

2005 BRAC COMMISSION REGIONAL HEARING

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2005

GEORGIA TECH HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER

800 SPRING STREET, NW

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

STATES TESTIFYING

GEORGIA, ALABAMA AND TENNESSEE

COMMISSIONERS:

COMMISSIONER SAMUEL SKINNER

COMMISSIONER JAMES BILBRAY

COMMISSIONER HAROLD GEHMAN, CHAIRMAN

CHAIR:

COMMISSIONER HAROLD GEHMAN

APPEARANCES :

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY

COMMISSIONER SKINNER

DAN COWHIG, Deputy General Counsel

UNCERTIFIED

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: This is the time and day 8:23 a.m. and it's June 30th, Thursday, at the State of Georgia Base Realignment and Closure Regional Hearing, Georgia Tech Conference Center. Good morning, my name is Harold Gehman. I will be the chairperson for this regional meeting for the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

I am pleased to be joined by my fellow commissioners Bill Bilbray and Sam Skinner for today's session. As this Commission has observed during our first period, every dollar inappropriately assigned and located in the infrastructure is a dollar not available to provide the training that might save a marine's life, purchase the munitions to win a soldier's firefight or fund the advances that can ensure our continued dominance of the air and seas.

Congress entrusted the Defense with vast but not unlimited resources. We have a responsibility to our nation, the men and women who bring the Army, Navy and Air Force to life, to the men, to demand the best possible use of these limited resources.

Congress recognized that fact and authorizes the Department of Defense to prepare a

proposal to realign the close of domestic bases. However, that authorization was not a blank check. The members of this Commission accepted the challenge and the necessity of providing an independent, fair, equitable assessment and evaluation of the Department of Defense proposals and the data and the methodology used to develop that proposal. We've committed to the Congress, to the President and to the American people that our deliberations and decisions will be open and transparent, and that our decisions will be based on criteria set forth in the statute.

We continue to examine the proposed recommendations set forth by the Secretary of Defense on May 13th and measure them against the criteria of the military values as set forth in the law, especially the need for surge manning and for homeland security.

But be assured we will not be conducting this review as an exercise as a sterile cost accounting. This Commission is committed to conducting a clear reality check that will not only shape our military capability for decades to come, but will also have a profound effect on your communities and on the people who bring our communities to life.

We are also committed to our deliberations and

decisions will be devoid of politics and that people in the communities affected by the BRAC proposals will have, through our site visits and through our public hearings, a chance to provide a direct input on the substance of the proposals of the methodology and assumptions behind them.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Commission to thank thousands of involved citizens who have already contacted the Commission that shared with us their thoughts, concerns and suggestions about the base closure realignment proposals.

Unfortunately, the volume of correspondence we received makes it impossible for us to respond directly to each one of you in this short time with which the Commission must complete its mission. We want everyone to know the public input we received are appreciated and are taken into consideration as part of our review process.

While everyone in this room will not have an opportunity to speak, every piece of correspondence received by the Commission will be made a part of our permanent record as is appropriate.

Today we will hear testimony in the states of Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee. Each State's elected delegation has been allotted a block of time that is determined by the overall impact of the Department Of Defense's closure and realignment recommendations on their states. The delegation

members that work closely with their communities to develop agenda, I am certain, will provide information and insight that will make up a valuable part of our review.

We will be greatly appreciated if you would adhere to your time limits, because every voice is important. To make sure that the last person speaks, gets their allotted time, we will have to enforce the time limits on the first person who speaks. I am sure you understand.

I will now request all the witnesses from the State of Georgia to rise for the administration of the oath that is required by the base closure and realignment statute. The oath will be administered by Dan Cowhig, the Commission's designated federal officer.

(Panel sworn.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Governor Perdue, you have the floor, sir.

GOVERNOR PERDUE: Mr. Gehman, Mr. Skinner, Mr. Bilbray, good morning and welcome to Georgia. I know that the last several weeks, months has been extremely busy for you. We want you to know we appreciate your service and the great responsibility placed on you for assessing the Pentagon's BRAC recommendations and helping to meet the future needs of our nation's military.

We want you to know -- to take away this

message very clearly: Georgia is a patriotic state, always has been, with a strong military tradition. We consider all military personnel bases in Georgia to be part of our Georgia family, whether they be Active-duty, Reserve, National Guard alike. We take extreme pride and do all we can to support and to care for this extended family.

You will soon hear from the individual Georgia Communities, the host bases affected by the Pentagon's recommendations. But I want you to know what Georgia as a whole has been doing to help our men and woman in uniform. Early in our administration, it was brought to my attention that military families and their dependents were not eligible for our in-state tuition at our colleges and universities.

I worked with our Board of Regents to correct this inequity. And now I am proud to say our military families and their dependents are on par with their civilian counterparts. Through our frequent meetings with Georgia base commanders, I have learned how predatory payday lending practices were snaring many of their troops in an endless web of debt.

In response to these concerns which were

legitimate, the legislature passed, and I signed, one of the most comprehensive anti-payday lending measures in the country. During the just recent session 2005, several important measures were signed into law to support our military family here in our state.

Georgia law now ensures that military spouses who leave a job because of their husband and wife's transfer to a new duty location are not disqualified from receiving unemployment benefits by that very fact alone. This reform will benefit many military families as a policy which Georgia is proud of, has been praised by the Pentagon. Another measure that passed our legislature and that I signed into law, changes to state law to remove hardships on service members that were called up to active-duty of 90 days or more. Among these provisions are providing jury duty exemptions for service members and their spouses, provide a grace period for renewing professional licenses that may expire during the deployment of those individuals, and allow those service members to more easily terminate a residential lease or mobile phone -- mobile phone agreement upon called to active duty. And also provides returning veterans with honorary fishing licenses for one year. That's important in Georgia.

These are common steps that taken together will make

the lives of our servicemen and women and their families just a little easier.

We also amended our tax code to provide our service members and national guardsmen serving more than 90 consecutive days for the tax credit of their qualified life insurance premiums through the Department of Defense service's members group life insurance program.

Our State's business community has contributed as well with a strong commitment to supporting our troops. The Georgia Chamber of Commerce is leading a \$1 million effort, fund-raising to help support families of deployed guardsmen who need assistance while their loved ones are away. In the testimony that will follow you will hear much about the capability and capacity and heart of Georgia bases. I hope you will also hear the deep underlying commitment that Georgia has to do all we can to uphold the quality of life and the support of military missions of our Georgia base troops and their families.

Georgia is a good place. We believe the best place for the military to call home. They're part of our family and we are proud of every one of them. On behalf of all Georgians, thank you again for your time, thank you for coming to Georgia, thank you for your service. And God bless America.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR CHAMBLISS: Good morning, gentlemen.

I thank you for your willingness to provide a great and valuable service to our country in what will be a very difficult decision-making process.

Today we will review what we Georgians already know. That is, that Georgia's military installations have an extraordinarily high military value. They all make vital contributions to a strong national defense. They operate at relatively low cost. They have excellent facilities and skilled workforces. They provide their personnel with excellent quality of life. And most importantly, keeping them in Georgia is a logical choice.

In this hearing, you will hear a compelling case that Fort McPherson, Fort Gillem, Naval Air Station in Atlanta and the Navy Supply School in Athens have the ability to cost effectively handle current and future missions while accommodating continuous operations from their world-class facilities. These bases continue to play an important role in the war of terrorism and should remain open and fully operational.

For the ongoing Quadrennial Defense Review's renewed emphasis on homeland defense and security Forts McPherson and Gillem are uniquely

postured as interagency platforms for responding to natural disasters or terrorist attacks in the southeast.

In addition to the multiple military headquarters, they are host to critical agencies like FEMA, GEMA, the Red Cross and the Explosive Disposal Battalion. Easy access to a network of highways, rail lines and military and civilian airfields make them ideally located for contingency operations.

The principal decision behind DoD's recommendation to close these forts is placed on flawed cost estimates. They greatly understate the construction cost that will be needed to replace the world-class headquarters located there.

They ignore the cost to relocate the secure telecommunications hub. And they do not consider the value of being next to an airport with an unparalleled access to major cities and the United States and around the world.

Other intangible costs were not considered like the disruption and relocating FORSCOM and subordinate commands, gentlemen, in the middle of a war.

For the Naval Air Station in Atlanta there

are major flaws in the COBRA analysis which you will hear about this morning. The proposed savings are based on faulty assumptions about the disposition of tenant assets. In reality, the true cost savings would be much lower. Other costs discrepancies exist in the projected savings for deactivating an F/A-18 Squadron and closing the medical facilities.

NAS Atlanta benefits from the large number of airline employees who are headquartered in Atlanta, which offers an unmatched recruiting pool for Reserve pilots and maintenance personnel.

The DoD recommendation also ignores the synergy between NAS Atlanta and Dobbins Air Reserve base, which are effectively a joint basis relying on each other to operate. Divesting the Navy from this region of the country will have a serious long-term consequence. The Navy Supply Corps School in Athens is the epitome of a joint-training facility that provides eight different courses for all four military services: The Coast Guard and the Military Sealift Command.

The chief of naval operations personally chose Athens as the ideal location for the Center for Service Support because Athens is a model of efficiency with its operation costs among the lowest

of any Navy facility. Athens provides a quality of workplace that supports learning and training and enhances retention while allowing its personnel to take advantage of the area's low cost of living and extremely low per demand -- per diem and housing cost factors not considered in the COBRA model.

I would be remiss if I did not note that the rest of Georgia's bases have a high military value and are posed to accept new missions.

Kings Bay, for example, ranks third among all Navy facilities for military value. It is the best facility for gaining both submarines and the submarine school. With the past reduction in the number of Trident submarines home ported at Kings Bay, new operations are relatively accommodated at substantially lower costs.

Fort Benning's high military value was recognized with its designation as the Army's Maneuver Center of Excellence, a logical move which can be easily accommodated. Fort Benning is postured to receive additional units from Europe as well as when the Army brings many overseas units home.

Finally, the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany is also prepared to expand its operation

for resetting Marine Corps equipment before it's pre-positioned around the world. Albany's implementation of lean production techniques has made it a model for how depots should conduct cost effective maintenance operations.

I am pleased to ask my colleagues Johnny Isakson to come next.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR ISAKSON: Welcome to Georgia. Georgia has a rich and storied history of supporting the Armed Forces in the United States of America. Today thousands of Georgians based here are deployed around the world on Global War on Terror and in defense of freedom and pursuit of democracy.

I appreciate the importance of Base Realignment Commission and I am pleased to have this opportunity to address your recommendations for Georgia.

We are very grateful for the enhancements recommended at Kings Bay, Fort Benning, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Moody Air Base, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany, and Robins Air Force Base. It is my hope the Commission will reevaluate its recommendation of Fort Mac, Fort Gillem, Naval Air Station in Atlanta and the Navy Supply Corps School

in Athens.

Georgia's strong support for the military has always begun very close to home, right in the very communities where our bases are located.

Organizations such as the 21st Century Partnership at Robins, the Central Savannah River Area, Alliance at Fort Gordon, Camden Partnership at Kings Bay and the Southwest Georgia Alliance For Progress in Albany are all excellent examples that you have seen in your evaluation of support by communities for men and women in our Armed Forces and the investment of those bases.

I have seen the same community support in greater Atlanta, Fort Gillem, Fort Mac and Naval Air Station in Atlanta and for the Athens -- the Naval Supply School in Athens.

The Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, Cobb County Commission has always played a key role in NAS Atlanta. The Chamber's Honorary Commanders program brings business leaders together to support the Navy's mission at NAS Atlanta. The County Commission's protection of the Dobbins' perimeter and its support of infrastructure has made it the best urban air facility in the United States of America.

The leadership of the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce has long records of supporting Fort Gillem and Fort Mac, as have the cities of Forest Park and East Point. And the City of Atlanta -- whose mayor is Shirley Franklin is here today in support of this effort -- offers both these bases a transportation system that cannot be matched anywhere in the United States of America.

On any given day Hartsfield-Jackson Airport cannot be matched. It can place the leaders of the United States Army anywhere in the United States by noon and almost anywhere in the world by evening. No location in America can match that. To quote the MasterCard commercial on television, that in terms of cost to the United States of America is priceless.

There's probably no facility in Georgia that enjoys more community support than Naval Air -- Naval Supply School in Athens, the Clarke County Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce at the University of Georgia provides enormous support including free fire and police protection to the base and an enriched quality of life for the Navy personnel and their families.

As you evaluate overall costs to the

United States and overall value in terms of support, remember the following: The community surrounding all our military bases have done an outstanding job. They are dedicated to their base and the protection and enhancement of the family. There is absolutely no doubt that the loyalty and hard work of all of these community groups has contributed immeasurably to the success of our military in Georgia.

I have no doubt this will become clear to you today as we make the case for the value of the Georgia bases. I thank you for your visit and your services. This concludes our first panel.

Now our second panel will provide presentations regarding the Pentagon's recommendations for base closures in Georgia. After that, our third panel will provide presentations on the Pentagon's recommendations for additional missions personnel at Georgia's bases. Gentlemen, we thank you for your attention.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

CONGRESSMAN LEWIS: Good morning. First I would like to thank you, Members of the Commission who are holding this hearing. I am pleased to be here along with the governor, our senators and my past colleagues. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today, not

only about the military value of Fort McPherson but also its essential role in shoring up our homeland security.

While I appreciate the Department of Defense goals of decreasing costs and increasing efficiency, I respectfully disagree with the conclusion that closing Fort McPherson advances those goals.

On the contrary, I believe that Fort Mac's role in supporting our homeland security is more essential in the post 9/11 world. Closing it based on material outlined prior to 9/11 is shortsighted.

As you may know, Fort Mac is home to four major Army commands that train, mobilize and deploy combat-ready forces engaged in a war on terror. Fort Mac also serves as regional headquarters for federal and state agencies, which is directly involved in operations that provide homeland security and homeland defense as well as domestic disaster relief.

Fort Mac's location located between the heart of Atlanta and Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, is easy as well as cost effective and time efficient to fly to and from, the importance of which can't be overstated. Fort McPherson played an expanded and critical role in providing homeland security and

defense. Its strategic value will only increase over time, Members of the Commission.

Now I am pleased to turn things over to my colleague, David Scott, Fort Gillem.

CONGRESSMAN SCOTT: Members of the Commission, I strongly urge you to please keep Fort Gillem open. Closing Fort Gillem would be a terrible mistake, a tragic blow to our homeland security, to our national security to our readiness and our military value.

As you know, we now have American soldiers stationed in over 140 nations around this world. We need Fort Gillem because of its closeness to the world's busiest airport, with rapid deployment and strategic mobility to get our troops in there very quickly.

We have an all-voluntary Army now which Fort Gillem is a major irreplaceable component, that recruits, it maintains, it trains, it deploys combat-ready troops throughout the world into our all-voluntary Army, the backbone of which is our National Guard and our Army Reserve which is the heart and soul of Fort Gillem.

In Atlanta -- Atlanta is a very attractive market, it helps our recruit. If you close Fort Gillem, we lose Atlanta. It strikes a very serious

blow to our recruitment efforts at the time when we are at war and at a time when our recruitment numbers are low.

Let's talk about costs for a moment. When you talk about costs, I want to mention a war on terror. The world is full of terrorists now. Atlanta is the home of Center of Disease Control. It's the home of the world's busiest airport.

We have brand names -- worldwide names like Coca-Cola, CNN, the terrorists will love to make an attack here. If Fort Gillem closes, Atlanta becomes more vulnerable to a terrorist attack because Fort Gillem coordinates all of our first responders. That's why we have an Army lab there, Red Cross, FEMA, GEMA on that base. If we dare lose Fort Gillem and sacrifice our security in terror attacks, cost measures has already been appointed by our -- appointed -- those figures with COBRA the Department of Defense is using does not match the figures of Fort Gillem, especially in terms of moving personnel. It doesn't take into consideration the closings.

Let's talk about one final thing as well. We in Congress have just put out in the last two years \$200 million for new construction on the base

of Fort Gillem. Can we walk away from that? Can we walk away from brand new buildings for a reserve center, for a crime lab? Close Fort Gillem? That would not be good tax -- source of the taxpayers' dollars. I urge you to keep Fort Gillem open.

You know, before 9/11, we were faced with a tremendous task. We were at peace, we are now at war. We must not close Fort Gillem.

I want to close with this: Franklin Eleanor Roosevelt said something that comes home right here when he was asked what it would take to keep this country free and moving with liberty. Franklin Eleanor Roosevelt said this: We must have a strong military with vision. That vision must not enable us to look straight. We must be able to look around corners, see what's coming up. Fort Gillem gives us that ability to look around corners. Don't take that from us. Keep Fort Gillem open. Thank you.

BRIGADIER GENERAL BROWNING: Good morning, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the opportunity to articulate the military value of Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem. We applaud the Army's goal of aligning its infrastructure with transformation objectives and return of forces from overseas. On balance, we feel their

recommendations are sound and will indeed improve the nation's ability to respond to future threats.

However, like any process of this magnitude, there are likely to be areas that need reconsideration. In the chart shown above, the Army proposes to close Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem.

Today we will present facts that will lead you to the conclusion that both recommendations should be reversed. Our position is that Fort McPherson represents an installation of significant relevance given the contemporary requirement for command, control and coordination between international and domestic governmental and non-governmental agencies with combined and joint military forces engaged in the war on terror.

Fort McPherson further leverages active component, reserve component, force provider, force unit, user readiness and command and control synergies.

Finally, Fort McPherson benefits from the highly skills civilian manpower pool required for mission accomplishment that we will show simply is not available if the Army's recommendation is adopted.

Our suggestion today will center on three

points: First, the cost appears to be the overriding factor in making the decision to close Fort McPherson. Yet we are not confident that the savings derived from the COBRA analysis are accurate and that other significant costs were not considered.

Secondly, that not co-locating the three major headquarters, Forces Command, FORSCOM; U.S. Army Reserve Command, USARC; and Third Army reduces the quality and efficiency of the important synergy between them and detracts from both training readiness and operational plan.

And finally, moving the three headquarters from Atlanta, specifically Fort McPherson, is ill-advised.

To begin the cost discussion, I would like to highlight in very succinct fashion some significant aspects of the Army's military methodology that appear to us to be relevant to our argument.

First, the Army established 40 attributes to determine an installation's military value. These attributes represent characteristics that were distinguishable between installations, measurable and derived from certified data forces. Each

attribute was then weighed and mapped against each of the four major DoD military value criteria.

The results were that in the Army's view, Criteria 1, mission capabilities versus impact on war fighting should be weighted at 29 percent.

Criteria 2, training land and facilities weighted in at 29 percent. Criteria 3, ability to accommodate mobilization and surge weighted in at 32 percent.

Criteria 4, cost, 10 percent. In other words, Criteria 4, cost, would be less of a discriminator in judging military value than any of the other three.

The Army also applied all 40 attributes against each installation and as a result developed a military value rank ordering for each. Fort McPherson qualified to remain in the Army portfolio defined by the senior review group on October 19th, 2004 as an installation required to support Army needs while maintaining maximum military value.

However, the Headquarters and Support Joint Cross Service Group developed scenarios that moved functions off Fort McPherson demonstrating a cost savings in doing so. The Army then elected to close the installation.

Given that fact, one could reach the

conclusion that cost was the primary reason for closing Fort McPherson regardless of other military value strengths of the headquarters there.

Let me continue our discussion by addressing cost in more details, specifically Criteria 4, cost and manpower implications and Criteria 5, extent and timing of potential cost and savings.

We believe that the savings generated by the COBRA analysis are overstated. For example, the 2005 COBRA model uses \$79 million for military construction for the three major headquarters there. However, our understanding is the actual replacement value of the three headquarters in question is approximately \$277 million.

Now, we asked the Army to reconfirm this. But in the meantime, we did run a COBRA excursion using the military construction costs above. As you would expect, there will be less savings over 20 years, higher one-time costs and a long pay-back period. We have provided the COBRA excursion summary sheet for the record.

Finally, we compared the BRAC 2005 COBRA results with the analysis done by Fort McPherson during BRAC '93. As you can see, there are major

differences in the final results. For example, one-time cost for Fort McPherson in '93 are 41 percent higher than in '05 and take three to five years longer to break even.

Now, we do recognize scenarios and assumptions will impact on any calculations, but such deviations are of a concern nonetheless. Given the above, there is skepticism that the COBRA analysis at Fort McPherson reaches a realistic conclusion.

That is particularly important if costs appear to be the determinant factor in reaching the Army's recommendation. One of the distinct cost advantages of positioning the three headquarters in Atlanta is the proximity of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. The ability to travel directly to all metropolitan cities both in the continental United States and overseas cannot be underestimated, given the large amount of travel generated annually by all three headquarters, \$18 million, for example, in 2004 including per diem.

Also, because most of the destinations are point to point, it becomes much easier for headquarters' personnel to conduct business with a

one-day turnaround thus avoiding per diem costs.

As you can see from the chart in the testimony, this would not be the case for Fayetteville, North Carolina. Cost of traveling will increase and flying to interconnecting airports would be required to get to key destinations. For example, the cost of traveling to Washington, D.C. is 36 percent higher than Fayetteville, and there are no direct flights. Flight availability is worth mentioning again because it is not only cost that must be considered but also the time lost while traveling.

Still another aspect of this particular issue is the expensive travel to Fort McPherson by various subordinate commands. As shown in your testimony, we took a sampling using Fort Hood and Fort Lewis which reflects, again, the cost disparity between Fort -- Fayetteville, North Carolina and Atlanta. For example, the price difference coming from Killeen, Texas to Atlanta is 10 percent less than flying to Fayetteville, North Carolina.

These costs -- all of these costs are not considered in the COBRA model. So in summary from a cost perspective only, we feel that the evidence suggests that the recommended action to close Fort

McPherson should in fact be reconsidered.

Next, for argument purposes, we made the assumption that costs were not the overriding factor in the decision to close Fort McPherson. And in doing so, examining the other military value criteria, particularly Criteria 1 and 3 to determine their significance.

We begin by asking ourselves if moving Third Army to Shaw Air Force Base and particularly -- and displacing it from FORSCOM and the USARC would improve mission capability. Our conclusion is that it would not, because of the implications for Criteria 1, as I will explain next.

Co-locating the Army and Air Force components of Central Command appears logical on its surface and clearly supports the DoD objective of joint basing. However, if you look at the functions interactions required between 9th Air Force and Third Army versus the Third Army interface with FORSCOM and USARC, you might reach a different conclusion. And we have.

Third Army is a force requester. It continuously is asking for specific capability to support ongoing planning and making adjustments as the force providers forces command in the U.S. Army

Reserve command meet or do not meet the Army's various requests.

Per Lieutenant General Yeosock, Third Army commander for Desert Storm, this was a planning challenge that was hence long term and required daily on-site meeting between headquarters. He is convinced that to sever the physical location of Third Army headquarters from its force providers would exacerbate what is already a difficult process.

In an operational scenario, the Third Army develops war plans and in so doing has 9th Air Force members on its staff who integrate Air Force mission assets into the ongoing plans. In other words, there already exists a built-in interface between the Army and its Air Force counterpart. Not so with Forces Command and the USARC. There are no staff augmentation from these headquarters on the Third Army staff. Therefore, again, co-location is a much better approach.

Headquarters, organizations, DoD Criteria 1 should be considered in the context of effectiveness and efficiency of command control. Eliminating the synergy between Third Army, Forces Command and the U.S. Army Third Command just above

will impact adversely on Third Army's war fighting functions. From a mission value perspective, it appears to us that the synergy created between the three headquarters must be retained.

At this point, I have not mentioned much about U.S. Army Reserve Command other than to stress the importance of the relationship it has to Third Army. Depending on its recommendations stated that the USARC should move and be co-located with FORSCOM at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina. Of course, we agree with co-locations of the two headquarters and feel that Fort McPherson is and has proven itself many times to be the better alternative, as I will explain next.

During the Commission hearings on May 17th through 19th, Commissioner Bilbray expressed concern that moving a facility from one geographic location to another might be problematic given the need to retain skilled professionals. As you can see above, the same applies to Headquarters Forces Command in the U.S. Army Reserve Command. Their ability to recruit professional career-oriented civilian managers and leaders in Fayetteville, North Carolina may be problematic. From the chart shown above, there are eight times more skills availability in

Atlanta than Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Two, Fort Bragg already has large established headquarters there that will be competing from a smaller demographic base than is available in Atlanta. We do understand that this is an issue very difficult to quantify but should be a concern nonetheless.

For headquarters, organizations, DoD Criteria 3 translates best into facilities themselves and the capability inherent in those facilities for Command Control. Forces Command and other commands at Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem have without question the most sophisticated command and control systems in the military today.

Key organizations have the advantage of being interconnected to worldwide world-class communications networks. The physical security and the intelligence security investment have already been made to the tune of about a billion dollars. We ask ourselves what is the benefit of replicating them somewhere else.

In fact, as early as September 14th, 2004 the Secretary of the Army expressed concern with the military construction bills for scenarios that consolidated the administrative activities in the

new facilities. Why then are we spending the limited military construction dollars on administrative facilities?

Final thought before I summarize the Fort McPherson argument. The thought is strategic in nature. We suggest that the Commission reflect on the changing nature of world order and the implications for stationing clusters of national commanding control facilities to take advantage of major transportation and information technology hubs. The threat today is diverse and unpredictable. To counter it provides coordination with numerous governmental and non-governmental agencies.

In our judgment, Fort McPherson and the Command Control headquarters there provide the basis for an expanded capability for homeland defense, to include the capability for coordination with international agencies and forces as we prosecute the war on terror.

In summary, given our concerns with the savings permitted by the COBRA model 2005, the mission that strategic value benefits of retaining three headquarters together, the enormous benefits of command and control offered by the current

availability of highly capable infrastructure, the availability of skilled civilian manpower in Atlanta, the close proximity of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport all mitigate, in our opinion, against closing Fort McPherson and support leaving all three major headquarters there.

Let me now address Fort Gillem. As with Fort McPherson, our discussion with Fort Gillem center on three points. First, again, cost appears to be the overriding factor in the Army's decision to close the installation while both COBRA analysis and other cost factors are a concern.

Secondly, moving the three major headquarters First Army, 2nd Recruiting Brigade and the 52nd EOD Group will impact adversely on training readiness of the Reserve Component, detracts from support for homeland defense and impedes efficient commanding control between headquarters and subordinate units.

Finally, the positioning of enclaved organization. There will obviate a security challenge and make redevelopment planning much more difficult. As with Fort McPherson, we examined the COBRA analysis for Fort Gillem and came up with much the same conclusions. For example, completing all

personnel moves and construction of a new headquarters for 2nd Recruiting Brigade in one year, start to finish, absolutely unattainable.

Again, the disparity between the COBRA modeling done in 1993 and 2005 in this instance, one-time cost of \$56 million in 2005 compared to \$350 million in 1993, are significant enough to question the validity of the data. We recognize that models and scenarios, again, and assumptions are but -- are clearly something that must be considered. But such large deviations certainly raise questions, and we recommend further examination by our staff.

Much like the proximity of Fort McPherson with Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, organizations at Fort Gillem too will be impacted by a less efficient travel environment and increased costs should Fort Gillem close. For all three organizations there, travel to get to a major transportation at the new locations will be extensive. For First Army it's 165 miles to Chicago, Illinois. For the 52nd EOD Group, 60 miles to Nashville, Tennessee. For the Second Recruiting Brigade, 80 miles to Birmingham, Alabama. Cost of travel and/or time spent traveling will be more.

To further illustrate this, we compared the cost of the availability of flights between a representative sample of the subordinate battalions of the Recruiting Brigade and the EOD Group. Except for cost of travel to a transportation hub, airline fares are generally the same. However, the lack of availability of flights equates to loss of productive work, which, again, is not quantified in the COBRA model.

Setting the issue of costs aside for a moment, the Army states by moving First Army 52nd Group in the Second Brigade that mission value is enhanced. We question that conclusion. Today First Army is subordinate headquarters to Forces Command and is responsible to FORSCOM for the training and readiness of Reserve and National Guard forces in the eastern United States.

Additionally, it serves as an Army coordinator for homeland defense and natural disaster support. Since First Army headquarters will be assuming reserve training readiness responsibility for the entire continental United States, moving it to Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, according to the Army, will locate it more centrally to the forces it will supervise, thus improving

mission capability.

Again, we question that. First, regarding the training and readiness of the Reserve component, there's a natural synergy between Forces Command, the U.S. Army Reserve Command and First Army that will be affected by the First Army move. Coordination won't be timely nor will it be as effective.

Secondly, in terms of time, given the fact that the major transportation hub, Chicago, 165 miles away, the question is: Is there really any benefit from a mission value perspective to move the headquarters from the immediate availability of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

Consider also the fact that First Army has a significant role to play in our nation's homeland security. It is unfortunate that the Pentagon has recommended displacing the First Army, a coordinator for military support civilian authorities including homeland defense, homeland defense and the capability that is offered by FEMA, GEMA, the Red Cross, CDC, CID Laboratory, the U.S. Army Reserve Secure Facility and National Guard units on Fort Gillem.

The move of the Second Recruiting Brigade

and 52nd EOD Group is again based on improving mission capability. By stationing the 52nd Group headquarters with one of its units at Ft. Campbell, the inference is it will provide better training and more efficient command and control opportunities for the Corps.

The Recruiting Brigade move, according to the Army, puts the organization in a more central location to the population it serves. To put the 52nd EOD Group in perspective, it is a small command control headquarters the commands five battalions and 39 companies located strategically throughout the United States and overseas.

Doctrinally the companies organized into small teams to render safe, explosive devices and weapons of mass destruction. Training is company focused. The group orients primarily on administrative and command and control functions and not as much on training other than to monitor training readiness.

A relevant point is that the 52nd Group's assets are widely dispersed, not only in the continental United States but also overseas. From a command and control perspective, therefore, it would appear to us placing the group headquarters on an

installation which will make travel more difficult, just does not make sense.

The Second Recruiting Brigade move is questionable as well. Like the others, command and control the effected given the additional time required to visit supporting units not in Alabama. Again, a product of the ground distance of 80 miles to a major transportation hub.

We see no advantage whatsoever in terms of mission efficiency in moving that headquarters. It is troublesome to us that a large number of organizations promote the Army and other federal agencies are scheduled to be enclaved in Gillem with no rationale for leaving them there and no single military organization charged with providing administrative and logical support.

Again, it appears that the Army's focus was to use cost to close Fort Gillem. Once that threshold was achieved, the remaining organizations were left with some future decisions.

Some are cited to be positioned on a so-called Base X; others are unaccounted for. Specifically the Third Medical Command, the Army Reserve Military Intelligence Center and the Atlanta Military Entrance Processing Station. For certain

what remains is a closed installation with little enclaves, to use the Army's terminology, having little semblance of organization or appropriate security for that matter.

We have circled in red the organization that will remain on the installation to better describe the security challenge that will exist and to give you an appreciation for the redevelopment obstacles faced by the community when the property is turned over.

Finally, I would like to emphasize Fort Gillem is inextricably linked to Fort McPherson. Setting aside the issue of synergy for training readiness of the Reserve Component which is an important aspect in and of itself, once you considered that Fort McPherson provides service, security and support to Fort Gillem and vice versa and is linked necessarily to its communications infrastructure.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: General Browning, I recommend you jump to your conclusions. I will have to cut you off.

BRIGADIER GENERAL BROWNING: Sir, in conclusion, the Army's recommendation to disperse headquarters, limit command and control and at

additional cost substantially deviates from the requirements of DoD BRAC Criteria 3 and 4. The Army's recommendation to disperse major headquarters whose synergy is critical to mission value deviates substantially from Criteria 1.

Finally, the costs are understated in the Army's analysis and thus deviate from Criteria 3. Therefore, our recommendations are retain Fort McPherson and the three installations there and do not close or realign Fort Gillem.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for the time. And we look forward to your questions.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

Commissioner, do you have any questions?

I don't think there are any questions.

Speaker, who may I give the floor to?

Congressman Gingrey, I don't believe you have been sworn. So we are going to ask you to step up and be sworn.

(Congressman sworn.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: The floor is yours.

CONGRESSMAN GINGREY: Gentlemen, thank you for coming today. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to explain why Naval Air Station in Cobb County should remain open. Also, I would like to introduce you to one

of the nation's leading authorities on reserve force structures, Major General Larry Taylor.

There are three key points that we hope you take away from today's presentation. No. 1, the City of Atlanta and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport provide the installation with unmatched demographics, demographics that cannot be replicated anywhere else. Companies like Delta, AirTran, Lockheed Martin, Home Depot, UPS and others provide NAS Atlanta with an endless supply of experienced trained pilots and maintainers and recruiting and retention will inevitably suffer without the population base the city provides.

Secondly, the assets at NAS Atlanta and the subsequent personnel will not go away. They will simply be moved. This means that the only true cost savings is for the headquarters personnel and the maintenance of the installation, which is less than one-half of what the COBRA model plans.

Thirdly, NAS Atlanta is a joint installation in the true sense of the word and is wholly interdependent with Dobbins Air Reserve Base and Lockheed Martin. The properties are literally interwoven. And each installation relies on the other for different functions like medical

facilities, wastewater treatment, fire protection and family support.

Gentlemen, this is an incredibly cost effective base. Military value is high. Like the Golden Rule of real estate, reserve installations rely on location, location, location and should this land be forfeited, the Navy will never be able to get it back.

I would like to introduce you now to the true authority. Major General Larry Taylor has commanded at every level and has long been a champion of the Reserve component. During the 1995 BRAC round, he was a commanding general of the 4th Marine Air Left Wing where he was responsible for the recruiting, equipment, training of all marine reserves aviation forces.

After his retirement, General Taylor was called back to active duty. After September 11th, his command was a Marine Corps Mobilization Command. No one is more qualified to share the importance of the Reserve's role in the support of our national command authority as well as the inherent challenges associated with more recruitment and demographics.

Thank you again for your consideration. And I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

General Taylor.

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: Thank you, Congressman Gingrey. And thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission. I appreciate having this opportunity to make a case for NAS Atlanta and detail why the Department of Defense was shortsighted in making the recommendation for closure, an act we believe will negatively affect the readiness of our reserve forces.

I am here today to discuss three key points: Reserve combat readiness is about demographics. The DoD numbers are flawed. There are better alternatives.

First let's address the key issue of demographics. What makes our Reserve Forces strong? Being able to recruit and retain the best and brightest our country has to offer, allowing them access to key job opportunities, occupational advancement, great schools, affordable housing and great quality of life for their families all while serving their country.

Atlanta has the second largest population of aviation-related occupational fields in the United States, supported by the world's busiest airport, Lockheed Martin and hundreds of high-tech companies.

I have two examples from personal experience as commanding general of the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing that demonstrates the benefit of superior access to trained prior service reservists.

One of 4th MAW's helicopter squadrons, HMM-764 then based at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro had given themselves the call sign Moonlight. They were very proud of the fact that in the few years preceding, they had accumulated a higher percentage of flight hours on night vision goggles than any other non-deployed squadron in the Marine Corps. They were able to do this by regularly scheduling multi-aircraft tactical training flights on weeknights.

Keep in mind some people think of the Reserves as weekend warriors. Not true. These marines, most of whom lived near the base, were able to take care of their work and family obligations and to train regularly throughout the month with their squadron. As you know, many of our missions, combat missions, these days take place in the hours of darkness. This squadron was combat ready.

Then BRAC closed El Toro and realigned that squadron to Miramar. No problem, we thought. Miramar is near San Diego, also has a

Reserve-friendly demographic profile. However, once the move of the squadron actually began, we discovered there wasn't enough room for them at Miramar. They were redirected to Edwards Air Force base, three-and-a-half hour drive into the Mojave Desert.

The Air Force had been an excellent landlord to the Marines at Edwards but that weeknight training Moonlight had done so much of when the squadron was near their homes and workplaces was dramatically reduced and frequently involved administratively pre-positioning aircraft closer to where the crews lived and worked, costly and time in dollars.

Should DoD's recommendations be approved, the highly trained and combat-ready helicopter squadron back at NAS Atlanta slated to move 120 miles to Warner Robins will suffer the same derogation of combat readiness.

There was another redirect that took place about the same time. The NAS Atlanta base fire squadron, which is now presently in Iraq, used to be based at NAS Cecil Field, Florida. BRAC closed Cecil and directed this squadron to Beaufort, South Carolina. After many lengthy discussions, the

message that we had been trying to send finally sunk in. It is difficult to recruit and retain reserves to the South Carolina low country.

The redirect on the squadron was ordered to NAS Atlanta. The rationale, quote, was superior demographics, unquote. This is a direct quote from the '95 BRAC report to the President.

We must ask: What has changed? All this I add at a time when we are relying far more than ever on the reserve components of our armed forces. The total force works. It works because in the past we have placed on reserve component capabilities and locations where recruiters and the personnel required to man these capabilities have relatively easy access.

When I talk to civic groups, I often use that old cliché about the three most important things about real estate: Location, location, location.

In the same fashion, the three most important things about a reserve site are demographics, demographics, demographics. This demographics issue is inherently tied to BRAC Criteria No. 1, operational readiness. Naval and marine readiness will suffer if the Navy divests

itself from Atlanta.

The savings claimed from closing of NAS Atlanta are substantially incorrect. Specifically, it would appear that the savings projection of \$60 million is incorrect and will be substantially low. For example, one of the tenant squadrons, VFA-203 with 129 personnel, left more than a year ago but is included in the calculations.

Also, an error in the manning of the to-be-closed medical clinic. The data said closing the clinic would save 111 personnel. The actual number is 40.

The bottom line is 307 fewer personnel will be eliminated due to closure than the original model estimated. Moreover, if recommendations are implemented, tenant commands do not cease to exist, rather they become tenants of other bases. Like New Orleans which has the lowest reservist manning percentage of all NAS reserve bases, Robin's Air Force Base, 120 miles from NAS Atlanta, Dobbins or Fort Worth.

The actual savings; that is, the savings associated with the elimination of the administrative and other overhead of the NAS itself is more like 35 million, approximately 25 million

less than claimed by the model, which I emphasize again accounts for all the positions of the tenant activity. The number of those positions slated to leave here only to operate elsewhere is 475.

I must also point out that the model fails to take into account the NAS Atlanta facility's condition index of 0.7 percent which is much better -- well below -- lower is better than the criteria of 5 percent to be considered excellent by the Navy, which addresses BRAC Criteria No. 2, condition of the facilities.

The key point here is that notwithstanding hard to quantify claims of cost savings by BRAC, Criteria 4, there can be little doubt that NAS Atlanta has been not only efficient but extraordinarily effective in doing what any reserve base is supposed to do. A reserve base is supposed to facilitate the recruiting, organizing, equipping and training of operational units to mobilize, deploy and be employed and combat. The proof is in combat, as we speak.

Analysis also ignores the joint use of the Dobbins runway, which is no additional cost to the Navy. It seems ironic that BRAC intended to promote jointness has essentially ignored the decades-long

inherent jointness of NAS Atlanta and Dobbins.

Late in 2004, not long after our fighter squadron was mobilized and deployed to Iraq but before our helicopter squadron had returned from Afghanistan, a very prominent local political figure visited NAS Atlanta. He commented how sleepy the place seemed. I mention this because it seemed to me it dramatically illustrates how efficient and effective NAS Atlanta has been and continues to be.

That sleepy impression in his mind was not because the base was Beetle Bailey's Camp Swampy with General Halftrack waiting in vain for that call from the Pentagon that never came. On the contrary, he saw little activity precisely because the Pentagon has called and continues to call early and often.

I already mentioned the helicopter squadron just back from 18 months in Afghanistan and the fire squadron in Iraq as we meet here today, also the Navy's transport squadron, VR-46 which sends detachments overseas for 28 weeks a year. There is also the airborne early warning squadron VAW-77 heavily involved in narcotics efforts and with NASA.

Now these young men and women are being

told thank you for your sacrifices, you and your families and employers have made, we plan to move your squadron to New Orleans or Warner Robins. If you wish to continue to participate after being mobilized for so long, you are going to have to explain to your families and employers that even more days and hours will be spent just getting to and from your squadron even when you are not mobilized.

Is there any doubt what this will do to the retention of the critical and combat-tested skills? Is there any doubt how much more difficult it will be to recruit such skills to new sites which lack the aviation skills intensive demographic makeup of Atlanta?

My final point is that there are workable alternatives that will provide cost savings while not having a negative effect on readiness. We have long advocated further increasing the joint relationship of NAS Atlanta and Dobbins by relocation or conveyance. But, regardless, NAS Atlanta should be your model, not your target. Either keep NAS open, relocate some or all of the squadrons across the runway to Dobbins or even better yet, convey all of the facilities and

properties to Dobbins Air Reserve Base.

Increased jointness also would spare DoD some of the challenges not to mention money and countless man-hours of previous BRAC rounds and their subsequent redirects when mistakes were discovered. Some of these discoveries, in my personal experience, were actual simple admissions previous BRAC recommendations ignored the expert testimony and warnings of the on-scene commanders.

I have already talked about Moonlight experience on the West Coast and superior demographics, quote, referring to the 1995 redirect to NAS Atlanta.

To some degree, NAS Atlanta is a victim of its own success. It's a remarkably efficient base with very little overhead due in part to the joint relationship with Dobbins. No matter how many times you run them off, it does not factor in the intangible strength of NAS Atlanta's demographics.

We understand that you are wrestling with incredibly difficult issues that pertain to saving taxpayer dollars but lives are affected. You are trying to determine as Admiral Gehman put it, is the pain worth the gain? I am here to testify that pain of closing NAS Atlanta is not worth the gain of

\$35 million substantially less than the model.

The good news is that we have shown you a way to save DoD dollars while retaining the military value resident in NAS Atlanta. Jointness is the key, and in that regard, NAS Atlanta should be your model, not your target.

At a time when we rely more heavily than ever on the reserve components of our armed forces, at the time when we lament the large and growing cultural and knowledge gap between our military and the society it serves, we are involved in a process that will continue the trend of the military to withdraw even further into an isolated and insulated Fort Apaches of a few large bases.

Cut the fat. But when you do, please remember much of our military muscle is the assurance that when America must go to war, places like Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; Yakima, Washington; Garden City, New York; and Atlanta, Georgia must go as well, both in person and in spirit. Personnel of the reserve units based here and with the spiritual support of their friends, families, employers and fellow citizens.

Gentlemen, in a short period of time, I shared with you that demographics is the key to

Reserve readiness. I have shown where the numbers were flawed and provided you with working alternatives that save money while ensuring readiness.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. We look forward to meeting with you and your staff in Washington to discuss these ideas and numbers in more detail. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. If you have a question for this speaker, we should do it right now.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: I do. I really want to talk about readiness, readiness in Ft. Worth and readiness at New Orleans and availability of personnel. I wonder if you could elaborate? Does the Marine Corps and Navy keep those statistics and have these statistics -- and have you shared them in a certifiable basis for the Commission?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: I don't have that analysis. I will share it with you when we meet with the staff in Washington. The statistics that we do have on hand are reservist manning at New Orleans, which is the lowest of all reservist bases.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: What about Fort Worth?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: I have no statistics,

sir.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Do you have any thought based on your experience as to availability of experienced personnel?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: Dallas, Fort Worth, of course, is a large aviation hub also. They share some of the similar characteristics that the Atlanta does. There are 1400 prior service reservists within the 50 miles of NAS Atlanta that would be available to be recruited. That compares with 400 in New Orleans and 28 within 50 miles of Warner Robins Air Force Base.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: You don't anticipate other than maybe going to Warner Robins that they would be -- these people would be transferring to New Orleans? Have you got any figure on that, how many people would move with the mission?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: Yes, I do. I don't have that handy. We have that in our overall package, which we will share with the staff. We have a breakdown within 50 miles, within 100 miles, on down the road, how many are currently in those units.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: I assume there's a higher -- you got a higher retention rate if you move down 120 miles than it is over New Orleans or Fort Worth. Is that gap big; do you know?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: I am not sure about that. 120 miles means a two-and-a-half hour drive. As I said before, some of that weeknight training will disappear, some of that training that's done now, because you can't make that drive after work, for example, like you would have if you were just coming from Marietta, Georgia to the base. So I think the proximity to the big city is very, very important.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: I actually have a question, too. The Marine Corps' move to Warner Robins, are there any Marine Corps units already in Warner Robins?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: No, sir.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Any reason for structure and command and control for headquarters or service support has to be put in there?

MAJOR GENERAL TAYLOR: I understand additional construction would be required.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much, sir.

CONGRESSMAN BARROW: My name is John Barrow. I represent Georgia's 12 District Navy Supply Corps School in Athens, Georgia. On May 25, this year about two weeks after the initial BRAC list was announced,

Admiral Gehman of this Commission toured the Supply Corps School in Athens, the first time that anyone representing this BRAC Commission has toured the facility.

On that day, Admiral saw firsthand what the rest of us has known for quite some time now, the Athens Navy Supply Corps School is a model in 21st Century military efficiency. A cost effective, multi-function, logistical think tank that provides state of the art training to all branches of our nation's armed forces. It performs its core capabilities smarter and faster and cheaper than any other Department of Defense school.

Moving NSCS to Newport, Rhode Island will prove a logistical and strategic mistake that will not only increase the school's operating costs, it will actually decrease the military value of the school's training resources.

Over previous BRAC rounds, the NSCS has acquired additional assignments and personnel precisely because military value, training excellence, cost effectiveness and superior facilities.

We are extremely fortunate in Athens to have an outstanding volunteer support team in our

Navy Task Force committee, in particular our chairman Jim LaBroon, prominent Athens banker, as well as two former commanding officers who made Athens their home, Captain Lynns Zomara and George Huban, who you met. They are just a few of the many individuals who work diligently to put our presentation together.

The following presentation from Captain Huban will show in the table how the May 13 recommendation to close and relocate Athens Navy Supply Corps School substantially deviates from the military criteria listed in BRAC.

Captain Huban.

CAPTAIN HUBAN: Mr. Chairman, I, too, want to add my thanks to you, fellow commissioners, and Commission staff for answering the President's call to take on this important task. Your decisions will not only affect the faith of citizens and communities that have supported these military installations for decades, but most important the military readiness of our Armed Forces.

I am here today to discuss the Navy Supply Corps School. The Pentagon's justification for this closure recommendation is that it closed a single function installation. This is incorrect. It can

support the training of officers in Newport with the existing infrastructure. This is incorrect. And finally, this relocation to Newport is desirable and cost efficient and supports a Navy initiative to create a center for officer training at Newport. This is also incorrect.

I will discuss how each of these justifications are wrong, how the Pentagon deviated substantially from the BRAC selection criteria and will end by recommending the Commission to reject the recommendation to close the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens.

Before I address the Pentagon's substantial deviation from the BRAC selection criteria, let me first address a significant misunderstanding of the role the Athens base played in the logistics warfare training. BRAC justification called the Navy Supply Corps School a single-function installation. Nothing could be further from the truth. Perhaps the Pentagon was thinking that the only course taught was Navy Supply Corps officers' basic qualification course, the first course officers take after commissioning to qualify as a supply corps officer.

This is a course originally brought to

Athens in 1954. At that point, the school was a single-function installation with this course representing approximately 90 percent of student throughput.

Today, the naval support activity, Athens, hosts three military commands: The Center for Service Support, the Navy Supply Corps School, and the U.S. Marine Corps Detachment. The basic qualification course now represents only 3 percent of the annual throughput of the Navy Supply Corps School.

The Athens base has evolved into a joint training logistics university teaching not only naval officers enlisted but also Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Military Sealift Command, International Military as well as Department of Defense civilian personnel.

The Supply Corps School teaches 36 courses on campus, 13 by mobile training teams and video teletraining. Course topics includes supply material management, hazardous material, transportation management, Marine Corps aviation, Naval Reserve expeditionary logistics.

In addition, state of the art technology, infrastructure built in the Athens base, allows it

to be a test facility for DoD training innovation. To stay current with logistics innovation in the 21st Century, the Navy Supply Corps established in 2001 the Tench Francis School of Executive Training in Athens. This course provides executive training to mid- and senior-grade officers in a state of the art conference center, located adjacent to an award winning bachelor quarters.

Additionally, in a long-standing partnership with the University of Georgia, selected Navy Supply Corps officers finishing their tour of duty at the Navy Supply Corps School receive orders to attend the MBA program at the prestigious Terry College of Business. This partnership not only allows the Navy to send officers to UGA at an in-state tuition rate but also saves valuable permanent change of station funds. One move to Athens, two sets of orders.

Let me highlight a significant misunderstanding of the role of the Athens base. We will now examine how the Pentagon deviated substantially from their criteria. Military value selection Criteria No. 1, the most important criteria, the impact on joint war fighting and readiness.

As noted previously, Athens has evolved into a joint training logistics university, producing recognized outstanding military readiness improvement in the training environment. Its reputation for training excellence has made it a magnet for 21st century logistics warfare training. This proposed move to Newport does not fully appreciate the student mix and synergy of this training facility. Currently only 7 percent of the over 5500 students trained are naval officers. This move to Newport appears to be driven by a very small percentage of throughput.

In addition, for new Supply Corps officers requiring a saltwater orientation, training is conducted in Mayport, Florida, a distance of approximately 350 miles from Athens. In accomplishing the same training in Newport, Rhode Island, the nearest ships to Newport are in Norfolk, Virginia, a distance of 570 miles. There are no active-duty ships homeported at Newport.

We strongly question the Pentagon's justification that this closure would create Newport as the center for officer training. Research has uncovered no Secretary of Navy instruction, directive or policy creating such a concept or

center. If Newport is to be the center for follow-on officer training, why wouldn't other officer communities training be affected?

In contrary -- to the contrary, in recognition of Athens facility cost effective training excellence, the chief naval operations in 2002 chose Athens as the ideal location for the center for services support. This new command is responsible for the training oversight and career development of 46,000 sailors across 17 separate listed ratings and 5,000 officers in 10 communities.

Based on our review, the question remains, what is the military value of this BRAC relocation?

Military value selection Criteria No. 2 is the availability, condition of land, facilities at both existing and receiving locations. Athens is a state of the art facility with one of the lowest maintenance backlogs of any Navy base in the Department of Defense. This 58-acre pristine location installation has received numerous DoD awards for its superior facilities. In addition, since 1954 the City of Athens, provided the base with fire and police protection at no cost.

In this age of developing innovative partnerships to reduce base operating expenses, the

special partnership with the City of Athens set the standard for over 50 years.

To support training in Newport with existing infrastructure, the COBRA model includes 15 million for military construction commencing in 2008 to refurbish outdated Newport buildings. This estimate does not include the millions of dollars necessary to bring Newport's maintenance backlog to the Athens level. More troubling than the cost to upgrade the Newport's classroom facilities is the BRAC treatment of transient student and support personnel housing.

The Newport bachelor quarters occupancy rate is so high the COBRA model assumes transient students and support personnel will not live on base but will live on the Newport economy. The cost per diem rate to live off base Newport is one of the highest in the country. A \$4.3 million annual increase in transient student and support personnel costs to live off base in Newport was provided in BRAC scenario data.

However, this cost was not loaded in the COBRA model at \$4.3 million additional cost will be paid by Navy's travel budget. We believe, therefore, the recommendation to close Athens

clearly deviates substantially from the BRAC military value selection Criteria No. 2 in ignoring the cost of transient student and support personnel.

Military value selection Criteria No. 4, the cost of operations and other considerations. Criteria No. 5 is the extent and timing of projected cost and savings. The BRAC data projects the annual recurrent savings will be of \$3.5 million. But the data also indicates the COBRA model did not take into account 4.3 million annual increase in cost for transient students and support personnel in Newport. When the cost is added in, there's an annual cost, not an annual savings to this proposed closure and relocation.

No reasonable business would invest 24 million, the BRAC investment number, for the privilege of paying at least 800,000 annually. All costs, no savings.

The other troubling aspect of the three-and-a-half million dollars annual recurring savings projection is that it's based on arbitrary personnel reductions called inefficiencies. In order to project an annual savings, one has to make efficiencies cuts big enough to overcome the fact that Newport's civilian locality pay scale is

significantly higher than Athens. In fact, Newport ranks in the top 10 for most expensive locations in the United States for military and civilian personnel. It's even higher than Washington, D.C.

In regard to permanently assigned personnel, Newport has \$800 per month higher officer housing allowance cost and approximately \$700 per month higher enlisted housing allowance cost. In addition, these inefficiencies ignore the streamlining that the Navy Supply Corps School has undertaken for the past 12 years and continues to achieve annually. Even though the student's throughput has doubled, the Navy Supply Corps School has used technology to reduce the staffing of instructors by over 20 percent.

Not allowing the COBRA model to account for Newport's increased annual cost of transient students and support personnel housing and make them what we believe are arbitrary efficiency cuts, the BRAC analysis clearly deviated substantially from selection Criteria No. 4 and other considerations, No. 5.

In summary, we believe that the BRAC savings protections are in fact wrong when all costs are considered. The Navy will spend \$24 million for

a move that will cause them to lose \$800,000 annually. A COBRA model excursion, which further elaborates cost implications of this move, was provided to BRAC Commission analysts for their review on June 28, 2005. Not only is this a bad investment, but most importantly, there is no clear military value payback.

We believe that after the Commission examines all the facts, you will conclude this recommendation to close the Navy Supply Corps School deviated substantially from BRAC selection criteria.

Thank you for your time and attention. We look forward to working with your staff in the coming weeks.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

I have one question. As every member of the panel realizes, the statute requires that this Commission only considers certified data. The analysis that you ran would be enormous value to us as we make our deliberations. We hope you will share it with us. But as you realize, we will have to turn it into, quote, certified data.

CAPTAIN HUBAN: Certainly.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: We greatly value the free manpower we get. We hope that you will work with

the Commission as we bring these numbers up.

CAPTAIN HUBAN: We look forward to it.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

Any other questions?

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: I have one question.

The Navy's concept is to, as you know -- as I understand it, is to put all of their training and to concentrate their training, officer training and a lot of their expert training in one location to get the synergy of the training force in one location.

Have you given any thought to that and why that makes sense or doesn't make sense? I am sure it would make sense if it was down here.

CAPTAIN HUBAN: Well, the words say they want to relocate to a desirable -- to create a center for office and training. We are a follow-on training facility; we are not commissioning officers. We train people who already do commission. When we look at Newport as a facility, we look for follow-on training of other communities that would be going there to do what you suggest.

For example, the CDC Corps that is currently located in California has follow-on training for their officers. We didn't see anything that was moving there. There is just a lot of

follow-on training, other than us, seems to be moving to Newport.

We question if this is a concept. We haven't heard about it. It kind of goes against all the locations with a center for service support which is supposed to look over training. The Navy could have put a center for service support Newport to focus on this issue. That didn't happen. We were puzzled and in our research to figure out that how was all coming together since we did not see anything.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Where does your students come from; they take basic training, officer training at Newport?

CAPTAIN HUBAN: No, sir. The commission program for Supply Corps Officer comes from AOCS. There's approximately 250 per year. The majority at this point in our session model are coming from AOCS which is currently Pensacola. That's not all. Naval Academy. That's a different area than we are working.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. Congressman Bishop and Mr. Kingston, have you been sworn in? Did I miss anybody else?

(Panel members sworn)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

The floor is yours.

CONGRESSMAN KINGSTON: I am Jack Kingston representing the First District of Georgia. Although I have a number of military posts and installations there, I am focusing today on Kings Bay Naval Base.

Kings Bay, as you probably know, is built for larger SSBN fleet that it has right now. Even if we make all the changes that BRAC has recommended, there will still be more room for additional growth. There's been a lot of discussion about changing the subfleet size. Whatever way we go, the combination of Norfolk and Kings Bay will accommodate all the needs required in the future.

Adding new missions to Kings Bay is the right move from a national security and an economic standpoint. The military value of Kings Bay is one of the highest in the Department of Defense. The synergy created by locating all three submarine platforms, SSBM, SSGM and SSN, near a major naval fleet concentration area will provide enhanced wartime readiness and surge capability.

Additionally, co-locating the submarine school at an operational base with three weapons systems enhances training for our sailors and ultimately their ability to work together when

deployed.

Kings Bay has the space and the access to easily support future missions and growth at minimal cost. The high level of current investment at Kings Bay coupled with the lowest base operating cost in the Department makes growing missions at Kings Bay a smart decision.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee on Defense, I am keenly aware of future years' acquisition strategies of the submarines. The current acquisition plan of one submarine per year through 2012 followed by two subs per year through 2025, when coupled with retirement plans for existing subs, will leave us with a smaller force in the future.

But the point I want to leave you with is that even with two East Coast submarine homeports, the Navy will still have the need to expand the size of the predicted 20-year force structure plan. Whether tomorrow's sub force is 40, 55 or some larger number, the combination of King's Bay and Norfolk is the highest military value option while achieving the maximum savings from the final round of BRAC.

I would like to introduce retired Captain

Walt Yourstone, former commanding officer of Kings Bay, to add some further comments.

CAPTAIN YOURSTONE: Good morning. I am here to address concerns that have been raised about Camden County, Georgia's ability to accommodate the growth associated with the Department of Defense recommendations presented to your Commission to realign missions to Kings Bay. These concerns are unfounded.

In addressing our capability to accommodate growth, I would like to stress that the community is experienced in managing smart growth. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, Camden County sustained an average annual population growth of 11 to 13 percent.

Despite the double digit growth driven by establishments of the Naval submarine base, the community sustained a high quality of life as evidenced by an excellent public school system, local post-secondary education, academic and technical programs, affordable and available housing, accessible health services, recreational activities that highlight the area's natural beauty and historical resources and strong military community partnerships.

I would like to stress three points with

the Commission this morning. First, as performance clearly shows, Camden County can support the anticipated growth. Secondly, present community support capability in many areas can handle this growth today. And finally, the communities embracing the future in its strategic planning, Camden County is part of the growing coastal region.

We are addressing future infrastructure needs with current county-wide comprehensive planning and resource management. Where additional infrastructure is required, planning and execution schedules are well within the timing of BRAC-related transition phasing plans. In other words, Camden County is and will remain ready to welcome new service members and their families to a community with a high quality of life and low cost of living, without placing a burden on current residents or overstressing community services and programs.

To illustrate these points, I will address Submarine Base manning, public education system facilities and the availability and affordability of housing.

Next one, please. With establishment of Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, the population of Camden County grew 10,000 in 1978 to over 45,000

today. Left-hand side of this chart shows approximately 4,000 billets added to Kings Bay over a three-year period.

Our understanding of Kings Bay-related DoD BRAC recommendations is that roughly 3300 billets will be added over a six-year period. The rate and magnitude of growth associated with DoD BRAC recommendations are less than that experienced in the 1980s when the county's infrastructure was much less than it is today.

Peak manning at Kings Bay occurred in 1995 when a total of 11,692 personnel was assigned. Since then, a submarine tender has departed and Trident force restructuring resulted in three of ten submarines being transferred from Kings Bay to Bangor, Washington. As a result, as of June 2005, base manning is 8,071.

The roughly 3300 billets from BRAC actions still result in a number below the 1995 peak. The base and community capacity can once again support this level of manning.

Residents of Camden County enjoy high quality educational opportunities as a result of an effectively-managed expansion program. With the arrival after the Navy, student population has grown

from 2800 students in 1978 to 9500 students this past school year. The system has grown from a single elementary and high school to nine elementary schools, two middle schools, a separate 9th grade center and one high school serving grades 10 through 12.

Instructional facilities are in outstanding condition with most being built in the past ten years. Yet over \$30 million in bonds issued to fund this initial growth have all been retired.

Current building programs include a brand new middle school and expansion of the 9th grade center. These projects will be paid in full upon completion. Balances in the capital investment accounts will be sufficient to fund the next anticipated building project in the 2000 time frame, a new elementary school to meet the needs of future development projects.

Based on current enrollment, existing school facilities have the capacity to handle approximately 1800 additional students. As a result of DoD BRAC recommendations, the roughly 1500 new students estimated by the GAO can be accommodated in our normal planning processes. However, if

additional expansion were required, it takes only two years from initial identification of a need to new school openings.

Housing availability receives much consideration from community leaders. A community housing team and partnership with the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing has begun work to ensure our strategic planning for affordable housing matches current needs and meets future population trends.

New housing construction over the past several years has averaged 3.75 percent. Compared with a 1.7 percent population growth, the new housing market is expanding. With an overall occupancy rate of 86.7 percent, it is clear that housing remains available. Housing is also affordable at Camden County. Of the 1404 homes sold in 2004, over half of them, 723, were priced less than \$120,000. Home ownership remains affordable to assigned and enlisted personnel.

A complete housing picture should include our neighboring Georgia counties as well as northeast Florida. On average, 20 percent of assigned personnel to Kings Bay reside outside Camden County with a 40-minute commute to downtown

metropolitan Jacksonville and a 20-minute drive to the airport. Another diverse and expansive housing market is available to those assigned to Kings Bay.

To summarize, DoD BRAC recommendations concerning relocation of activities to submarine base Kings Bay will give Camden County the opportunity to integrate the Navy's growth with our own community planning for the future and to continue and expand the strong partnerships that exist between the community and the naval base.

Our message remains that the base has the capacity to accommodate growth and that the County has either the capacity or the plans in place to grow with the base through leadership, partnership and community support, we are an area that is ready for growth.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

Any questions?

Mr. Westmoreland, the floor is yours, sir.

CONGRESSMAN WESTMORELAND: Thank you. I would like to thank the BRAC commissioners for coming to Atlanta today to discuss these important bases in the states of Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee and the effect that they will have on the these states, but most of all, the impact they have on the U.S. military and the

defense of our nation.

I am here today representing the Army Installation at Fort Benning, the home of infantry. As a training and doctrine command installation, Fort Benning's vision is to be first in training, first in readiness and first in the quality of life. The base provides the best training to all soldiers who pass through their schools.

Fort Benning's mission is to provide the world's best infantry soldiers, to provide a power projection platform to deploy soldiers anywhere in the world on a short notice and provide the Army's premier installation and home for soldiers, families, civilian employees and military retirees.

Fort Benning's leadership has always had its focus on the most important items in the Army, the individual soldier and their families. One such example of this focus is the improvement of the single soldier and family living quarters, both of which I witnessed firsthand.

A critical aspect of supporting our soldiers is when the Congress works with the Department of Defense to provide them with proper housing. With an additional gain of 10,000 soldiers and their family members, I pledge to you as a

member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in the House of Representatives, I will continue to push for additional infrastructure funding for the base and the surrounding community to prepare for this large increase and uphold the Fort Benning vision of first in quality of life.

Fort Benning is fortunate in this unique relationship with what is finally called the tri-community. This consists of Fort Benning, Columbus, Georgia, and Phoenix City, Alabama. Not only do the local communities fully support Fort Benning, my Congressional colleagues who are here with me today from both the states of Georgia and Alabama have shown their support for Fort Benning in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

I would now like to introduce Colonel retired John Mitchell and Colonel retired Biff Hadden who will speak on behalf of the local community. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you.

To the speakers, unfortunately, you are allotted very little amount of time, so please watch the clock.

COLONEL MITCHELL: Yes, sir. We appreciate the opportunity to appear before the Base Realignment

and Closure Commission to explain how Fort Benning and our surrounding community are prepared for growth. We acknowledge the importance of how this Commission work and thank you, each member, for their selfless and consciousness work on behalf of our country.

Recognizing that growth for any DoD installation may come from several different sources, whether transformation of the Armed Forces or restationing of forces from overseas, today we will focus on the proposed changes that would come from the recommendations of our Secretary of Defense and the decisions of this Commission.

As regard to Fort Benning and our community in particular these are the Secretary's recommendations. Let me say that the senior leadership of Fort Benning and the community surrounding it are fully supportive of these recommendations. The most compelling evidence of this is the manner in which the staffs of the affected installations have partnered in the 47 days since the Secretary's May 13 announcement.

Already, a contingent from the Armor Center and Fort Knox has visited Fort Benning for a preliminary fact finding. Last week members of the Fort Benning staff reciprocated. Add to that the

visit to Fort Benning of a BRAC Commission analyst and the constant exchange of information between the affected party and a full-time task force now in place at Fort Benning to advance the planning effort, and you get a sense of the momentum that is building to properly implement each of these recommendations should they become law.

Since you have these slides in your packet, I will not speak to every point on that. This timeline shows the major milestones overlaid on the statutory BRAC timeline. As the BRAC process runs its course in what remains of this calendar year, Fort Benning's planning effort will advance. Once the recommendations of this Commission become law, the required environmental impact study can begin with an 18-month window for completion.

Thereafter, Fort Benning can execute a three phase plan which will activate the maneuver center at Fort Benning and transitioning the training load at Fort Knox over a two-year period. This proposed timeline has been coordinated with the Armed Center at Fort Knox.

Here we depict the key events to execute the Secretary's recommendation that the Fort Benning's Drill Sergeant School be consolidated with

others at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Fort Jackson's staff will plan for the remainder of this calendar year initial coordination between our installation staffs lead us to conclude this process can be completed in fiscal year '07.

Fort Benning is fully engaged in the Army Reserve in planning to relocate the 81st Regional Readiness Equipment Concentration Site to Fort Benning. Potential sites for this operation have already been identified on Fort Benning and will be included into the Base-wide environmental impact study.

This record depicts the land mass that is Fort Benning in green, with major ranges and maneuver areas depicted in blue geometric shapes and two major impact areas in red. Most of the heavy vehicle maneuver and training areas and live-fire ranges and so forth are located in the north half of this installation, while most of the dismounted infantry and wheeled training areas are to the south.

Fort Benning and the infantry center are no strangers to the requirements of the M1 Abrams main battle tank. We have for many years had an armor battalion as part of the Third Brigade Combat

team, third infantry division, now deployed to Iraq for the second time in four years. This plan shows what results if you overlay the requirements of the Armor Center's programs of instruction on what already exists in terms of facilities at Fort Benning.

These facilities now meet the training needs of the Infantry School and those of the various deployable units stationed in Fort Benning.

In short, the proposed creation of an armor center is fully supportable at Fort Benning. Further, the base has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional should the Commission recommend this.

Now to discuss the posture of our nine-county area to accommodate the growth implicit in these recommendations is Colonel Biff Hadden.

COLONEL HADDEN: Good morning. We are honored to speak on behalf of the Fort Benning region and would like to express our appreciation for the tremendous work being done on the Commission.

The Fort Benning Futures Partnership is a public-private regional community action group designed to support and promote expanded activity in Fort Benning. Our leadership support comes from six

Georgia counties and three Alabama counties.

Primary areas impacted by Fort Benning are Columbus, Georgia, population of approximately 190,000; Phoenix City, Alabama, 35,000.

Our cities are led respectively by Mayor Bob Poydasheff, a former infantryman and Mayor Jeff Hardin. Our entire congressional delegation of four senators, five House members and our two governors are well versed on the issues surrounding Fort Benning and have been part of our planning for future growth.

They have made extraordinary commitments to our soldiers and their families, and we look forward to continuing our work with them.

We are here today to let you know we are excited about receiving the Armor Center and School from Fort Knox. We have the ability to support this growth. The military is a historic part of our community and has been since 1917. As we have done in the past, we have welcomed our new residents with unwavering support.

We have worked in partnership to support ongoing growth surrounding Army transformation and have developed a vision for our region's growth. A key part of our planning for the last 18 months has

been family housing. We are in a position to construct an abundant quantity of quality, affordable housing lofts, upscale apartments and single-family homes to accommodate all new soldiers and civilian employees and their families that are to be assigned to Fort Benning. This housing is being constructed in every one of the partnering counties and all have extensive capacity to increase housing construction without encroaching on Fort Benning and its mission now and in the future.

Our second focus is public education and schools. Our reach is currently investing over \$350 million in new construction and renovation in the public school systems. We have analyzed each of the six principal school systems for expansion. With the help of both states, we will continue to add schools and classrooms to accommodate all additional children.

In addition, spouses, family members and civilians who are assigned to Fort Benning and living in Georgia will be eligible for Georgia Hope grant and Hope scholarships. These could be used for earning teaching certificates or developing special work skills to help prepare them for positions within our business community, including

Fortune 500 companies like AFLAC, Synovus, and TSYS. Georgia citizens in our region are granted Alabama in-state tuition with local colleges and Auburn University.

Our communities have four full-service hospitals and another under construction. These provide comprehensive cardiac and orthopedic specialty care and a regional cancer center that just opened, offering the latest in treatment capabilities. These are available to soldiers and their families.

We also assessed our utilities capabilities and determined we have sufficient capacity of all types to accommodate current and future growth. We currently have more than 25 million gallons of day in excess available water supply, 15 million gallons of day in excess capacity of sewage treatment.

Quality of life: We have a diverse and outstanding quality of life. Our communities have raised over 200 million through one penny local option sales tax and applied it toward improving the quality of life for all citizens.

In conclusion, we are prepared, excited and committed to supporting the growth of Fort

Benning now and in the future as it becomes the Army's Maneuver Center of Excellence and flagship training and strategic deployment installation for our military. We can also support any other forces that could be assigned to Fort Benning, to the BRAC Commission or to Department of Defense or so select.

On behalf on the Fort Benning Partnership and all of our communities and their leaders, we thank you for your time and attention and, most of all, your service to our country.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bishop, you have the floor, sir.

CONGRESSMAN BISHOP: Good morning. I am Congressman Sanford Bishop, a member of the House Appropriations Committee and a representative from the Second Congressional District of Georgia which currently spans 27 counties in Southwest Georgia but which most importantly includes two of our nations finest military bases: Fort Benning and Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany.

MCLB is the heart of Dougherty County in the center of my district with 326 square miles. Dougherty County is home to almost 100,000 people including the City of Albany, which is really the

region's retail and cultural hub.

In the Marine Corps, the Logistics Base Albany and southwest Georgia, we have indeed some of the best, some of the brightest, some of the most creative and some of the most ingenious civilian and military personnel anywhere in the world.

It's an honor for me to introduce a group of people who have been instrumental in making Albany what it is today: Our mayor, Dr. Willie Adams, chairman of our Daugherty County Commission; Mr. Jeff Bodine Sinyard, chairman of the Southwest Georgia Alliance for Progress; Mr. Joel Wernick Dick, a former Commander of the Marine Corps Bases in Albany; retired General Ed Cassity; Ms. Kaye Read, editor of the Albany Herald newspaper; Mr. Tim Martin, president of the Albany area Chamber of Commerce, and finally retired Colonel James Taylor who was formerly Commander of the Maintenance Center in Albany, responsible for maintenance and policy of both Marine Corps repair centers in Albany, Georgia and California.

It is indeed my pleasure to turn the floor over to Colonel Taylor, who will present brief remarks about the Albany community and Marine Corps Base in Albany.

After hearing this presentation, I am confident that you will conclude that the Secretary's recommendations relative to the Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany are entirely sound and should be implemented forthwith without modification. Thank you. Thank you for your service.

COLONEL TAYLOR: Chairman, members of the Commission, I represent the Albany community and the Southwest Georgia Alliance for Progress. I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with information about our community and our Marine Corps Logistics Base.

It is important for you to know that Albany and the southwest Georgia region are vibrant and growing. Our area has the residential, educational, transportation and health care resources to easily accommodate the additional personnel recommended for re-assignment to Marine Corps Logistics Base. We are particularly proud of the capabilities of our technical colleges, which responds quickly to workforce development requirements.

My experience as a previous Maintenance Center Commander leaves no doubt in my mind that the planned increase in mission is well within the Depot's capacity and can be accommodated and

sustained. The Maintenance Center is a quality facility performing joint workload with over 1200 dedicated highly skilled artisans and technicians who are on the leading edge of business standards and process improvements -- process improvements and standards such as ISO, Lean, Theory of Constraints, CITE and others.

There's no environmental, encroachment or union issues that impede Marine Corps Logistics Base operations. This Secretary of Defense recommended mission growth has the added benefit of driving down the already attractive cost of doing business, which will in turn enhance competitiveness and increase an already robust inter-servicing and private-industry environment.

In 2002, the General Accounting Office ranked public-private partnerships of Albany in the top four of 14 of the Department of Defense Depots. Albany is also the home of Marine Corps Logistics Command, the single centralized control of maintenance and logistics for the entire Marine Corps. This worldwide asset visibility, coupled with a flexible rapid response to multi-commodity maintenance capability, is also vital to support maritime prepositioning ships program located in

Blount Island Command, Florida.

These coordinated functions have time and again proven successful in support of combat and humanitarian operations. Our sustainment of the longest logistics tail in modern warfare during the initial invasion of Iraq, our production of sizeable numbers of vehicle armor kits for Marine and Army units in Iraq and our support of tsunami victims are but a few recent examples of this effective level of accomplishment.

In summary, in Albany we have community dedicated to country, faithful to the Corps and proud to have been chosen to serve. We also have a Base with significant military value. Both the community and the Base are fully able and eager to accept and sustain this recommended mission increase, as well as additional ones should the need arise.

This concludes my remarks. Thank you for your time and attention. Thank you for your services. Important work.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Let me ask one question. Is the logistics depot there -- I am talking about the industrial part of it, are they working one ship, one-and-a-half ships, two ships, what is there?

COLONEL TAYLOR: They are now performing about a ship-and-a-half, they have a core ship. From time to time, they have about 50 percent of their staff and then an additional ship.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

Any other questions? Senator Chambliss?

SENATOR CHAMBLISS: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Skinner, Mr. Bilbray, there is a country music song entitled The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia. We have tried to give you a very subtle indication of what would happen if these bases were closed. We are going to have to raise the tuition at Tech to make sure utility bills are paid.

I want to thank the senators for the very positive and succinct information to you this morning. I want to thank you, gentlemen, once again, to serve our country in this very important position and for the seriousness in which you are taking this job.

As you have heard from our testimony here today this morning, DoD's recommendation relative to Fort Mac and Fort Gillem overstates the cost savings of closing these two facilities, fails to consider the value of locating headquarters next to a major transportation and communications hub, and fails to

consider the military risk of dispersing command and control functions which currently operate synergistically across the United States.

DoD's recommendation regarding NAS Atlanta significantly overstates the cost savings, includes personnel from units that left NAS Atlanta 18 months ago, and if followed, will divest the Navy and Marine Corps from the second most aviation-intensive metropolitan area in the United States.

Finally, DoD's recommendation regarding the Navy Supply School projects a cost reduction, when in reality, there will be a cost increase if this recommendation is followed.

While costs are not the only factor we know in the process, unless DoD can show that the cost savings, if there are any, are significant enough to overcome the disruption of moving functions to another base and unless DoD can show there is a reasonable increase in military value to justify the move, the recommendation should be seriously questioned.

We believe DoD's recommendations for closures in the State of Georgia merit serious consideration on both of these grounds and should be reversed.

You have heard testimony from several communities today whose bases will be gaining personnel and missions if DoD's recommendations are followed. These communities will do whatever it takes to accommodate these gains smoothly, and as you have seen, each effective community, Camden County, Columbus and Albany have a plan, is prepared and readily able to accept new residents and new missions.

Mr. Chairman, I have served in the United States Congress now for ten and a half years. In my entire tenure of the United States Congress, I supported BRAC and I voted every time not to delay or cancel this round of BRAC. There's no doubt about it. Your Commission's job is to close bases. I support you in that very difficult and sensitive task, because I do agree with Secretary Rumsfeld. Our military needs to get rid of excess infrastructure and use every dollar we can to buy better weapon systems, support our men and women in uniform, and fight the Global War on terrorism.

However, that responsibility must be used very judiciously. We have done our best during these two hours to provide our response to DoD's BRAC recommendations to the State of Georgia. I

trust we have been effective in that effort. We want what's best for the United States military and for our country. I know you do also. I hope that our input into this process will make it easier for you to make the best decisions for our country and our men and women in uniform.

With what you heard this morning, I know you will have to agree that Georgia truly is the land of the free, the home of the brave as well as the home of the Braves. We appreciate you being here and thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: On behalf of the Commission, we would like to thank all of the presenters. As we mentioned in our opening remarks, this Commission has essentially only heard one-half of the story up to now. That's the Department of Defense's side. As a result of these hearings and your work we are acquainted with the other half of the story. You have presented some information which we will have to go back and work hard on.

I remind all of the very capable presenters here that we are required to use certified data in our analyses, and we would like to call upon you to be an adjunct on our staff as we work through these issues to get down to the bottom.

Thank you very much for such a strong attendance.

We will take a three-minute break before we see the next delegation.

(Hearing concluded.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: To the delegation of Alabama, welcome. We're pleased to have a strong delegation. The BRAC statute requires that this Commission can only consider certified data and sworn testimony in accordance with the statute. We ask you to rise and be sworn in. Everyone in the delegation who is going to speak, please let's do it all at one time.

(Panel sworn.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Senator Shelby, I will turn the floor over to you.

SENATOR SHELBY: Thank you. I do want to expressly thank the Commissioner for being here today to further examine the important role that Alabama military installations play in our national security.

I am joined today by Senator Sessions, my colleagues Congressmen Cramer, Everett, Backus and Rogers,

Governor Riley, mayors, state officials and elected and appointed community leaders from Alabama's Military Base communities. Overall, the BRAC recommendation was favorable to Alabama, and we appreciate the Department of Defense recognizing and reinforcing Alabama's contributions to our nation's defense.

Alabama is the heart of the Army's extensive missile and space research and development programs. It is home to Army aviation. It provides a full spectrum of Air Force education and issues and maintains every track vehicle in the Army inventory. Alabama has an unsurpassed network of universities, research facilities, defense and aerospace technology companies and industrial expertise, not duplicated anywhere else in the United States.

We are pleased with the majority of the BRAC recommendations. Overall, Alabama will increase in both missions and personnel, with the addition of: The Army Materiel Command, headquarters for the Space and Missile Defense Command, extensive Missile Defense Agency Missions, the Aviation Logistic School and an addition of C-130s and F-16s for our National Guard in the Service.

The recommendations increase efficiency, support consolidation and realign the force to support research and development and training in ways that will enhance our military. I am pleased

to see DoD recognized Alabama bases' role in our national security.

However, there are five recommendations that we respectfully ask you to reexamine. We believe that the recommendations in these areas either deviated substantially from DoD's criteria or that issues were not primarily assessed resulting in flawed recommendations. As Alabama continues its testimony today, I urge the Commission to further investigate these matters.

I will now briefly address two of the five issues we would like the BRAC Commission to consider. Senator Sessions can pick up on the others.

First Fort Rucker, already home to Army and Air Force rotary wing training is slated to receive enlisted aviation training as well. This consolidation makes sense. We fight jointly. I believe we must train jointly. I fully support this recommendation.

However, one piece of the rotary wing puzzle is missing. Navy rotary wing training was not included in the consolidation. The Army and Air Force have been successfully trained together for 30 years. It makes perfect sense to train all three

services at the same location. In a warfighting environment that is becoming every more joint, in a future field filled with common airframes, shared services and dual-hatted commanders, the Navy's helicopter training should be co-located with the Army and Air Force at Fort Rucker.

The Navy will argue that their training is unique because it's necessary for the Navy aviators to train over water and replicate landing on carriers. However, the Navy overlooks these facts: Fort Rucker's rotary training already meets or exceeds all of the Navy's requirements for over-water training.

Fort Rucker is only 30 minutes from the water and trains Army, Air Force and foreign countries' pilots in over-water survival training and provides dunker training for simulating in-water crashes. Every aspect of Navy rotary training can be accomplished at Fort Rucker.

Fort Rucker's training airspace is the size of South Carolina. Fort Rucker has every simulator and training device necessary to train aviators in all services, while Whiting Field simulation assets are already overextended. With the capacity to easily expand post Navy rotary

training, it's apparent that this consolidation would be both cost effective and save the DoD approximately \$100 million in synergism. It just makes sense to consolidate all three services in rotary flight training and ask the Commission to reconsider relocating the Navy Rotary Wing pilot training to Fort Rucker.

The second issue I briefly want to address is consolidation of resources. In many cases, consolidation saves money and eliminates duplication, but it does not make sense in every situation. Many aspects of national security operations need to be redundant, sustained in several geographic areas or by multiple commands. If one goes down, another can seamlessly replace it.

That's why DoD's recommendations to combine the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group, OSSG, located in Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base with other information technology assets into a new information systems R&D center at Hanscom Air Force Base is perplexing.

This appears to be a simple consolidation of R&D information system functions at one location. However, this is not the case. The underlying flaw in this recommendation is that the OSSG has a 24/7

operations sustainment mission for Air Force DoD and joint information technology. It is not an R&D group. OSSG is the sole agency overseeing the operations and sustainment of Air Force information technology missions.

The OSSG is co-located in Maxwell-Gunter with a defense information systems agency. The organization is similarly responsible for the operational side of DoD informational networks. The operational expertise that exist in these two organizations and their associated contract workforce could not be realistically duplicated, hired or replaced in a timely matter. Its loss will result in a direct reduction of support to our combat forces during time of war.

If the OSSG were moved to Hanscom, all of its operational functions would have to be reconstituted, resulting in significant additional costs with no efficiency or synergistic gains. Additionally, the existing relationship between OSSG and DISA would be destroyed.

As you listen to our presentation today, respectfully, I ask that you consider the following: Does this recommendation by DoD fit the BRAC concept of centers of excellence or meet the BRAC criteria?

Does it increase military value or decrease the risk? Does it increase the ability to operate jointly? Does the relocation save money?

I support consolidation when it makes sense. However, moving the OSSG to Hanscom does not appear to provide cost savings or any synergistic advantage.

According to a COBRA model that used end strength and contract data, you would actually cost \$413,000,000 over 20 years to reproduce OSSG mission. It's clear that in this instance, consolidation does not make sense.

I ask the Commission to consider amending DoD's recommendation so that OSSG can remain at Maxwell-Gunter. The speed and intensity of modern war means that the United States will not have time to leisurely build up forces or construct new bases.

Again, I want to thank you, the Commission, for your time and their dedication here. Senator Sessions will now talk on the three other concerns that we have.

SENATOR SESSIONS: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Skinner and Mr. Bilbray and staff, we are honored to have you work on these issues and be reporting. I hardly agree with Senator Shelby and the observations he has made. I

think they are well worth your Commission's to review carefully as I know that you will.

Thank you also for giving your time and your talents to make this process, BRAC process, work and from hearing from the community that are involved.

We have the finest military the world has ever seen. The goal of this process would be to make it even better. I believe that will be your goal.

I have been a member of the Senate now for eight years, a member of the Armed Services Committee for six. BRAC is certainly no stranger to me. Loss of a major installation of Fort McClelland in 1995 affected us significantly in Alabama. I spent many painful hours working through that process. Our military, even while at war, must transform itself. The global repositioning of U.S. forces, this BRAC round, and the QDR are the keys to the transformation.

Our file on -- Senator Shelby's remarks were made on three points. First, I requested the Commission to reconsider a small portion of DoD's recommendation regarding the Communications Electronics Command, CECOM's, move from New Jersey

to Maryland, the reassigning of CECOM's aviation, avionics and survivability functions to the Army Aviation and Missile Command would be preferable.

These are inherent aviation specific functions of the type embedded throughout the AMCOM's aviation commodity enterprises today. This logical realignment will strengthen DoD's and the Army's military aviation systems.

Retabulation of COBRA data suggests that there are inherent cost savings both on a one-time and annual basis if CECOM's aviation functions are moved to AMCOM.

The Huntsville presentation led by an illustrated video provides a good start for the Commission's examination. I think you will be impressed. Mr. Nathan Hill will make a presentation that presents a strong case for limiting the proposed DLA's role in purchasing major end items for the uniform services. If allowed to stand, it appears to me that overhead costs will surely go up.

For example, this decision impacts engine purchases at Anniston Army Depot and aviation parts at Redstone. DLA will have to charge for their work, a function better handled, it seems, at the service of the consumer.

Mr. Chairman, I am submitting for the record a paper from the DoD, could be predecisional, on the transfer of depots' maintenance-related functions to DLA prior to your Commission recommendations. We do not need to jump the gun here. These are genuine questions and subjects that I think you will want to review.

Third, it has been especially painful to me to learn of the recommendation to move the 117th Air Refueling Wing. I know Congress and I discussed it. These pilots have flown thousands of missions. I visited them and their commanders several times. I know that you understand the importance of this, as I know you will have a separate hearing on the subject later this afternoon to give that the consideration it deserves.

I will make these comments about the 117. The Birmingham runway will soon be 12,000 feet and allow heavier fuel loads and greater distances than the gaining airfields. There will be costs and inconvenience for pilots and crews and it is estimated 80 percent may not be able to continue to serve as they would like under these conditions.

Major General Mark Bowen will explain the details of the analysis. I want to thank the

Commission for its consideration today. I will yield to our first presenter, Ms. Irma Tudor from Huntsville.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much, sir.

MS. TUDOR: Hello. I am Irma Tudor, founder and CEO of a 350-person defense contracting firm. Today I am speaking on behalf of the Tennessee Valley BRAC committee.

The DoD has recommended significant relocations to Redstone Arsenal, including major portions of the Missile Defense Agency, the Army's Materiel Command Headquarters, Army's Base and Missile Command Defense Headquarters and the Army Security Assistance Command. We support these sound recommendations. They take advantage of the multi-mission, multi-agency capabilities unique to Redstone.

The proposed move of portions of the Missile Defense Agency and the Army's faith in Missile Defense Command headquarters will co-locate two organizations that already have a significant presence at Redstone.

Over 50 percent of SMDC and MDA's largest program are already located at Redstone. The

relocation of the Army Materiel Command and the Army Security Assistance Command to Redstone enables DoD to disperse headquarters activity outside the D.C. area and also consolidate headquarters that interact daily.

Since you will have not had the opportunity to visit, we have a short video to acquaint you with Team Redstone and our surrounding community.

(Video presentation)

MS. TUDER: As you can see, DoD's recommendations take advantage of the unique expertise and facilities at Redstone. To further maintain and enhance this national asset, we suggest that you consider the following modifications to DoD's recommendation: First, Senator Sessions requested that relocation of the communications command to Aberdeen be reconsidered. The communications command currently manages a number of aviation elements. These elements are integral to the aviation missions at Redstone and should be located at Redstone.

Second, we recommend the joint robotics program office remain at Redstone Arsenal. Redstone developed unmanned ground and air vehicles for the Army's future combat system. The challenge for

robotic is the integration of systems, not the development of vehicles. TACOM builds vehicles. Relocating robotics to Detroit fragments development and destroys the synergy that exists at Redstone.

Third, we recommend that you keep the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Training at Redstone. Redstone has the existing range area and hosts the FBI Premiere Hazardous Devices School, a one-of-a-kind facility. Synergy with the FBI, the school, range availability and permitting at Redstone deliver efficiency and military value.

Finally, we want to ensure that Redstone's exemplary record with the 1995 BRAC is clear. The Army's records show that more than 60 percent of those offered relocation to Redstone accepted.

Commissioners, we are confident we can repeat that success. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you.

MR. HILL: Good morning, my name is Nathan Hill. I am the military liaison Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce and past deputy commander of Anniston Army Depot for 18 years. Thank you for giving the State of Alabama and me the opportunity to provide you information about Anniston Army Depot, DoD's Center for Industrial and Technical Excellence for all ground

combat vehicles. I am honored to be here.

The three major advantages for Anniston as the Center for Industrial and Technical Excellence are to support our warfighters, our ability to perform and sustain missions with our skilled work force, experience and partner with industry and the increase in military value. We are the highest ranked Depot in military value.

Anniston is a pit crew for U.S. warfighters. We maintain their equipment so they can win wars. We have performed that mission through Korea, Vietnam, Yom Kippur, Grenada, Panama, Operations Desert Shield and Storm and now the Global War on Terror.

When Depot capabilities are needed around the world, our civilian volunteers are there. Not only did we lead the way to manufacturing and fabricating armor kits and produce the greatest number of them for our warfighter vehicles in Iraq, our people are there today installing those kits.

We are able to perform our current mission and those recommended by the Secretary of Defense by not only using the vast in-house skills, facilities and equipment at Anniston, but by partnering. As a DoD leader in partnering with industry, we leverage

the four competencies of both the organic and private sector. Together we create a tremendous surge capability for DoD.

As the Army Center of Industrial Technical Excellence for Combat Vehicles, towed and self-propelled artillery and small-armed weapons along with the joint work we do for the Marine Corps and other services, we have the capacity, the skills and facilities to be the DoD's Center for Excellence for all ground combat vehicles, wheeled and tracked.

Our new Powertrain facility that is up for a contract award now, along with a planned construction of a state of the art rubber facility, our environmental stewardship and freedom of encroachment will allow us to continue to support our warfighters and 20 years force structure.

We have over 25,000 highly trained artisans and technicians skilled in every phase of combat vehicle requirement. We will keep our current and new workers trained to support current and future combat systems. Our location in Alabama's automotive industrial car provides many sources of automotive skill training, from the state-sponsored training to technical schools to universities.

Anniston has established co-op programs. The one starting at the high school level is paying large dividends as the first of its type in DoD and then copied by Mercedes Benz. Anniston and our partners have made major capital investments to maintain and modernize our vast production capabilities, especially with the new Powertrain facility that is under contract.

These investments have put Anniston facilities in a state to function as a Center of Excellence. Anniston developed various options to accomplish the DoD recommendations to include DoD construction. Because of the outstanding condition of the existing buildings and the desire to minimize construction costs, we will renovate and connect four existing buildings. This will create 600,000 square feet of existing production space and provide for extensive direct labor.

Partnering with industries is a way to accomplish our mission. We are DoD's leader in a part of the industry shown in this 2003 GAO report. Surge capacity is critical in our consideration.

We know partnering with industries is the best and most economical way to provide the surge capacity needed to support the 20-year force

structure requirements revenue retaining --
maintaining and retaining excess Depot
infrastructure. We are partnering with the combat
vehicle, original equipment manufacturers and
component manufacturers.

This adds to the DoD's capacity to reduce
its cost and leverage in its four capabilities of 48
sectors to ensure Anniston will use the best
practices and knowledge of our industry partners in
this operation. This chart is five of the 14
examples cited by the GAO report.

Since this report was prepared, Anniston
and Boeing, the lead systems integrator for the
Future Combat System, have signed a partner
agreement which will ensure the Center of Excellence
of Anniston as a key player of developing and
fielding FDS providing for the 20 years for
structure requirement.

This chart thoroughly depicts some of the
combat vehicles maintained at Anniston and we can
easily afford those in the DoD BRAC recommendations.
DoD did a thorough job in assessing the industrial
sector based on the established criteria. This
recommendation will increase military value and
warfighter.

The Center of Excellence will enable streamline Depot production, business and information process and eliminate unnecessary overhead and capital investments while leveraging facilities and equipment of a highly capable Center of Excellence in its private sector partners. More importantly, Anniston will provide one phase to the warfighter.

The Center of Excellence will also improve management of components of spare parts which leads to my next subject.

The services must retain the experience and critical skills required to manage service-specific components and consumable items, a Corps maintenance structure and the acquisition of depot level reparable such as engine transmission.

Depots' commander and shipyard commander must have command and control of all their corps operations. Transferring these functions to DLA may or may not be consistent with U.S. Code 10 Section 2464. Senator Sessions and others at previous BRAC hearings have emphasized transferring these service-specific management partners to DLA will adversely impact our ability to rally equipment warfighter.

Anniston as the Center for Industrial Technical Excellence has control of all operations will give better fit through for the American warfighter.

Questions are welcome, and I thank you for your time.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

I actually do have a question. Several functions are being moved -- proposed to being moved to Anniston. You mentioned rubberized -- rubber tracks and wheels and things like that. That is a function that I thought I heard you say you currently do that.

MR. HILL: We have plans to facilitate, we have people, yes.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

MR. NAILLEN: My name is Charles Nailen. I am the chairman of the Friends of Fort Rucker and a businessman operating out of Dothan, Alabama. I am accompanied by numerous mayors, businessmen, community leaders and retired members of the Army in southeast Alabama, the home of Fort Rucker and the home of Army Aviation.

We are one of the fortunate installations recommended for growth. We would like to highlight

today why we believe that recommendation was made and why for the same reason the Commission should consider expanding that growth as part of the BRAC process.

Our detailed written statement of record was recently submitted. Due to time constraints, I will be outlining what's contained therein. I know you must deal with facts, so here are the facts: Military fact No. 1: Fort Rucker is an installation that is a leader in transformation. Fort Rucker is a joint base and has been a joint base for quite some time, conducting rotary wing pilot training not only for the Army but also for the Air Force, numerous government agencies and 36 foreign countries.

In the last several years the Army has invested \$162 million in military construction, executed a long-term contract valued at \$1.1 billion and a new curriculum called Flight School XX1 invested \$20 million in a state of the art flight simulation center. As a result of many of these efforts, Fort Rucker is now ranked No. 7 in military value in all Army training installations.

Military fact No. 2, second military BRAC selection criteria is the availability of land and

facility. Fort Rucker is blessed with 63,000 acres of land and over 32,000 miles of air space. Over a thousand acres of land with infrastructure in place is currently available for expansion. Fort Rucker has got the land and the facility to accept any new mission from the Army, the Air Force and as I will point out later from the Navy.

Military fact No. 3, the third military value criteria is the ability to accommodate contingency mobilizations, surge and future force requirements. In addition to land, air, space and facilities, another factor is key with regard to surgability. Our community heads military aviation in its civilian DNA.

The sound of helicopters flying overhead day and night is not bothersome. Where a lot of communities who generate noise complain as to the sound of helicopters, it is the sound of freedom in our area, where we train our nation's sons and daughters to fight this war on terrorism. We have shown that from Vietnam on, this community understands and supports the need for surge requirements.

Military value fact No. 4, my fourth point relates to the last military selection criteria, the

cost of operations and manpower. The southeast is one of the lowest cost operations with construction and operating expenses. That fact notwithstanding, Fort Rucker has worked diligently to continue to drive the cost of operations even lower. Fort Rucker was the first installation in the entire Army to privatize all four of its utilities.

In addition, 58 percent of the Fort Rucker workforce are contract employees, including 28 percent of the instructors. This effort fully supports the Pentagon's goal of a public-private partnership and allows Fort Rucker to support the third military value goal of rapidly responding to changing pilot training requirements.

I would like to comment on the Department of Defense's recommendation to move the Aviation Logistics School that conducts the enlisted aviation training from Fort Eustis to Fort Rucker. There's great synergy in training a total flight crew in one place. We believe this consolidation will work well for all the reasons that are cited in the Education and Training Joint Cross Service Group detailed recommendations.

Importantly, this recommendation consolidates aviation training and doctrine at a

single location. We must fly and fight as a team. It just makes sense to do the training as a team.

Finally, let me talk about one of the areas where we think the Pentagon should have made a recommendation but they did not. We firmly believe the facts show a strong military and cost value to the Navy including its rotary wing pilot training from Whiting Field to Fort Rucker.

Consider these facts: Two services use essentially the same trainer aircraft. The Air Force conducts their additional rotary wing pilot training at Fort Rucker and the Air Force is moving their advance helicopter training to Fort Rucker over this year. Helicopter training is also conducted at Fort Rucker for numerous government agencies and helicopter training is also conducted for over 600 students a year representing 36 foreign countries.

The Commission really has to ask itself, if helicopter training is being done successfully at Fort Rucker for everyone else, why can't the training for the Navy be done there? Fort Rucker has adequate land, air space and facility to support the Navy for rotary wing pilot training. The Pentagon's own BRAC analysis shows Fort Rucker has

substantial excess runway capacity, excess apron space, excess classroom capacity and excess simulator capacity.

The Pentagon announced its surge capacity shows that Whiting Fields simulators are near to maximum capacity and do not meet the DoD's definition of having surge capacity. It mentioned earlier Fort Rucker has a state of the art simulation center. Fort Rucker has substantial excess simulator capacity.

DoD's look at the military value analysis report of the infrastructure steering group also shows that Fort Rucker's military value ranking is better than Whiting Field in six of the seven fields evaluated.

The bottom line is Fort Rucker can conduct training for the Navy and they can do it in a superior sort of way. It has the land, the air space and the facilities to do it now.

Quite frankly, I cannot understand how the Department of Defense did not make this one of the BRAC '05 recommendations, as it clearly fosters pilot consistency, standardization and training proficiency across the entire Department of Defense. It also fosters a key military value, jointness, and

train to fight together initiatives that Secretary Rumsfeld based BRAC '05 on.

We respectfully request the Commission to evaluate moving the Navy wing pilot training to Fort Rucker and designating Fort Rucker as the Joint Center of Excellence for Rotary Wing Training.

To summarize, the Fort Rucker community is honored in that their BRAC '05 recommendations, the Pentagon recognized the past contributions that Fort Rucker has made to our national defense by adding an additional mission in personnel, the Aviation Logistics School.

We respectfully urge the Commission to relocate the Navy rotary wing pilot training to Fort Rucker and making Fort Rucker the DoD Joint Center of Excellence for Rotary Wing Training. It just makes sense.

Thank you for your attention. God bless you for your services.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. Once again, as I mentioned to you previously, Speakers, if you have data or information or analyses or overruns which support this suggestion, we hope you will share it with our committee staff so we can take a look at it very carefully.

MR. NAILEN: Yes. I am working with the staff.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Have you done any analysis on that? In other words, I agree with the -- in order to make that move, obviously economics play an important part in both short-term and long-term economics. Have you seen any analyses that have been done?

MR. NAILEN: Last analysis, sir, that was done is somewhat dated, back in '92, the Rolls Mission study. At that time the savings was quantified somewhere between \$80 and \$90 million a year. I would add to that if you escalate that number up to current dollars, it would be in excess of a hundred millions, maybe \$110 million a year.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: In order for the Commission to look at that seriously, we have to have certifiable numbers.

MR. NAILEN: Sure. We will provide that.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

MR. HANKINS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to appear before you here today to talk about the movement of the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group from Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base to Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts.

We ask as we go through this discussion in the next few minutes that you pay attention what operations sustainment really means for the IT systems and network and what it really means for the warfighter in the Air Force in the day-to-day operations.

Senator Shelby outlined key questions that he requests that you consider today. Does in fact this realignment fit this criteria and meet the concept of DoD's Center of Excellence? Does it increase military value? Does it in fact enable joint operations and save money?

If you agree that we do, the answers to these questions is no, then we think it's appropriate that you amend DoD's recommendation in this realignment.

Let's look at the question of does it fit. DoD's recommendation puts together the concept of the center of excellence for research, development, testing and evaluation and acquisition. It does not contain any words about operations or sustainment. We agree this is a good idea. It makes sense to put together the work forces in the intellectual capacity that goes with research and development.

However, to push operations and

sustainment into the same center of excellence, we think are just disparate missions and work forces. If you think of OSSG as an IT depot, you in fact begin to understand what it does.

Whether it's for a ship or for a plane or a tank, the IT systems, once they become operational, become the property of the warfighter. They are maintained by warfighters and by depots and not concerned about the research and development that's going on for future systems. They are concerned about whether those systems work and service the warfighter every day.

If you look at business applications of this, and you look at what's going on in corporate America today, you find some ready examples of the same kinds of things.

American Express has its headquarters and financial center in New York City. It leverages the -- I'm sorry, it leverages the financial expertise that goes around Wall Street. However, its operations and customer service centers are dispersed throughout the United States. They take advantage of a significantly cheaper work force to produce the same capabilities and services.

Finally under the BRAC Criteria 5, excess

capacity or capacity of the bases was supposed to be analyzed. In the case of OSSG, the analysis did not consider the new building that's under construction today for an operations support center that will be back in operation next year. It also did not consider the leveraging of the work force that exists between information going on in OSSG and the operations servicing that goes on in the DISA computing center that exists on Maxwell.

So if military value is then the primary driver for this transfer and this movement, let's look at it in terms of OSSG. The military value of this organization exists in the work force itself. That's a synergy that's been developed and an experience that's been developed over 30-plus years of doing sustainment operations for IT systems for Air Force warfighters.

It's a knowledge that can't be replicated and it's a knowledge that can't be purchased. It only comes from experience in working, making that contact between the warfighter, the functional expert, the person sitting on the operational console, and the contractor who is doing sustainment of that system since its inception. You can't take that and leverage it in a different way.

Therefore, if you believe in historical documented evidence that says only 20 to 30 percent of its work force will move in this realignment, you are putting at risk a good 70 to 80 percent of the actual military value of this organization.

There's also expensive military value involved in the co-location of this mission with the DISA computing center that exists here. This is one of only four computing centers that exist in the United States. One is Maxwell-Gunter and the other is Hanscom Air Force Base. These organizations share common systems and equipment. They have a common workforce expertise in that they both do operations and sustain. They have personal relationships between the agency that can come from working together every day, from eating lunch together, from living together in the same community.

This was never more evident than on September 11th when the Pentagon was attacked and the Air Force IT system and network were taken down. The OSSG teams were formed, co-workers were called at DISA and they had the Air Force classified and unclassified networks back up online in 48 hours.

If you think about the environment this

took place in, where cell phone communications was limited, air travel was not possible, where communications itself was suspect, where bases were locked down, you realize these kind of results could not have been produced in a remote or virtual way; they only occurred because they could walk across the street and solve the problems.

Finally, if you look at joint military value and you evaluate the synergy that exists with DISA, you see it exists because they both do operational missions. They are not chasing research and development or cutting edge technology; they are looking at how to deliver the day-to-day support for the warfighters in the field. They shared a mission, they shared a work force, and they shared systems and equipment creating a joint synergy that is a model being emulated by all the services.

This collocation also answers a couple of other questions within view of DoD's criteria, that resolves around the ability to do service. The example that I gave of September 11th is a perfect illustration of this, the redundancy of systems in the end, the greater hole that exists because of the commonality of the work forces and what they do.

We found also in the area of joint

operations DoD didn't even look in-house what they are doing. We attached for the record a briefing that's been given by this leadership. It actually outlines mission centers being placed in all likelihood in these same four locations throughout the United States.

The creation of synergy and the development of these mission centers was not considered in a joint evaluation of OSSG and its location in Maxwell. If you look at the actual cost in the end and the question, Does it save money, it's hard to go back and cost the actual work force.

The work force does create the military value. How do you do that when this work force has gained experience over time, when they put together this operational expertise for sustaining these systems? It's impossible to actually replicate this experience in any meaningful way in a short period of time.

If you went out and asked or tried to hire the MIT or Harvard grad, they are going to be looking to go and pursue the leading edge technology in the IT business, the leading edge software and hardware. They are not going to be interested in filling operations to sustain the job with old

equipment and systems that are currently being operated.

On the other hand, the government will not want to pay the costs of hiring that same Harvard or MIT graduate to do the operations and sustain the mission.

When we did the actual COBRA analysis and looked to the DoD data that, which we included in our statement for the record, we found significant deviations in the analysis. At best, the analysis was shallow. At worst, it was totally inaccurate.

I would like to point out three particular areas. First, they did not cost the contract for work force. The only cost to the military DoD and military civilians that will be involved is this move. That would be okay except for the fact that the contractors makeup 50 percent of the work force at OSSG.

They also did not take into account or took false savings because OSSG is currently the most efficient op organization. They are a working capital fund organization. The number of people who are on board doing this job are actually the number it takes to do the job. DoD took false cost savings by actually adding in costs savings associated with

unfilled and unfunded bills.

Finally, they didn't take into account the fact that there's joint operations required. This is a 24-hour day, 7 day a week, 365 day a year operation. An operation that can't be turned off today and turned on somewhere else tomorrow. Dual capability will have to exist for some lengthy period while new facilities are built, while new work force is hired and experienced and that cost was not factored in.

If you look at excursions that I am showing you on this chart, you can actually see that DoD's baseline summary said that this move would be paid for in eight years. It would in fact say \$229 million over the course of the 20 years.

In fact, if you put in the contractor work force alone, you push the pay back the move to 51 years, and you have no cost savings but in actual cost to DoD of \$119 million. If you then take away the false savings for the unfunded positions and unfilled positions and add them in, you get a cost payback of the move that never occurred and you are now up to \$413,000,000 cost over the course of 20 years.

I think as we examine these questions, the

answers are evident. What you have today is a clean sheet of paper before you. You have the opportunity to create a center of excellence for research and development. We agree that that makes sense and that in fact that center of excellence should be created.

The figures don't necessarily show in the cost analysis -- the cost analysis doesn't necessarily show that should be Hanscom but it doesn't really matter. The center of excellence does make sense.

However, it also makes sense to separate operations and sustain them on a different mission and different work force. The operations to sustain the mission as it exists at Maxwell should be taken advantage of as should the synergies that exists with DISA and their future mission and mission center concept.

It also makes sense to continue to allow the contractors to do mission sustainment of these systems on a day-to-day basis while new systems are developed and come online.

Finally, it makes sense -- ultimate sense, the leverage, influence and support of the delegation that is with us today to create a center

of excellence through operations and sustainment at Maxwell Air Force Base with OSSG. That is the transformational idea. That is on the cutting edge of the way this BRAC Commission should operate.

We think that leads to the final conclusion that, in fact, the Commission should amend DoD's recommendation. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

Any questions?

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Is the current system backed up or replicated? What is your current disaster of recovery -- because you are talking about you would have to build a new data center and a new system center in Hanscom. But you must have some -- you couldn't build one without turning the other off. Is there a third system that does this? What do you rely on for your backup?

MR. HANKINS: Sir, the backup mainly comes between the two organizations that exist there side by side. The systems are maintained, and they work joint excursions together all the time.

It is true that you would have to in fact stand up an exact duplication of this system at Hanscom. You would have to recreate them. It's the only place in the Air Force that does operational

sustainment of IT systems and combat support.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: I guess it's a 24/7 data center. Under force protection and a lot of other criteria, you are going to have to do that anyway, aren't you?

MR. HANKINS: Sir, they do the backup. It's on a secure basis. It's almost a skip, if you will, in and of itself. It is --

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Say the lights go out there instead of here, where would you operate out of now?

MR. HANKINS: That operation would then transfer back to the Pentagon as long as it took us to get the systems back up and in place.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: Thank you.

MR. BOWEN: Good morning. The Birmingham International Airport Air Guard Station, home to 117th Air Refueling Wing. This unit transitioned to the KC135R aircraft about ten years ago in '94. The Department of Defense has recommended the realignment of Birmingham KC135R aircraft, four aircraft, to move to McGhee-Tyson, two to Phoenix and two to Bangor. Birmingham would lose 183 full time and 326 traditional guard positions. The Secretary also recommended keeping an expeditionary combat support enclave force in

Birmingham.

We have serious concerns with DoD's recommendation to realign the nation's tanker fleet as specifically related to Birmingham.

First, we believe that DoD substantially deviated from the Defense Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 that was amended with the recommendation to realign the Birmingham Air Guard. It's clear that DoD ignored and failed to consider military value which was contrary to the law.

Secondly, we want to highlight DoD's apparent failure to consider Birmingham's mission capability and the existing infrastructure there already. We will demonstrate the clear advantage of keeping Birmingham in place by showing an overwhelming global reach capability.

This is how the DoD substantially deviated from the law. Birmingham's military value was rated at 63. Six Air National Guard Tanker wings determined to have less military value than Birmingham are remaining in place. In many cases, the lower-valued units will see an increase with the number of aircraft they possess.

The DoD substituted its own definition of military value and included an arbitrary use of

military judgment to justify these recommendations. In fact, the DoD's own red team believed the BRAC process would be in use only to move aircraft and to gain MILCON funding rather than reducing infrastructure.

Additionally, the military value itself is incomplete. I asked you in a post 9/11 environment what is more important to our nation than homeland's protection? Our fighter aircraft cannot adequately perform the interceptor missions without tanker support. The DoD's analysis makes no mention of the tanker role in the air sovereignty alert mission.

Birmingham has been supporting an air sovereignty alert mission of the highest priority since 9/11. We stand ready to launch an aircraft this minute.

I believe the nationwide tanker realignment plan is flawed. It severely degrades the operational readiness, eliminating six existing combat-capable R model squadrons while creating seven new R model flying units.

The original Air Force E model retirement plan left capable R model units in place. In the current proposal, it would appear that BRAC has been used for the Air Force to circumvent current

legislation and carry out changes that could not be accomplished by any other legal means.

Since converting to the KC-135 aircraft over ten years ago, \$73 million has been spent on Birmingham's infrastructure to make it a world class tanker base. We have room today to bed down KC-135 aircraft at no cost to taxpayers. Yet, military judgment in lieu of military value was used to realign our jets to other locations that required additional infrastructure to accept our aircraft.

Current data indicates that McGhee-Tyson is unable to accommodate the 12 aircraft that they are proposed to receive. The DoD's report indicates the savings to the Department over 20 years to realign Birmingham is \$460,000. That amounts to \$23,000 per year. Is this an example of military judgment?

The Birmingham's Air Force 12,000-foot runway makes the 117th Air Refueling Wing the most capable Air National Guard tanker airfield in the eastern half of the United States. KC-135R stationed at Birmingham International Airport would be able to take off with the most fuel under the widest variety of weather conditions.

Birmingham is an unmatched force

multiplier using the 9/11 scenario. In addition, it provides nonstop global deployment and airlift capability to current theaters of U.S. operation.

There are clear advantages of keeping Birmingham in place by looking at the overwhelming global reach capabilities. This slide says it all. The green shaded area depicts Birmingham's capability with a 12,000-foot runway. Compare that to the red shaded area representing the capability of Knoxville with a 9,000-foot runway and the result is stunning.

Knoxville is scheduled to gain four of Birmingham's aircraft. This scenario represents the type mission that the 117th performed in the days and weeks following 9/11 and is assigned the same mission today for Air Sovereignty alert. The DoD used military judgment to place these aircraft in Knoxville to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Simply stated, for Knoxville to perform this mission outside of the red ring would require two jets. Birmingham can do the job with one. The green rings represents military and the red ring represents the military judgment.

Here again, look at Birmingham's unmatched nonstop global reach in the Pacific and compare it

to Knoxville. The green dot represents the Birmingham aircraft department from Birmingham and landing at Guam with three hours of fuel to spare. The red dot representing a Knoxville jet falls well short.

The results are just as impressive going the other direction. This slide again shows Birmingham's global reach capability with a jet flying nonstop beyond Baghdad to Qatar with 20,000 pounds of fuel remaining. Birmingham tankers are always one hop away from any of the world's hot spots. The Knoxville jet once again falls well short of the target.

Commissioners, the DoD's military judgment to realign Birmingham also falls well short of target. Lastly, the 117th is the only Air National Guard tanker wing co-located with a depot-level KC135 repair facility.

The 117th air crews frequently augment PEMCO's active duty air crews during peak production periods. In fact, 117th proposes to assume the entire flight test mission at PEMCO. Capitalizing on this natural partnership makes perfect sense.

Commissioner, the recommendation to realign the Air National Guard tanker fleet will

degrade operational readiness and makes no sense. The DoD substantially deviated from the military value criteria specified in the law. The Air Force admitted deviating from military value and substituted military judgment. Military value was ignored in the realignment of Birmingham.

If the DoD had made his recommendations based on military value calculations, we wouldn't be here today. The Birmingham Air Guard Base has documented military capability and is ready to accept more jets today at no additional infrastructure cost. The unit has proven time and time again its value to the country. The 117th Air Refueling Wing is the most capable Air National Guard tanker unit in the eastern half of the United States.

The relocation of tanker assets nationwide, especially in Birmingham, is a flawed decision and creates reduced operational readiness. This is a force structure decision that really belongs in the hands of the Congressional Defense Committee after a thorough analysis.

I urge you to reject the DoD redistribution plan for the air refueling tanker fleet.

Thank you for your services.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you.

Any questions?

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Yes. I want to ask:

These tankers -- how many flying planes do you have left at the Air Guard Base after that?

MR. BOWEN: How many will I have left in Birmingham? Zero.

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Anywhere in the state.

MR. BOWEN: I won't have any more tankers. I will have some fighter jets in Montgomery.

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: By the BRAC, you are gaining some -- on the recommendation you are actually gaining C130s in Montgomery also -- anyway.

Governor Riley, do you want to close-up?

GOVERNOR RILEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I am proud to be with you today and I want to thank you for the important job you are doing for all of us in this country. My job today is to wrap up the State of Alabama. And as you heard from our presentation we have five specific recommendations we want you to re-examine and change.

Before I summarize those recommendations, however, I want to remind you of the several

recommendations we do not want you to change. Do not change the recommendations to relocate Army Materiel Command, the Space and Missile Defense Command and several missile defense activities Redstone Arsenal. Relocating those activities to Redstone Arsenal makes good sense. It exponentially increases overall military value by locating them next door to the largest defense-centric research and development park for America.

Do not change the recommendations to relocate activities to Anniston Army Depot where DoD will create a Center of Industrial Technical Excellence for ground combat vehicles wheel and track. This fact says it all: DoD rates Anniston Army Depot as having more overall military value to our nation than any other depot.

Do not change the recommendations to relocate the Aviation Logistics School to Fort Rucker. This recommendation consolidates aviation training and doctrine development at a single location. It would be virtually impossible to find a location other than Fort Rucker that could duplicate the climate and training environment we have here today.

Do not change the recommendation to

relocate training and maneuver activities Fort Benning. There is plenty of room for expansion at Fort Benning. I know because over 13,000 acres of Fort Benning are located in Alabama.

For Alabama, it boils down to this: I compliment Secretary Rumsfeld and his department for their hard work. DoD has made several sound and responsible recommendations. Don't change them. I want you to know that I will do everything that it takes to make these recommendations a reality.

However, there are five recommendations the State of Alabama is respectfully asking you to re-examine and change. We ask because we share your commitment to put national security and good government first. Moreover, we are equally committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure these recommendations will change.

As the summary of these recommendations are No. 1, reconsider DoD's recommendation to relocate all elements of the Army's communication electronics command to Aberdeen Proving Ground.

No. 2, keep materiel management as a service core capability and reject the transfer of this function to the Defense Logistics Agency.

No. 3, recommend relocating the Navy

rotary wing pilot training to Fort Rucker.

No. 4, amended DoD's recommendation so that the operations and sustainment systems group remains at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base.

For the last one -- I don't understand why DoD made this recommendation. It creates more risk to the warfighter and adds no military value or cost savings.

Final, No. 5, reject the DoD's redistribution plan for the air refueling tanker fleet. When the DoD plan recommends shutting down the 117th Birmingham and relocating its planes to places with a lower military value, with less capability, and inferior infrastructure, we are not maximizing the effectiveness of our national assets.

Finally, let me say if I can help you in any way with any of your deliberations or analysis, please let us know. Again, I thank you for your service to our country.

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Not so much of a question. I want to say I wish I made a trip to Alabama. My family came to Alabama after Shreveport. My Dad was born in a strange little town called Pine Apple. I don't even know where that is.

GOVERNOR RILEY: We not only know where it is,

we will pick you up and bring you down to visit there.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. Congressmen, the entire Alabama package will be made a matter of record. I don't need you to speak, but I see you have statements in here that will all be part of the record. Thank you very much for helping us stay on time.

As you know, we have another state to hear from, then we will go into another completely different hearing on the subject of the Air Guard. It enables this Commission to perhaps get a little lunch before we go into the next one.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: You may want to clear the room before Tennessee comes in.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you. We will take a very, very short break.

(Hearing closed.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: We are ready to start with Tennessee, if Tennessee is ready. Gentlemen, as I mentioned to all the other delegations, by statute, the Commission is only permitted to receive certified data

and sworn testimony. So we will ask you to step up and be sworn in please by our designated swearing-in officer.

(Panel sworn.)

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. Congressman Cooper, you have the floor.

CONGRESSMAN COOPER: Good morning and thank you for serving on the BRAC Commission. A special thank you to Jim Bilbray for personally visiting Nashville. Before I introduce our Tennessee General, General Gus Hargett, I want to mention a few things about the Air Force and BRAC process relating to the Air National Guard.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I have always voted for the BRAC process. It's vitally important that our bases infrastructure support the operational needs of the 21st Century. We must adapt to new threats of challenges.

I am concerned the Pentagon's recommendations concerning the Air National Guard will weaken our national security. Our citizen soldiers are a critical part of our national defense. They have done heroic work since 9/11, and the current base in our military operations is simply unachievable without the Air National

Guard.

Last week at the regional hearing in St. Louis, Major General Roger Lempke, adjutant general from Nebraska and current president of Adjutant Generals Association, provided critical testimony regarding the Air Force's BRAC process. General Lempke testified that the Air Force did not include the state adjutants until very late in the process, and as a result produced flawed closure and realignment of our conditions. I agree with General Lempke's assessment.

The Air Force BRAC recommendations failed to fully consider the unique capabilities and civilian military partnerships of many of our Air Guard facilities and the legitimate recruiting, training and potential concerns of our state adjutants. For BRAC analysis was not addressed for the potential impact of realignments on state homeland security missions. A central component of the Air Force BRAC recommendations regarding the Air National Guard is the development of 23 Air National Guard enclaves.

The enclave concept consolidates aircraft new locations while some support facilities and organizations and place soldiers for future

missions. This concept appears to be contrary to the attempt -- of our process and seriously flawed. Let me use the 118th Airlift Wing as an example of this.

First, the loss of aircraft of the Air National Guard and the movement of aircraft to fewer sites will have a negative impact of the retention of our most experienced air crews and maintenance personnel. Unlike active-duty airmen pilots, Air National Guard personnel do not just pack up and leave to follow their airplanes.

Next, consider the airmen left behind in a place holding enclave. The realignment of the 118th and similar units across the country essentially takes the "air" out of the Air National Guard. Attracting and retraining highly motivated young men and women for a place holding organization with no real mission will be difficult if not impossible.

Third, rebuilding the deep operational experience for each 118th -- forged with multiple deployments, combat missions will require many many years. The direct and indirect personnel costs of realignment units like 118 do not appear to be considered in the BRAC process.

Fourth, as part of your analysis, I would

also ask the Commission to fully consider how the Air Force assessed the military value of the Air National Guard facilities under consideration. For example, new construction in Nashville was simply not considered by the military in your equation. Consequently, excellent facilities in Nashville will remain in limbo, neither fully closed nor open for operations. Where is the efficiency, cost savings or operational advantage in this arrangement?

Beyond these modern facilities, the 118 Air Wing has an ideal relationship with Metropolitan Nashville Airport. These facilities are superb and cost is minimal.

Finally, General Hargett and I are puzzled by the BRAC meeting by the term military judgment. BRAC report states that military judgment was the predominant factor in the decision to realign the 118. Nowhere is the term "military judgment" defined and explained. To me, to tear apart an experienced operational team like the 118, based on a non-defined term is a serious mistake. Thank you gentlemen for your time and consideration and please allow us citizens and soldiers of Nashville to keep up our nation strong. Thank you, gentlemen.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much.

GENERAL HARGETT: Thank you, Congressman Cooper, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the BRAC recommendations today. I am Gus Hargett, I am the Adjutant General of Tennessee. I am here to testify, representing our governor of Tennessee and the citizens in the State of Tennessee who are concerned about the prospect of losing the 118th Airlift Wing in Nashville.

While being an outstanding force provider to our nation, our guardsmen play an equally vital role for Tennessee during times of emergency and homeland defense. We believe that the realignment of Nashville is not in the best interest to either the Air Force nor the state of Tennessee for three reasons: Loss of experienced personnel, loss of existing infrastructure, and the unrecoverable financial cost to our nation.

First let me give you a little background on the 118th Airlift Wing. Roots of the 105th Airlift Squadron and the 118th Airlift Wing at Nashville reach back to World War I. They received Federal recognition in 1921. Tennessee's unit is the first in the South and one of only three similar units in the entire nation.

In the early 50s, they flew fighters and later

became a Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. In 1961, they became an Airlift Wing and have since accumulated 44 years of airlift culture and experience. They transitioned to Tactical Airlift in 1971 with the C-130.

In 1979, they restructured to a 16 PAA unit and became one of only two super squadrons in the Air National Guard. They operated with 16 aircraft for 17 years. Coincidentally, the Air Force has designated 16 the PAA as the right-sized C-130 unit.

In 1989, through a congressional act, the Nashville Unit traded their old A models for C-130H's which they still operate today. In 1995, they were downsized to 12 PAA and are now being downsized again to 8 PAA.

Tennessee is the volunteer state, and as you can see, the Nashville unit has lived up to our state motto. They have been involved in every major national event beginning with World War I up to the present. This is just what they have been doing since 1991. Within hours after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C., our volunteers were airborne, flying in a donated organ to Houston, Texas to save a little girl's life.

Within hours after the Afghan campaign kicked off, in October 2001, this unit was called upon, along with two other Air National Guard units, to stand up a homeland defense quick reaction force. Within 48 hours, they had

aircraft and crews on one-hour launch alert at Cherry Point supporting the marines. Their efficient and well-organized package became the standard.

Again, in February 2003, Nashville was called upon to be the lead wing of a seven-wing deployment to Tabuk, Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This contingent of 46 C-130's stood up operations at the most austere location in the AOR. And in spite of the severe conditions, they racked up impressive results.

These seven units performed well above expectations as to military reliability and launch rates in spite of severe conditions. This was accomplished through the outstanding dedication, unit pride and experience of all of these air guardsmen.

By the way, seven -- five of those seven units involved in this deployment are being recommended for realignment closure.

Our people are our most valuable asset we have. Without our experienced airlifters and maintainers, our aircraft would be scrap metal.

In the Air Force, you take the people to the base. In the Air National Guard, you take the base to the people. Our combat seasoned aircrews have over 16 years' average experience. They flew over 7,000 combat hours in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they have the awards to prove it.

The planes don't fix themselves. Our expert maintainers average over 20 years experience working mostly on C-130s. Recently we conducted a survey of our airmen. The results are, quite frankly, frightening. 58 percent will retire or resign. Losing 58 percent of our crew members translates into the loss of over 300,000 flying hours and 1200 years of experience. Only 15 percent would leave the state following the aircraft, with most going to Louisville and no one will move to Peoria.

The reason is simple. The guard is a part-time job, albeit a critical one for our nation. The closest unit to Nashville is Louisville, which is over three hours away. Of the aeromedical evacuation squadron, no one is expected to transfer to Carswell. This career field is difficult to recruit and is a critical medical asset that would leave Tennessee with no deployable medical unit to respond to any disasters or terrorist incident.

Do we want to lose 58 percent of our experienced combat hardened veterans during an ongoing war to have them replaced by inexperienced personnel, which will take years to train? I believe that it is in the best interest of our nation and my state to keep them in Nashville.

Quite honestly, as the Adjutant General, my main concern lies in the Guard's State mission and their contribution to homeland security. The C-130 is a flying

deuce and a half capable of transporting vital supplies and personnel in response to natural disasters, terrorist attacks in both Tennessee and within five FEMA regions.

In Nashville, the C-130s are well positioned to transport the Nashville based 45th Civil Support Team and their six C-130 equipment loads. Should the C-130s disappear, the CST would have to resort to ground transportation. In a state as large as Tennessee, the CST's response time, quite frankly, would be unsatisfactory. Response time equals lives.

Another Nashville capability is the Aeromedical Evacuation squadron. It is the only deployable medical unit in the state. Should the Aeromed unit be realigned, Tennessee would be left without a deployable medical unit.

Now lets look at military value. I know you would agree with me that people are military value. But the Air Force came up with their way to quantify it and Nashville was shown to have low military value.

But I want to show you why Nashville's airlift mission compatibility index, MCI, better known as military value, is flawed and does not accurately reflect its current condition in each of the highlighted criteria shown above.

According to the BRAC report, Nashville had a military value of 104. Under the current proposed scenario, four units with a lower military value are gaining

aircraft. We submit there are a number of areas where Nashville did not get the proper credit for infrastructure. Certified data is being submitted to the committee to back up these facts.

Let's take a look at each of them: Hangar capacity, part of condition of infrastructure in Nashville reported does not accurately reflect our current situation. The Airlift 118 is 90 percent complete on a \$24 million 104,000 square foot aircraft maintenance facility scheduled to be occupied in November. It eliminates six separate facilities and is a one of a kind hangar in the DoD.

Our airfield pavements were not even considered due to what looks to be an error in analysis. Nashville International Airport has four main runways, with the largest one being 11,000 feet. All runways possess a high pavement quality rating.

Finally, Nashville AGS has agreements in place to provide additional fuel capabilities to the Air National Guard to handle transient aircraft and to support mobility and surge operations. While we have the capabilities, this was not considered since the Guard does not own the fuel farm. But this is one of the guard's strongest points. Through our relationships with local airport authorities, we have incredible capabilities at our disposal at very low costs.

The Air National Guard model of operating at community airports and sharing the airfields, fire protection, et cetera, also means we share the costs. In Nashville's case, access to four runways, fire protection, and a tower cost by the federal government only \$36,000 per year, one of the lowest in the Guard.

Summing up all the changes to the military value shown above, our MCI increases to 48.

Now lets look back at the previous chart with our revised military value shown. Now eight units with lower military value would gain aircraft. However, the Nashville realignment was justified by military judgment, not low military value. Military judgment has never been defined in the BRAC criteria. Even the Air Force red team agreed when they said military judgment is used frequently to override military value. But a majority of judgment factors used are economic and business-related rather than military unique.

The Air Force formula does not project an accurate picture of military value. Besides an installation's pavement, hangar and fuels, an accurate picture of a Base's capabilities does not exist.

So let me give you a complete picture of Nashville. 50 percent of our facilities are new or have been completely remodeled within last two years. The centerpiece of our modernization is the new hangar

maintenance complex, a 2005 Air Force Design Award winner. This facility is an example of how we do business, right-sized and cost effective. It is designed for our current mission, while looking forward to the future by being capable to handle C-17s. 75 percent of facilities are less than five years old. \$55 million has been spent in the last six years.

The Air National Guard is conscious of how we construct our facilities, making sure they are right-sized to meet the mission. Excess is not authorized. However, excess capacity is the real winner under the Air Force model—but should be the loser in the taxpayer's model, the model that really counts. Right-sized facilities meant that the Air National Guard could not compete against the Air Force, leading to a strong bias against the Air National Guard, which becomes clear when you look at the military value list. That is also reflected in the number of Air National Guard units being either closed or realigned. To implement these realignments cost money, and we have found that the accounting both in the realignment implementation costs and the savings are flawed. When the Air Force first approved the Nashville realignment recommendation, the pay back period exceeded 100 years, however three months later, the COBRA cost info was changed and to show a payback of two years.

Is this an example of fuzzy math used to justify predetermined decisions? We have found errors in four areas. I would like to touch on two of these major areas: Personnel savings and training costs.

The Air Force has taken the personnel freed up by the realignment as savings, but the Air National Guard does not lose any end strength. All positions freed up by aircraft realignments will be used to remission. Their salaries will still be paid regardless of location. There are no personnel savings.

The other major area is training costs. There will be significant requirements for training and these costs have been grossly underreported even using conservative numbers. Our conservative review that this scenario will pay back in 82 years. Would you rather have the capabilities of our combat-seasoned Tennessee volunteers now or wait 82 years to realize any savings?

Based on the justification given in the BRAC documentation, this recommendation is arbitrary and was used to implement the Air Force's future total force. In summary, the Department of Defense's recommendation to realign Nashville, eliminating its flying mission, substantially deviates from congressional criteria used to evaluate military bases by basing the recommendation on military judgment.

This realignment results in loss of experienced personnel, loss of modern infrastructure, which can robust up to 16 C 130s with no MILCON. No savings from this recommendation will be realized until the year 2091.

Based on this information, we respectfully request your consideration in reversing this realignment. Thank you for your time and allowing me to share my thoughts. And we would be happy to answer any questions.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Are you going to be around this afternoon?

GENERAL HARGETT: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: All right. Many of the issues you brought up are common across the Guard and Reserve.

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: I want for the record to say I went down to the National Guard two days ago. I tell you it's a fantastic facility. I looked at so many hangers the last couple of months I never want to see another hangar again in my life. The fact is what they done there with the C-17 really is innovative impressed me beyond any other guard base that I have seen.

GENERAL HARGETT: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much for

your testimony.

COMMISSIONER SKINNER: I have one question. You didn't mention your recruitment and retention, and other units have. You might want to put that in there. What is it and how good is it?

GENERAL HARGETT: They are about 90 percent right now. We lost a few people after the Gulf War. We were down to about 80 percent. We are going back up now. We are in a reconstitution because they stay mobilized longer than any other C-130 unit in America. Does that answer your question?

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Are you capped out on your two years out of five, or is that affecting you in any way?

GENERAL HARGETT: We are capped out on the two year out of five. We got a few individuals who are not. Most of our individuals are capped out.

COMMISSIONER BILBRAY: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GEHMAN: Thank you very much. This concludes the Atlanta Regional Hearing of the Base Closure Realignment Commission. I want to thank all the witnesses who testified today. You brought very thoughtful and valuable information before this Commission, which we will take back and evaluate very, very carefully before we make our decisions.

I also want to thank all the elected officials, community members who have assisted during our base visits in preparation for this hearing.

In particular, I would like to thank Senator Chambliss and his staff and assistants in obtaining space and arrangements in setting up this fine site visit.

Finally, I would like to thank the citizens of the communities represented here today which supports the members of our Armed Services for so many years, making them feel welcome and valued in their town. With that spirit, that what makes America great. This hearing is closed.

(Hearing closed 12:16 p.m.)

UNCERTIFIED