across country seek aid preparing for student influx

January 19, 2006

State Editor

BY Harry Franklin

State Editor Superintendents or representatives of school districts around the country expecting additional students from growth at nearby military installations will meet Jan. 26 in Atlanta to plan strategies for seeking federal financial assistance.

Muscogee County School Superintendent John Phillips will head a delegation from the school district attending the all-day session at an Atlanta hotel, Deputy School Superintendent Robin Pennock said Wednesday. The local delegation includes Pennock; Myles Caggins, chief operations and facilities officer; and Claudia Gordon, administrative assistant to Pennock.

"We hope to coordinate our efforts using the Chattahoochee Valley Schools Project template to align public school systems most affected with positive growth numbers we are getting from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, U.S. Army transformation and redeployment of forces from overseas," Pennock said. "We are all facing challenges from federal actions. The growth is very exciting for our communities."

But we must be prepared for the children they will bring to us."

Late last year, a team of school superintendents from eight area counties in Georgia and east Alabama prepared the Chattahoochee Valley Schools Project report and an unsolicited funds application, delivering it to the U.S. Department of Education, the Department of Defense and other officials. It outlined the need for additional schools or classrooms stemming from additional students the school districts expect due to anticipated growth at Fort Benning in the next few years. The application seeks funding for school construction projects totaling \$321.3 million to address those facility needs.

School officials are expected to attend from districts near Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Lee, Va.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Little Rock, Ark., Air Force Base; the Fort Benning Futures Partnership; and Gov. Sonny Perdue's office.

Bills focus on preserving Oceana

By LOUIS HANSEN,
The Virginian-Pilot
January 23, 2006

VIRGINIA BEACH — The threat of losing Oceana Naval Air Station may have receded, but Virginia lawmakers are proceeding with plans to preserve the master jet base.

State legislators representing Virginia Beach and Chesapeake this month introduced bills in the General Assembly to give their cities limited power to condemn properties in high-risk crash zones. They are also seeking \$15 million over two years to buy property around the base.

Virginia officials believe the bills, SB 565 and HB 975, will satisfy part of the Defense

Base Realignment and Closure Commission's demands as conditions of keeping Oceana from being relocated.

In August, the BRAC Commission ordered Virginia to stem development around Oceana and spend \$15 million annually to buy properties around the base.

Commissioners complained that growing commercial and residential development had compromised pilot training and made some areas more vulnerable to potential accidents. The proposals, sponsored by Del. Terrie Suit, R-Virginia Beach ; Del. John Cosgrove, R-Chesapeake ; and Sen. Kenneth W. Stolle, R-Virginia Beach, would give the two cities the ability to condemn and buy property around Oceana and Fentress Naval Auxiliary Landing Field.

The cities would be allowed to use their expanded eminent domain power only if a property owner requested condemnation . The voluntary condemnations also would be restricted to the highest-risk areas, known as Accident Potential Zone 1 .

Virginia municipalities now have some eminent domain authority, typically used to clear blight or redevelop an area.

The bills also would require the cities to enforce strict new development guidelines around the base. The guidelines were developed over several months by the cities, developers, residents and the Navy.

The Virginia Beach City Council passed the new guidelines last month, but the BRAC Commission required the state to pass a law ensuring that future city councils keep the controls in place.

Ed Bourdon, an attorney who represents several developers in Virginia Beach, says the condemnation powers will help property

owners. It can make the sale of the property easier, particularly if the property has multiple owners, he said.

Condemnation can speed the buying process when a part-owner is reluctant to sell or cannot be found.

The properties could become vacant or be re-used under the new, more restrictive guidelines.

But, Bourdon added, "there is certainly the potential for a lot of litigation and negotiation" over the purchases.

Local lawmakers are also working to secure \$15 million over two years from the state to buy development rights between Oceana and the Chesapeake landing field. The sum will be matched by the localities to establish a BRAC-mandated \$15 million annual purchase program.

The state's share would come from a \$30 million fund created by former Gov. Mark Warner to aid communities affected by base closings.

Suit said state lawmakers understand the importance of Oceana to state revenue. She does not expect the bills to generate controversy.

Virginia localities will not be kicking people out of their homes to comply with the BRAC order, she said.

"Taking people's houses away from them is not an appropriate response," Suit said.

Federal inspectors will review the state and city actions, then determine whether Virginia has met the BRAC Commission's requirements.

Virginia risked losing the base to Florida, where elected leaders offered to heavily subsidize the re opening of the former Cecil Field air station to accommodate Oceana's operations. Jacksonville's mayor backed out after the plan drew intense community opposition.

Despite Jacksonville's withdrawal, Virginia leaders still feel an urgent need to meet the federal base-closing commission's demands.

"I don't think that takes any of the pressure off," Stolle said.

Cosgrove said the commission alerted state lawmakers to the importance of supporting military facilities.

"We have to take our military readiness into account," he said. "We cannot take this for granted."

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes