

May 21, 2003

Gov
Address
City State Zip

Dear Gov. X:

The House and Senate are presently addressing the next Armed Services Budget. This gives us the opportunity, as Governors, to weigh in on the 2005 base realignment and closure (BRAC) process. I strongly believe that this is not the time for additional base closings and seek your support to amend current NGA policy to reflect the needs of our military, military communities as well as the defense of our homeland.

Earlier this month the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness passed an amendment that would have completely repealed the 2005 BRAC. However as much as I support such a move, I am currently supporting a compromise proposal that would delay BRAC until 2007. Attached please find a copy of my proposed language changes for the NGA policy. There are three distinct and strong arguments to support a delay:

1. States cannot easily absorb the loss of military facilities and related jobs given current fiscal conditions;
2. Senators Hutchison and Feinstein have introduced a bill (S.949) that would create a commission to complete an overseas review of force needs and readiness that could directly effect base roles here in the states (any overseas review should be completed before any stateside review); and
3. Senator Levin, a strong proponent of the BRAC process, is on record saying that the size of the military might have to grow to meet the demands placed on the military by current world pressures.

While I realize that the current BRAC language in the NGA Economic Development Committee Policy (EDC-10.2.5) was agreed to after great debate, I believe this is the right time to readdress our position. Thank you for looking into this important matter.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE