but are requiring enormous restrictions that preclude a location in a metropolitan area anyplace in the country, and that are going to cost such a premium to build, they are going to make them prohibitive for any other activity to be in those buildings.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on at greater length on why I do not think that these recommendations make sense from a cost standpoint, from a military effectiveness standpoint, from just a common-sense standpoint. I will not do that, but I will summarize by again pointing out that these recommendations are going to cost billions of dollars to build new buildings for DOD money that we do not have, that we are going to have to take from veterans health care. It is not going to improve our military preparedness. It is going to cause a brain drain in terms of many of the agencies that we rely so much on for technological superiority and intelligence. And when you have a recommendation that causes such additional cost and is going to make it so much more difficult to implement our military mission, I think the right thing to do is to reject it.

That is what this resolution does. That is what I would urge my colleagues in this body to do, to vote for the resolution of disapproval that has been offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) so as to have the administration go back and tell us ways they can, in fact, save money, ways they can, in fact, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our military mission.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. BONNER). The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of it clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3057. An act making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 3057) ''Making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes,'' requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BOND, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1285. An act to designate the Federal building located at 333 Mt. Elliott Street in Detroit, Michigan, as the ''Rosa Parks Federal Building''.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DISAPPROVING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Science.

(Mr. BOEHLERT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, many of us who have been privileged to serve in this great institution for some time have been through this process many times. This is not the first or second or third. We have had BRAC after BRAC. But I could not agree more with my distinguished colleague from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) who observed this was the best BRAC of all. We are finally getting it right. This was the least political, most professional BRAC we have ever had. And that is a tribute to Chairman Principi and all of the distinguished members of the panel: Admiral Gehman; General Newton; former Congressman and colleague Jim Bilbray; Phil Coyle; Sam Skinner; General Turner; Jim Hansen, another former colleague who served with great distinction; and General Hill. This reads like a Who's Who list of distinguished Americans who are providing a very important service for our Nation.

The fact is DOD had too much physical inventory. It is costing DOD to maintain that physical inventory. It is costing the taxpayers. So understandably they wanted some realignment, adjustments; and there had to be winners and losers. As someone who has been on both sides of that issue, let me say I know what it is like. I can feel the pain of the losers. But I would say to those who are on the short end of the recommendation, one, you should have confidence that the recommendations were made once again by the least political, most professional BRAC we have ever had, a BRAC whose individual members, including the Chairman, were available not just to have a courtesy photo opportunity, but to hear out those of us who had presentations before that Commission.

They asked pertinent questions. They had on-site visits. They were very, very serious about their important work; and they were not alone. The highly dedicated and very competent professional staff of BRAC was even more accessible. You can understand when you get on the phone and you try to get a conversation with Chairman Principi or General So-and-So or Admiral So-and-So, a lot of people want to talk to them. I must say that I was fortunate to be able to talk to each and every one of them. I had quality time. But the fact of the matter is the staff followed through once again with on-site visits, and that was so very important.

The dedication and determination demonstrated by the Commission, its accessibility for individual members, their willingness to listen produced a product that I think we can all be proud of.

Let me once again address those who represent communities who are not treated favorably by the BRAC recommendations. I have been through that before with a magnificent Air Force base that dissolved back as a result of the 1993 Commission report, and in 1995 it actually closed down with a couple of exceptions. And there were some people in the community at large who wanted to write the economic obituary for that community, Rome, New York, and the surrounding areas. There were others, a lot of us, not just me, the mayor, the county executive, local officials, business communities, that were determined to make the best of a bad situation.

□ 1130

Today, that once-vibrant military installation, Griffis Air Force Base, is now a very vibrant business and technology park with upwards of 4,000 people gainfully employed there; but part of that installation involves an Air Force research laboratory which was set off as a containment area as a result of the decision to close the base in 1993, and the people at DOD and everywhere were wondering would this work.

It has worked in spades, and now the Air Force research laboratory, incidentally operating out of a $25 million state-of-the-art new facility, is the center of excellence for the entire Air Force in command, control, communications, and intelligence technology. It is an information directorate, and it not only services the Air Force well but it services a whole wide range of other activities. It is serving so well.

So BRAC looked at that and made the decision that some operations that had been located there should be transferred elsewhere in line with the overall scheme of the Air Force to consolidate like operations at a central facility. Some moved out; some moved in. The net result is maybe a gain of 15 to 25 jobs for Rome, New York. I am not supporting the BRAC because we have got 15 or 25 jobs. I am supporting the process and what it did and what it produced.

Let me tell my colleagues another story. At that same business and technology park, we now have a defense finance accounting service, and that employs exactly 382 people. DOD said, well, we want to consolidate, restructure. We do not need 26 locations all

over the country. We want to go down to three locations. That did not really make a heck of a lot of sense; and when all was said and done, when the BRAC looked at that, they recognized that maybe the answer was somewhere in between. Instead of going from 26 to three, they went from 26 to about five or six, consolidating, saving money, improving efficiency.

Guess what. This facility at Rome, New York, which incidentally is operating and out of a new $10 million state-of-the-art facility, was examined very carefully. They did not just listen to me, and they did not make a decision that was posited with that because I had a scintillating personality or I had some influence down here. Influence down here did not make much difference in this process.

What they listened to were the facts, and the facts are that when they examined all of the DFAS operations, in 16 measurable categories where you could quantify, where you could measure, where you could compare the output of one against the other, this installation was at or near the top.

A final BRAC decision, not only are those 382 jobs preserved, 600 additional are coming.

So I say it from the perspective of a proud Member of a district who is gaining, and I say it as a proud Member of this institution who identified with creating a process that is serving our Nation well; and therefore, I would strongly oppose the resolution to disapprove and urge that the movement go forward.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Illinois both for introducing this resolution and for yielding me some time to speak in support of the resolution.

The stakes could not be higher. Of course, we should take steps, even if politically difficult, to cut waste and improve efficiency in the military. Let us look where we are.

The Pentagon has recommended closures through the BRAC Commission. The BRAC Commission has approved them. Now the House is going to stamp them approved before the Department of Defense has completed its force structure review. This is exactly the opposite of what was supposed to happen. The BRAC commissioners themselves pointed out when they began their hearings this summer that the entire process has the cart before the horse.

Also, the Overseas Basing Commission noted that the Pentagon had not factored in the impact of the return of tens of thousands of personnel from Europe to the United States in its BRAC recommendations; and even now, we are proceeding with the BRAC process before the Pentagon has even completed its periodic force review, which is supposed to be the blueprint for what we need for the 21st century.

So we will be closing bases, losing key personnel, diminishing critical capabilities, even before we have determined which of those capabilities we need in order to meet current and future threats. The process, Mr. Chairman, has been backwards.

I certainly can find fault with some of the specifics in here. I am very familiar with the excellent work done by the people at Fort Monmouth in central New Jersey where they do electronics, command, control, communications, computers. They have taken the lead in developing countermeasures to detect and disarm roadside bombs in Iraq. It is hard to think of anything that could be more important.

We know that a large number of these scientists, probably 70, 80 percent of these scientists and engineers and procurement experts will not make the move if Fort Monmouth is closed. That capability would be lost at a time that we cannot afford it.

The harm to the military, to the Army, and to the joint services effort, I can assure my colleagues, is much greater than the harm to New Jersey. That is why I am highlighting this example of the problems.

Let me be clear, I have nothing but great respect for each of the commissioners and their staffs. They worked for months a grueling schedule, reams of data, listening attentively, openly. In the end, however, the commission produced a series of recommendations that could not be right because the whole thing was flawed from the beginning. They got the cart before the horse.

In the resolution before us today, we have the means to stop this flawed and dangerous process, and it is apparent that the commissioners knew that they were not getting it right.

In the case of Fort Monmouth, for example, in their recommendations, they charged Congress, not that they are able to charge Congress, but nevertheless they did, to review their results with respect to Fort Monmouth to say do not go ahead with them if it might hurt the capabilities that we need to fight terrorism around the world, to support our troops in the field and Iraq and Afghanistan. They actually said that in their recommendations. They were acknowledging that they were not getting it right, or at least they thought they might not be getting it right.

They have got the cart before the horse. It is a flawed process. To give us a chance, I will urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution so that we can get it right. Our country's security depends on it.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for the opportunity to be heard.

After a series of hearings and debates today, the House will vote on H.J. Res. 65, disapproving recommendation of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. I stand here in opposition to that resolution and support the BRAC process.

Since the Department of Defense released those dreaded base closure recommendations on May 13, 2005, elected officials, community leaders, and employees have come together to make the case for keeping their respective facilities open.

I respect the BRAC process. I understand that it is necessary for the Department of Defense to reconfigure its infrastructure into one where operational and support capacity is optimized for both war-fighting capability and efficiency. I also understand that the BRAC process assists the Department in maximizing joint utilization of defense resources and reallocates military personnel from supporting and operating unnecessary and underutilized infrastructure. However, I believe that the BRAC process should remain a fair process, allowing for every facility to be evaluated in a clear and consistent manner.

Let me state that I am extremely pleased that on August 26, 2005, the BRAC Commission decided not only to reverse its decision to close the Defense Finance Accounting Service in Cleveland, Ohio, but to expand and add jobs at this facility. This facility has earned the right to remain open and continue to provide A-plus services to its executive clients and, most importantly, the men and women serving in Afghanistan, Iraq, and around the world.

DFAS Cleveland is an integral part of the nerve center that supports our troops on the ground in Iraq and worldwide. It is the homesite of the Reserve pay center of excellence which processes payroll for the Army, Air Force, Naval Reserves and National Guard. It has a track record of innovation and success that has been recognized on more than one occasion.

I thank the entire BRAC Commission, particularly Chairman Principi and General Lloyd Newton, for their service. In addition, I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) who is seated on the floor and his staff for all the work they did in supporting DFAS, as well as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for his tireless efforts.

Through our collaboration, we were able to outline to the commission the various discrepancies in the initial recommendation and make a good case for reversing the recommendation for removing the Cleveland DFAS office.

I want to thank also the Cleveland Partnership and its membership. Thanks to Carol Caruso behind the scenes and thanks to attorney Fred Nance, the managing partner of Squires, Sanders and Dempsey, who argued our case before the commission. He was brilliant.

Finally, I would like to say that this process has been a grueling process. In the city of Cleveland, we have lost so many jobs over the past 4 years. The thought that we would lose another 1,200 jobs if DFAS moved was just grueling, and we are thankful for the commission's recommendation. Again, I vehemently argue in opposition to H.J. Res. 65 and thank my colleagues for their support.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Colorado for the time.

First, let me thank the BRAC Commission head Anthony Principi and all of the panel members for their hard work for listening to all of us, both at the regional hearings and in person, and with the staff and the Department of Defense who worked with so many of us in these very difficult decisions.

I rise in opposition to my colleague from Illinois's resolution, but I share some of his concerns. I would like to talk about a few of these.

In the State of Indiana, the previous round of BRAC, I was legislative director for the junior Senator from Indiana when we watched all of our active military bases get wiped out in the State of Indiana, one of the number one recruiting States in the United States.

My hometown in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is one of the major centers of defense electronics in the United States with ITT Aerospace, with Raytheon, Defense Electronics based there making many highly classified electronics, defense systems, with General Dynamics with a huge facility there, with BAE Systems with a huge facility there, with USSI with a huge facility there, with Northrop Grumman with a large and expanding facility there.

We have defense electronics and a very patriotic, one of the highest, if not the highest, congressional districts in America in military recruiting for Army, Navy, Air Force and all of the various Guard and Reserve groups.

We have an Air Guard base there in Fort Wayne, Indiana, that is gaining under this process. It was a very difficult process as to how we deal with the Guard and particularly the Air Guard, and it was a very stiff competition with the gentleman from Illinois' air base and the air base in Terre Haute, and we can argue the relative merits.

What I heard at the hearing is, look, I am very proud of our Air Guard. They are way over. They have the highest percent retention, actually overretention at 116 percent of their recruiting quota. They have won national outstanding unit award three times by the Air Force and recipient of the National Guard number one Air Guard unit in the United States.

But I also heard from the people in the capital region Air Guard unit and the people in the Terre Haute Guard unit. In fact, they were all high in recruitment, and they were all high in national awards.

□ 1145

The problem is the Air Force is cutting. The F–16s are aging and declining in quality and disappearing from our defense system, and the Air Force plans are to reduce the number of fighter planes by two-thirds. So where is this going to leave the Air Guard and the Reserve, and how do we work this through when we head into a BRAC process? I am very concerned where we are headed long term with this, not just this BRAC process but the next BRAC process.

It is clear we are leaning heavily on Guard and Reserve. Are we going to the point where Guard and Reserve and the Air Force are only going to be at active bases, and where does that leave the heartland of the United States as we move everything to the coast? Where does it leave us in homeland security?

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) raised a very difficult and interesting question that worked through the courts in this process, that it is pretty clear that the Department of Defense cannot close an Air Guard base, but they can move the airplanes. So we had one court ruling in Pennsylvania that said they could not close the base, but we have other rulings that said they could move the airplanes. What exactly is the role of an Air Guard base if it does not have any airplanes, and how are we going to work this through?

I believe there will be other types of defense systems in homeland security that hopefully will be located in Terre Haute and will be located in Springfield, Illinois, very important cities to homeland security and our national defense. We have to work this through.

I believe the BRAC Commission made the right decisions, but this does not necessarily give us much guidance as to where we are headed and how we are going to integrate and maintain the defense structure we have in the United States with our Air Guard, Army Guard, and all of our Reserve units around the country if we do not have an adequate base structure, if we do not have adequate training places and ways to do this.

I hope we can find, in addition to the fighter planes that are located in Fort Wayne, and the expansion of our base, for which I am very thankful, ways to work with Springfield, Illinois, with Terre Haute, Indiana, and other bases around the United States because we need all of those pilots. We need all of those Guard and Reserve people around the United States because we are strapped very thin. I hope this BRAC Commission report, while I strongly support it, will also be a launching point as to how we are going to work and build and keep this very diverse Armed Forces system in the United States.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER).

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Chairman, I come here today to praise the men and women of the 118th Air Wing who fly out of Nashville, Tennessee. They have been mistreated by this BRAC process. I do not blame the BRAC Commission. I think the fault lies originally with the Pentagon recommendation because they simply did not take into account one of the best flying units in America. They are proven, they are ready, they have performed valiantly every time the Nation has called them to service. They have volunteered for extra duty. They fly C–130s. We have, and we soon will miss, those eight C–130 airplanes.

The bottom line for the Pentagon decision, did it really have anything to do with military judgment for value or cost savings? No. What did it have to do with? A political calculation on the part of the Pentagon that because Tennessee had a great air unit in Memphis with C–5s and a great air unit in Knoxville with KC–135s, that therefore, Nashville had to lose one of the best Air Guard units in the country.

Now, they did not close down our base entirely; they did not have the temerity to do that, but they took all our aircraft. They took the ''air'' out of the Air National Guard in Nashville, Tennessee.

Now, Members might say, well, I am just protecting a local interest. Look at the facts. First they came at us with wrong data because the Air Guard unit there does not own the runways; we only lease them from a fine commercial airport. We got no credit for that. So we addressed that problem.

Then they did not take into account the fact that we had some of the newest and best facilities in all of our military, the number one best hangar in America, brand new, barely opened, and it will probably never see an airplane. It won the top Air Force award for best hangar in the country, so why did American taxpayers pay $55 million for that hangar never to see it used?

Guess what, almost every other facility on that base is less than 2 years old, and we are taking away all of the aircraft. How does that make sense? It only makes sense if you look at the politics. Tennessee had three bases; they wanted to cut us down to two and distribute it more evenly around the country. So they can take our airplanes, are they going to train the new air crews at these other bases? Are they going to build them brand new and wonderful facilities and hangars? Will that save the American taxpayer money when we already had one of the top units in the country in Nashville performing perfectly?

If you ask Secretary Rumsfeld, he knows about the men and women from Nashville who have flown him wherever he needed to go, in the Middle East or other places in the world.

So I am in an ironic situation. I believe in the BRAC process. I do think Congress needs a restraint. We cannot just all protect our local bases, but the Pentagon's recommendation has to be based on sound military judgment, and at least in this one small case, it was not. Unfortunately, the BRAC commissioners did not have the temerity to override in this case, at least, the Pentagon recommendation.

If Members talk to top folks in the Pentagon, they will tell you that from the expected savings from the BRAC round, they are virtually gone, because the BRAC Commission did interfere in a lot of other bases, and some services, so 70 to 80 percent of the expected savings are not there. I think history will chalk this up as a failed BRAC round, not because of Nashville but because of larger issues.

So I hope and pray that when the next BRAC round comes around, we will do a better job starting with the Pentagon and through the BRAC Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in favor of H.J. Res. 65, which would reject the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee I initially supported the BRAC process. It is very important that the composition of our bases and infrastructure support the operational needs of the 21st century—a century that is emerging to be as dangerous and challenging as the 20th century. We must adapt to new threats and challenges. But our decisions concerning future base structure must be based on what best supports the national security of the United States. The BRAC decisions regarding the Air National Guard do not meet this test.

Consequently, I disagree with the Department of Defense's recommendations concerning the Air National Guard. Our citizen soldiers of the Air National Guard are a critical part of our defense structure. They have done heroic work since 9-11. We simply would not have been able to sustain the current pace of our operations without the Air National Guard.

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 retention concerns of the state adjutants. Moreover, the BRAC analysis did not address the potential impact of realignments on State homeland security missions. These ill considered recommendations generated almost unanimous opposition from State Adjutants. Despite the efforts of the commission, this entire process has done great harm to the vital relationships between the Air National Guard and the Air Force. This harms our national security.

Let me briefly discuss these flaws using the 118th Air Wing (AW) stationed in Nashville as an example. The decision regarding the realignment of the 118th AW, one of the premier C130H flying units in the United States, illustrates the nature of the flawed recommendations that grew out of a closed process.

First, the loss of aircraft from the Air National Guard and the movement of aircraft to fewer sites will have negative impact of the retention of our most experienced air crews and maintenance personnel. Unlike active duty airmen and pilots, Air National Guard personnel do not just pack up and relocate with their aircraft. It is highly unlikely that the majority of the 118th AW's highly experienced pilots and maintenance personnel will move with the C130H aircraft to new base locations.

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

Third, rebuilding the deep operational experience and cohesion of units like the 118th AW, forged through multiple deployments and demanding combat missions that have continued through the rescue and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina will require many, many years. The direct and indirect personnel costs of realigning units like the 118th AW do not appear to have been considered in the BRAC process. It takes time and money to recruit, train and develop experienced pilots and co-pilots and highly skilled maintenance and support personnel. Indeed, duplicating the skill, experience and dedication of the 118th AW may be impossible.

Fourth, it appears that the Air Force failed to fully consider the military value of the Air National Guard facilities under consideration. For example, in Nashville, we have spent over $55 million over the last five years on military construction to include a new state of the art hangar/maintenance complex that won an Air Force design award. Yet it appears much of this new construction was not considered in the evaluation of the 118th AW's "Military Value." Consequently, these excellent facilities will remain in limbo—neither closed nor fully operational. Where is the efficiency, cost savings or operational advantage in this arrangement?

Finally, the overall BRAC savings are minimal. According to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, the Department of Defense claimed that their recommendations would save $47.8 billion over twenty years. The Commission concluded that once one time up-front costs of $21 billion are subtracted and personnel costs are accurately calculated the total savings to the American taxpayer will only be $15 billion. This figure is likely high because costs for the retraining of pilots, air crews and mechanics are not factored into the up-front costs. This is extraordinary.

Consequently, I have concluded that the marginal fiscal benefits of these recommendations do not out-weigh the costs to our Air National Guard flying formations and our national security. I will vote "yes" on H.J. Res. 65.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this resolution because I believe the BRAC Commission has performed its job admirably. It wisely chose to remove from the closure list the Defense Finance and Accounting Services in Cleveland which was scheduled to lose 1,028 jobs. This came after a very strong community effort in Cleveland that was led by the Greater Cleveland Partnership and attorney Fred Nance, whose brilliant presentation at the BRAC Commission hearing was quite persuasive.

It also came as a result of work that was done by our colleague from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from Ohio has demonstrated that a bipartisan cooperation and partnership can be quite successful in helping to strengthen a community's economic position.

We worked together, along with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES), other Federal officials, and local officials to ensure that we made the best case possible as to why the people who do an admirable service at DFAS in Cleveland should be permitted to continue doing their work.

The 2005 Department of Defense recommendations put on the BRAC closure list inappropriately the Cleveland area, and they targeted Cleveland with over 1,000 job cuts. We made the case that those potential job losses were unjust and unfair and counterproductive to the interest of our Federal Government. The BRAC Commission reversal wound up adding 475 jobs, in addition to saving the current jobs. This means Cleveland will host 1,500 DFAS jobs and continue to be a major financial center for the Department of Defense.

The BRAC Commission showed independence from the Pentagon, which is a rare feat in Washington, D.C. and Cleveland is grateful for their independence. This shows all of us why independence in our government's decision-making process is a crucial ingredient to ensure that the right decisions are made. This is another opportunity to move our great city off the list of cities with the highest poverty rate. The commission accepted the argument that the Pentagon should not move jobs from Cleveland, a city with one of the highest poverty rates in the Nation, to other cities which ranked much lower in poverty.

So in all, I believe that the BRAC recommendations represented a very thoughtful, well-reasoned set of recommendations. I was honored to have the opportunity to participate and actually see the process at work, and I was also honored to work closely with my colleagues from the House of Representatives, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

In one of the few times since 1995 when we arrived in the House together, I am going to disagree with the gentleman from Illinois and will vote against this resolution today.

I want to talk a little bit about the Cleveland experience and then the process and how we moved forward, which has been addressed by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

I understand why the gentleman from Illinois has brought this resolution here today because I remember the shudder that can go through a community when 1,200 jobs are being discussed, in some cases more, some cases less. In Cleveland's case, they were jobs that pay an average of $54,000 a year. You are not just talking about the loss of the tax base. You are also talking about individuals who have made lives, whether it be in Cleveland, Indiana, Colorado, Missouri or other parts of the country.

I had one grandmother who came up to me in Lake County, Ohio, after the decision was made to keep the facility open in Cleveland, and she said I want to thank you because it means my grandchildren will not be going to some faraway place. I can understand the shudder, and as the gentleman from Colorado said, maybe we should reexamine how we engage in this. But I want to talk about the process.

The process, although it was nerve-racking, was also healthy. It was healthy because it gave me the opportunity to work together with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH). I am Republican and they are Democrats, and we all put our shoulders to the same wheel to get the same result. It was good to see the labor community and the business community in Cleveland all come together, because sometimes they have disagreements. It was encouraging to see the leadership of the city of Cleveland come together, with Mayor Campbell and others all working towards achieving this result. From bad news, good news took place.

But as the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) said, it was not because the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) and I are so powerful. This was a process done on facts. Anthony Principi and the BRAC commissioners and the professional staff, and hats off to Marilyn Wasleski in particular, they took the time to look at the numbers and figure out that when the Pentagon came up with its original proposal, they had the numbers wrong. Just one small example: they overvalued the square footage that was being paid to the General Services Administration so Cleveland did not score as well.

It would have been easy to say we are not going to pay attention to that, but the BRAC commissioners paid attention. They paid attention to the arguments and observations; and at the end of the day, Cleveland did not win because Cleveland had more political muscle, Cleveland won on the facts and on objective standards.

Another thing that impressed me, the BRAC Commission not only looked at the numbers, they looked at the human cost. They considered the value of the 1,100 people that work in that building, the Celebrezze Federal building in the city of Cleveland, and they said to those Federal employees, you have value, you have worth. They recognized what they have accomplished in becoming centers of excellence, and they were rewarded for that. That is exactly what we would want to encourage.

The last thing I want to say, we have some force protection issues, antiterrorism protection for Federal properties are coming up in 2009. I understand that when it comes to the men and women who are serving in the active military, but the Cleveland facility is made up primarily of accountants. And I want to protect our men and women in uniform, but the folks in the Cleveland building are accountants, by and large. And I try to read all of the chatter from al Qaeda and everywhere else, and I do not hear a lot of chatter about taking out the accountants. I would argue that our civilian Department of Defense employees are valuable, but they are no more valuable than the people who work for the Social Security Administration or the U.S. Marshal's Office. Before we make sure that we fortify and penetrate all of these buildings for DOD civilian employees' work, we should look at force protection for everybody who works for the Federal Government.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois for introducing this resolution. I will be voting today in favor of H.J. Res. 65 because I believe the BRAC Commission's recommendations should be overturned. I commend the commission for their thorough and diligent work. They certainly had a very difficult job.

□ 1200

However, I believe that now is not the time to implement a BRAC round, considering the number of operations our armed services are currently engaged in around the world. I have great concern about the Pentagon's ability to adequately assess our needs and assets while there are so many soldiers abroad and while the Pentagon awaits the results of the Quadrennial Review.

I am also concerned about the Commission's recommendation to place Cannon Air Force Base in enclave status. This decision places Cannon in enclave status until 2009, or until a new mission can be identified for the base. I do view this recommendation as a partial victory for New Mexico since the Department of Defense initially slated Cannon for closure, but I firmly believe that Cannon should simply have been removed from the list altogether.

Cannon offers the Air Force and its pilots unrestricted airspace and training ranges just off its runways. This is a rarity in today's Air Force, as more bases experience increasing encroachment. This unparalleled airspace is in the process of being expanded, making the base even more valuable. When approved, the New Mexico Training Range Initiative would make Cannon's airspace wider and taller and allow for training at supersonic air speed.

I strongly believe we will be able to identify appropriate missions for Cannon Air Force Base to minimize the amount of time during which the base will remain in enclave status. Nevertheless, Cannon is too important to our national defense for it to be placed in enclave status.

I urge passage of H.J. Res. 65.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak against this resolution. I understand the frustrations that have been expressed by some of our colleagues here on the floor about the BRAC safety valve. I understand their frustration. We were in the crosshairs in my community, and some of the issues that were raised earlier about the friction within the Pentagon, the inability to appropriately focus on the value of the Air Guard and there were some other issues that were at work here. I think this process is helping.

I appreciate the debate here on the floor. I hope that we are able to further clarify the role that the Guard, especially the Air Guard and Ready Reserve, play as opposed to the Pentagon.

The BRAC process in our case allowed us to make the case. We pulled together as a community. We were able to document that the transfer of the Air Guard actually would end up costing the taxpayer money, and we were able to demonstrate that it would leave a whole sector of the Northwest United States vulnerable, taking away critical air support that has loomed larger as we deal with the role of homeland security in our national defense.

I would hope that our friends on the Armed Services Committee would focus on adjustments that may need to be made to the BRAC process to allow a higher priority attached to homeland security in these decisions in the future. It was not as clear when the BRAC legislation was enacted almost 20 years ago. I think things have shifted. I think it is time to readjust it.

I would also hope that this would be an opportunity for us to focus on what we are leaving communities with after the bases are closed. I have come to the floor pleading for more support from Appropriations and more attention from the Armed Services Committee to unexploded ordnance and military toxins.

The problem we are facing right now, after the 1988 BRAC process, we still have a dozen communities where they have not finished cleaning up those bases. Indeed, the Mather Air Force Base in California, in Sacramento,

closed in 1988. The cleanup is not going to be completed until 2072. That is not fair to communities where bases are closed.

While I support the BRAC process, I oppose the resolution. I think, in the main, BRAC has worked. I hope we are able to clarify the role of the Guard and the Ready Reserve as it relates to national security.

I do hope this is a wake-up call to what we are leaving communities with, and we can accelerate the cleanup process.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) who represents one of the largest military installations in our State.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of H.J. Res. 65. I totally disagree with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's decision pertaining to Rock Island Arsenal and other key installations across the Nation, including Springfield Air Base as well.

The BRAC process is seriously flawed. Both the Department of Defense and the BRAC Commission failed to follow the criteria established by Congress to base its decisions on military values and cost savings. I expected the DOD and the Commission to follow the criteria outlined in the BRAC legislation. It failed to do so.

The BRAC Commission stated it will actually cost the American taxpayer with no further expectation of future savings. The government will never receive a financial payback from this move.

The BRAC Commission recommended realignment of installations in the 17th Congressional District of Illinois, but failed to base its decision on military value criteria. Rock Island DFAS was rated number one in military value, but the Commission recommended consolidation at facilities rated substantially below Rock Island: Columbus, 7; Indianapolis, 9; Cleveland, 12; Limestone, 17; Rome 19.

The BRAC decisions regarding not only bases in Illinois, but throughout the Nation, are extremely frustrating because the Commission recognized the military value and cost savings provided streamlining of bases already undertaken on a local level.

I am a former marine, and I will not surrender this fight to save jobs at the Rock Island Arsenal. I will continue to work with the Quad City Development Group and local officials to strengthen the arsenal and to bring more jobs to the island.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Peoria, Illinois who has done an outstanding job in fighting this battle. I look forward to working with him on the cleanup of this process and hope that we do not have to go through it again. I appreciate his leading the charge on this bill today.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Chairman, there is no shortage of valid complaints to be made of this round of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission's work. I generally support the BRAC process. But what is important about the BRAC process is the process and how it is handled by the Commission itself. I feel that insufficient attention was paid to the role each individual base played in the United States national security, and, more importantly, the homeland security.

The recommendations seem to be based much more on bean counting than strategic value, nowhere more so than in the case of Ellington Field in Houston, Texas. Ellington Field is currently home to the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Fighter Wing, who just got back from Iraq and showed themselves to be exemplary not just in their efforts before going to Iraq, but in Iraq itself. They were absolutely exemplary in their efforts and in their service. We appreciate them in everything that they do.

But Ellington is also home to several other branches and resources of our armed services, all of whom are responsible for the protection of the entire gulf coast. Its national and homeland security facilities should be plain to anyone as in need of more personnel, greater maintenance and better military assets.

Yet the BRAC Commission has chosen to realign Ellington, removing its F–16 Fighter Wing and leaving the gulf coast, to my mind, in many ways more vulnerable than it is now. The Houston-Galveston region has all nine of the FBI targets. It is the only region in the entire United States that has all nine of those targets.

The Commission's Ellington decision was a bad one. I join with the proponents of this resolution and, for that matter, the two BRAC Commissions, including Chairman Principi who voted to save Ellington, in their frustration. The flawed methodology and dangerous implications of the Commission's work, particularly with regard to the Ellington Field decision, leave me no choice but to oppose the BRAC recommendations and support the resolution before us.

We should all support the work of the BRAC Commission to consolidate and improve the alignment of our military assets to strengthen our national security. This round of recommendations, in my view, does not accomplish that goal. I will continue to work on behalf of Ellington Field and to ensure national and homeland security interests of the gulf coast region.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to follow my neighbor from Texas (Mr. DELAY). Ellington is in his district, but I am the next closest Member.

I rise to express my disapproval for the recommendations of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure and urge my colleagues to support the gentleman from Illinois' resolution, of which I am a proud cosponsor. This is the most ill-advised, ill-timed round in base closure history. We currently have men and women fighting in two countries, and we passed three large supplemental requests, and the fourth likely in the next few months. We are in the process of closing bases overseas and bringing them home. Given these uncertainties, we cannot know what our base needs or our threat needs will be for the next 5, 10 or 20 years.

Ellington is home to the 147th Air National Guard Wing, Texas Air National Guard Wing. Houston is the fourth largest city in our Nation. It is our home and has a huge petrochemical complex that accounts for nearly half of the Nation's base petrochemical production. The Houston ship channel in the Port of Houston handled more foreign tonnage than any other port. We have the Texas Medical Center and NASA's Johnson Space Center. One of the most vulnerable targets in the area is the petrochemical complex, along with these other assets. Yet the base closure commission on a close vote decided to close Ellington.

Now, what they are doing is they are saying that we are going to provide service from San Antonio, Texas. The problem is that is 23 minutes away. As we know, an airborne attack on a refinery complex could seriously disrupt our Nation's energy supply, causing major nationwide economic impacts. An attack on a chemical plant could result in a hazardous release and thousands of casualties.

Currently our 147th Air Wing provides air security in the area, and the solution from the Pentagon is rotating several planes to fly on alert out of Ellington, which provides a much smaller deterrent than having a full squadron. What would happen if we had multiple planes that are attacking different facilities?

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the resolution.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my disapproval with the recommendations made by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, and to urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

This is the most ill-advised and ill-timed round in the history of Base Realignments and Closures. We currently have men and women fighting in two countries, we have passed three of the largest supplemental requests in our Nation's history with a fourth likely in the next several months, and we are in the process of closing bases overseas and bringing troops home.

Given these uncertainties, we cannot begin to know what our basing needs will be 5, 10, or 20 years down the road. However, instead of postponing this round of closures for 2 or 3 years like many members of the House and Senate supported, one of the most contentious rounds of BRAC was pushed through.

Like many other communities across the country, the district I represent was affected

by the Defense Department's plan to consolidate Air National Guard units, leaving one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country less prepared to respond to a terrorist attack.

Houston is the fourth largest city in the Nation, and is home to a petrochemical complex that accounts for nearly half of the Nation's base petrochemical production capacity. The Houston shipping channel and the Port of Houston handle more foreign tonnage than any other U.S. port. Also, we have NASA's Johnson Space Center, and the Texas Medical Center.

One of the most vulnerable targets in the area, and possibly the country, is the petrochemical complex; a tremendous complex that stretches the length of the Houston Ship Channel and continues along the coast through Beaumont, Texas. We have seen in the aftermath of Katrina and Rita the negative effects caused by disruptions in our oil supply and refining capacity, and leaving this area unprotected is leaving the door open to a terrorist attack on this critical infrastructure.

The Port of Houston is the second largest petrochemical complex in the world, and the largest in the Western Hemisphere, which produces over 35 percent of the Nation's gasoline at a great many refineries.

Numerous chemical plants also line the channel, producing a number of volatile compounds. According to the U.S. Coast Guard, 7,600 deep draft vessels arrive each year, and 60 percent of those ships carry sensitive oil/chemical cargos.

An airborne attack on the refinery chemical complex could seriously disrupt the Nation's energy supply, causing major nation-wide economic impacts. An attack on a chemical plant could result in a hazardous release with thousands of casualties.

Currently the 147th Fighter Wing of the Texas Air National Guard provides air security in the area and could respond to a threat on the complex or at the port in minutes because of the close proximity.

Rotating several planes to fly on alert out of Ellington, provides a much smaller deterrent than having a full squadron permanently stationed there, and would not provide enough planes to respond to multiple attacks on multiple targets in the area.

Meanwhile the closest full squadron would be in San Antonio, and would take approximately 23 minutes longer to respond to a threat than the F–16s at Ellington can currently provide.

In addition to providing security for the Houston area, the 147th is capable of providing precision strikes, close air support, offensive counter air, defensive counter air, and suppression of enemy air defenses.

The area around Ellington also provides the 147th with excellent training airspace, including over-water air-to-air training on the Gulf of Mexico allowing them to perform supersonic flights and lights out training from the surface to 50,000 feet.

Terrorists have proven their intent and capability to attack ground targets with multiple aircraft and retiring the 147th Fighter Wing's F-16s leaves Houston vulnerable to an attack.

The savings estimated in the DoD's BRAC report are minimal and do not justify moving the F–16s away from Ellington; while it is estimated that retiring the F–16s will save DoD $3.6 million over 20 years, an attack on any of the possible targets listed above, especially the petrochemical facilities and Port of Houston, would cost our national economy billions of dollars.

Mr. Chairman, this round of BRAC is ill-advised and ill-timed and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON).

(Mr. HOBSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1215

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise reluctantly in support of this motion. I have always supported the BRAC. I have been here through three of these, and I always thought they were well reasoned before, win, lose or draw; and by the standards of win, lose or draw, I probably came out okay in a lot of ways in this, because four out of five facilities in my area did well. The Army did well in this BRAC.

But I always thought the BRAC was based upon numbers and savings and mission, and suddenly I find out that is not true. I am going to read something here in a minute about that. That is what troubles me in this one, because the Air Force set out on a plan to arrive at a number, and they destroyed, in my opinion, much of what one of their components does best, and that is the Air National Guard.

Let me give you an example. At Mansfield, Ohio, they realigned the base. ''Realignment'' means you do not technically get BRAC'ed, but you get no airplanes, so you have to find something else to do. Let me tell you, the soldiers that were in the Dome shortly after Katrina were Ohio Army Guardsmen. They were flown there in 130s out of Mansfield. The soldiers that were in Mississippi from Ohio were flown down by 130s from Mansfield. The soldiers that were in Texas from Ohio were flown in by 130s from Mansfield.

When BRAC gets done, there are not any airplanes at Mansfield. So how many days are we going to wait to come in and pick those people up and bring them down? Because we have still got a large Army Guard that can perform, and they have shown they can perform; but 2 years from now, that is not going to happen. That does not look smart to me.

If you look at the chart that shows the support in the hurricane by the Air National Guard, it is far superior to what the Air Reserve did or especially the active duty in response to these hurricanes. That is not going to be there 2 years from now.

Now, closer to home, my Springfield Air National Guard Base. It is a training base. I did not ask to do this mission. The Air Guard and the Air Force came to me and said, We screwed up. We have closed much of our flight training. We need another place to do this. Will your State take this on? My State said it will.

They came to me, I was chairman of the MILCON, if you wonder how they came to me. They said, Will you take this on at your Springfield F–16 base? We saluted and said, Yes, sir, we will do it.

We put in over $85 million to make this a first-class flight school. We have not even opened the $8.5 million tower yet. We just finished the fire station. We put in a $10 million pad. And what do we find out? We are being realigned. ''Realigned'' means you lose your airplanes; you lose your mission. What are we going to do? Now I find out there is another mission available for flight school, but they want to take it and possibly put it in another place, someplace else, and spend the money again and take these airplanes.

Let me tell you what the Commission's findings were regarding Springfield Air National Guard Base. I am upset because they always did this by the numbers in the past. This was not done by the numbers, and that is why I am so infuriated about what happened, because I do not mind a fair fight.

We thought we had this won, until the Air Force went to the commissioners at the last moment and said, Hey, you have got to change this, because they were going in the right direction the day before. The next day when they got up, I knew we were dead.

Let me read the commission findings: ''The commission found that the Department of Defense recommendation to realign Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport Air Guard Station should be supported even though the military value criteria were flawed and the realignment will be a cost instead of a savings to the Department.''

I mean, give me a break. It is flawed and there is no savings; but, by the way, the mission is going away, and we are not going to train these pilots. This place is training pilots better than they were expected to do and more than they were expected to do, and yet it is being realigned. The airplanes are gone. If we are going to do this this way, this is wrong and we have to stand up and say it is wrong.

I think this happened in more instances than just mine, and that is why I am so upset about the way this was done. It was not done by the numbers; it was done to drive to a number that the Air Force had to get to to save some airplanes like the F–22 and some other things.

So I am just hoping the people will vote in support of the resolution.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support this resolution of disapproval on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's (BRAC) recommendations that are now before Congress. This is not a decision that I have come to lightly. During this latest BRAC round, there were several recommendations made that will benefit the State of Ohio and the 7th Congressional District that I represent. However, I cannot in good conscience accept a process that was fundamentally flawed and very unfair in the decisions made with regard to our country's National Guard and Reserve.

I represent four military bases, including the Springfield Air National Guard Base (ANG),

the Defense Supply Center Columbus (DSCC), Wright Patterson Air Force Base (AFB), and Rickenbacker International Airport. Each of these military installations has an exceptional workforce dedicated to the military missions assigned to them, whether it is logistical support for deployed troops, research and development, or pilot training.

Mr. Chairman, this is the third BRAC round that I have been through, so I understand the importance of community leaders and base officials doing the homework necessary to define the installation's military value, and the potential economic impact this process will have on communities where bases are located. During this latest round, I would argue that Ohio had some of the most hardworking and competent individuals working on behalf of our State's installations.

We testified at hearings in Buffalo and Washington, DC, and briefed BRAC Commissioners and staff during site visits to DSCC in Columbus and to Wright-Patterson. We also worked together in reviewing the numbers used by the Pentagon in making their BRAC recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, I think that I can speak for other delegations when stating that our efforts in getting information from the Air Force during this BRAC round did not start well. When we requested material on how they came to their recommendations, we didn't receive it for weeks. And when we did receive the data, it was inaccurate.

As I've already stated, I was very disappointed by the DOD and BRAC Commission's final recommendations with regard to the Air National Guard. This was especially true regarding their recommendations to redistribute the 178th Fighter Wing F–16 aircraft from the Springfield Air National Guard Base.

I have said all along that if the BRAC process had been fair and done ''by the numbers'', that I would accept the outcome, even if I didn't like it. But unfortunately, this was not the case.

First of all, the BRAC analysis material stated there is only one F–16 Formal Training Unit in the Air National Guard. This is wrong! There are two Air National Guard F–16 Formal Training Units, and one of them is at the Springfield ANG Base.

Second, I was asked several years ago if I would support Springfield taking on this training mission that would require specialized infrastructure to support it. I was the Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee for Military Construction at the time, and I agreed to support the Air Force in this effort. More than $75 million in federal funding has been invested in the Springfield base to support its F–16 training mission. Over the years, we have put in a new ramp to accommodate the plane, a flight simulator, a dining hall, an operations building, and a new control tower that is still under construction. Some of these assets are only now becoming operational.

Third, everyone agrees there are no cost savings achieved by realigning the Springfield ANG Base. In fact, the commission actually concluded in its report that DOD's ''recommendation to realign the Springfield base should be supported even though the military value criteria were flawed and the realignment will be a cost instead of savings to the Pentagon.''

Fourth, the Air Force lacks sufficient training capacity for F–16 pilots. If we further reduce this capacity through this proposed realignment, it even further diminishes this capability, especially since this unit is the highest F–16 pilot production unit in the Guard. The BRAC analysis on Springfield shows that operational personnel will begin to leave the base in 2007, while there are student pilots scheduled for training in 2008.

Mr. Chairman, there is also the issue of homeland security. Like some of my colleagues, I think it is fair for us to consider what these BRAC recommendations will mean for the future of the National Guard in responding to emergency situations. As we saw in the days following the recent hurricanes in the gulf coast region and on 9/11, the Air National Guard was a critical resource in transporting troops, supplies and protection. For example, the Mansfield, Ohio-based 179th Airlift Wing flew over 50 missions in support of Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Yet, homeland security did not appear to be a major part of this BRAC process.

Overall, I was very disappointed in the process by which the Air National Guard decisions were made, particularly the flaws in the Air Force analysis. These flaws run throughout the entire BRAC process, from the consolidation of aircraft models, and the so-called right sizing of operations, to the poor or nonexistent analysis of the cost to replace the people from the locations that are being set aside. This doesn't even consider the recruiting and retention issues that we already face. And, it doesn't speak to the cost of personnel training to recreate this capability, and the loss of experience that will occur by the Air Force plans.

Finally, I was dismayed that there was absolutely no discussion by the BRAC commissioners or staff regarding the National Guard recommendations during the final considerations on August 26th. Until then, there was much talk about the lack of consultation and the quality of the recommendations by the Air Force throughout this BRAC round. There was even the suggestion that the entire set should have been thrown out by the BRAC commission.

On the day the BRAC Commission upheld their recommendation to realign the Springfield Air National Guard Base, I wrote a letter to each BRAC Commissioner to express my disappointment with the way they handled decisions regarding the National Guard. I pointed out that there was no discussion when, by the numbers, we had demonstrated the flaws in the Pentagon's proposal. I also asked for an explanation on how the commissioners arrived at their decision, and I received no answer.

Finally, in early September, I wrote to the President requesting the same information, and for his consideration to send the recommendations impacting the Air National Guard back to the BRAC Commission with instructions to use programmatic changes to reshape our state militia forces. Unfortunately, for the men and women in the Guard and Reserve, I am still waiting for a reply.

As I stated before, opposing the BRAC recommendations was not an easy decision. Overall, Ohio faired well during the commission's final proceedings. Wright-Patterson will keep over 2,000 information and technology jobs that were to be transferred to Hanscom, Massachusetts, and it will also keep a first-class post-graduate program known as the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT). In Columbus, the Defense Supply Center will maintain its 6,000 jobs, and is scheduled to receive many high-paying jobs.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think that in the years to come when the recommendations regarding the Guard and Reserve are set in motion, people will realize that this latest BRAC round was flawed, and consequently the wrong thing to do. It is for these reasons that I will stand here today and support this resolution to overturn the 2005 BRAC recommendations.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, I have come to the same conclusion as the great gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON). I have just probably been at it longer. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the responsibility to provide for the national defense. It does not make us generals; it does not make us admirals. We do not tell admirals how to sink ships; we do not tell generals how to takes hills. We do, hopefully, provide sound business decisions for them.

The whole concept of BRAC is taking that decision-making process away from the people who begged for the job and were given the job by the citizens and delegating it to some other people. I did not run for Congress to delegate my responsibilities. I take them very seriously.

The service Secretaries would come before our committee, for years they have come before our committee and said, We have too many bases. Every single service Secretary. The gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) and I would respond to the service Secretaries, Name one base that you want to close. Just one. The same service Secretaries who said they wanted to cancel the Crusader, who said they wanted to cancel the Arsenal ship, who wanted to cancel the Joint Strike Fighter, the same guys who have no hesitation on canceling things and making tough decisions, never named one base that they wanted to close.

We followed that up with a very simple question: In the three previous rounds of BRAC, can you name one weapons system that you have bought with those savings? Can you name one additional benefit that you have given to the troops? Can you name one good thing that came out of this? Never once could they answer that question.

You see, BRAC saves no money. What people miss in all of this is that when a base is closed, the local communities then come to Congress, as they should, and say, Look, you have just put all my folks out of work. We at least want the property back. And in every instance Congress has given that property back to the locals, so there is no savings of selling off the property.

As a matter of fact, it gets worse, because our Nation has to live by the same laws as everyone else. If an individual pollutes a piece of property, they have to clean it up before they can sell it. To date, our Nation has spent $15 billion cleaning up properties before we gave them away.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) makes an excellent point: every time you lose a base, you lose a capability. The worst of Hurricane Katrina hit my congressional district. I was very fortunate to be friends with Admiral Mullen, the Chief of Naval Operations. I was very fortunate to be friends with General Steven Bloom, the head of the National Guard Bureau. In my frantic calls to them in the aftermath of the storm begging for their help, their first response was, Where can I put my people? Name a barracks, name an airfield, name a place where I can put my people so they can help the people of Mississippi.

Every time you lose a base, you lose a place to put those people in the event weather, whether it is a tsunami in the Pacific, a hurricane in Mississippi, a flood or earthquake on the west coast, a flood in the Midwest, you lose a capability to help the American people.

We are at war. Goodness gracious, we have 140,000 Americans fighting and dying in Iraq. We have another 20,000-plus in Afghanistan. Did anyone see these wars coming? The truth of the matter is, in my time in Congress we have had a war in Panama that no one saw coming, we have had two wars in Iraq that we really did not see coming, we had a war in Bosnia that no one saw coming. So when you close a base, you close it forever and you lose that capability to respond to future contingencies.

Above all, when some new weapons system comes along, you lose a place to deploy it. Right now our Nation is buying 30,000 acres in North Carolina, and some people in North Carolina think it is a great idea and some people think it is a terrible idea. We are spending a heck of a lot of your money buying land in North Carolina so we can build a base to land F–18s, the newest version of the F–18, when they come off the carriers.

Then we have to buy the land and build a runway. And everyone who has served knows it does not end with the runway. You have to have a fire station, barracks for the enlisted, barracks for the single guys, family housing for the married folks, you have to have commissaries, you have to have fun things for the guys to do when they are off duty, because we are trying to attract young people like you to come serve our country. All of these things cost money, and we are going to build all these things in North Carolina at great expense to the public.

With you we already had all those things. We had all those things that we are getting ready to buy and build in North Carolina in Jacksonville, Florida. It was called Cecil Field. It had a 10,000-foot runway and three 8,000-foot runways. It had an excellent quality of life, and it was all paid for by the American taxpayer, and a previous round of BRAC closed that.

So, please, proponents of this, tell me how we are saving the taxpayers money, how we are making the Nation more secure, and, above all, if the service Secretaries cannot name a single base that they think is worthy of closing, why are we going to close so many bases in one fell swoop?

We were elected to follow the Constitution. The Constitution clearly gives Congress the responsibility to provide for the Army and the Navy. Let us do our job and let us not hide behind some commission to do our work for us. I urge Members to vote against the recommendations of this commission.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi for his very articulate statement.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, let me say initially I do not believe in the BRAC. I have opposed every BRAC initially from the very beginning, and I have been here in Congress 18 years.

The reason I do not believe in BRAC was somewhat articulated by the previous speaker. I think it is a abrogation of Congress' responsibility. There is no reason why we cannot make these decisions, and to give these decisions to an independent commission, I think, is just a cop-out on our part. So I want to start out with that.

I also want to say in this particular round in 2005, I strongly disapproved of the BRAC even more so than in the past because we are in a war in Iraq. You do not shut down, in my opinion, military infrastructure at a time of war. I think this BRAC in particular is poorly timed and ill advised.

Now, the 2005 round of BRAC also was done hastily, in my opinion, with very little regard to the actual warfighter. A number of bases with great functional value are being shut down in the name of savings. I do not believe anyone at the Department of Defense or any member of the BRAC Commission actually believes that this round of BRAC will actually save us any money, and I listened to many of the BRAC hearings.

I am also truly disappointed because I believed that the BRAC ultimately would try to be an independent broker and that the commission would review each facility, analyze the data, and come to conclusions based on facts. I do not think that was the case. The opposite was the case. In the case of Fort Monmouth, which is the installation near my district, a lot of the people employed there live in my district. We successfully proved, myself, the two Senators and several other Congressmen, including the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT), we successfully proved to the BRAC Commission, in my opinion, that the Army substantially deviated from six of the eight BRAC criteria. The BRAC actually said that, that the Pentagon deviated from six of the eight BRAC criteria.

But, even so, even though the BRAC was supposedly an independent commission tasked with ensuring that the DOD's recommendations would not hurt the warfighter, even though they admitted there was a serious concern about the warfighter and how in the days of Fort Monmouth the communications and electronics functions crucial to Iraq might be seriously hampered, they still decided to include it on the list.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to my friend from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Look, we are down here on the floor, it is empty. Maybe some folks are listening in their offices. I hope they are. I hope at least some of the staff, some folks may be paying attention.

□ 1230

Our problem here is very, very simple. Over and over again our colleagues will say to us, well, I got out of this okay, or we have resolved that issue. I am one of those folks. I can say that. I have had people come up and say to me, well, why are you bothering? Pearl Harbor made it out of there.

Why was it taken up in the first place? I will tell you why. It is politics. This has nothing to do with whether or not there is some rational process that has been undertaken, and everybody in here knows it. For once, can we not come down on this floor and actually vote the way all of us really understand where our responsibilities are?

Pearl Harbor got brought up for a very simple reason. They were going to close a facility up in Maine, and the people in Maine in their panic said, do not take us, take Pearl Harbor instead. They started comparing some naval apples, some shipyard apples with some shipyard oranges, and they came up with, well, go get Pearl Harbor. It had nothing to do with it. I did not come back and say, no, no, no, not us; go back to Maine, go get them. What kind of a process is that where we try to devour each other? I said, let us keep all of them open. We need every shipyard facility that we can get in this country.

We are going to be going back out to Guam soon because of what is taking place in the Pacific right now, and having to recapitulate everything that got put under the water out there in Guam, billions of dollars is going to have to be put back into Guam in order for us to be able to protect and project our strategic interests in the Pacific.

We are under a review right now in the Armed Services Committee, and we do not even have the courage of our own convictions under our own jurisdictions in our committees.

It is not that I am right or Mr. LAHOOD is right or Mr. HOBSON is wrong or right, or Mr. TAYLOR. That is not the issue. The issue is are we meeting our responsibilities here? We are

constantly admonished that no sacrifice is too great. We are constantly admonished that we have to honor the sacrifices that are being made by our fighting men and women all over the world right now. Yet we cringe from our own responsibilities as Members of Congress to meet those responsibilities and obligations with regard to bases.

Now, I have been told over and over again, well, that is all well and good, but people are going to come down here, and you are going to lose anyway. It happens occasionally some people come down and say, you know, I was going to vote the other way. Let us, for once, come down here, and I make this appeal out there to anybody who is thinking about coming to the floor. Vote for Mr. LAHOOD's recommendation.

We are not down here just to hear ourselves. When you come over here, search your conscience, and, for once, let us live up to what people expect of us in this Congress. For once let us not fulfill some stereotype that we are just going to roll over because we managed to make it out the door. That is not what we are here for.

If this is just a job to you, then do not run again. This is a calling. This is a vocation. It is supposed to be. That is the way I feel about it, and I know that is the way most Members feel about it. They want to be able to look in the mirror at night and recognize somebody with a little bit of integrity and walk into their homes justified.

If we are going to justify our job, everybody knows in their heart that we should not be voting for this, regardless of our good friends being on it, like Mr. Hansen and Mr. Bilbray, for example, who are colleagues and personal friends to many of us here. It is not a question of whether they did their job or did not do their job; it is whether we are doing our job, and we are meeting our obligations.

So I appeal to everybody on their way over here. Let us vote for RAY LAHOOD's resolution, and let us do the right thing by ourselves and the Nation.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the resolution and join the growing chorus of the Members of Congress who are coming down to the floor today disappointed in the recommendations of the Base Realignment Closure Commission.

I cannot understand why, in a time that we are fighting a global war on terror, a war where we are actively engaged on two fronts and obligated to also increase domestic defense against terrorism here at home, the Department of Defense has suggested, in fact recommended, that we close bases across the Nation.

More troubling is the fact that the Department of Defense has moved ahead in this BRAC round by applying a Cold War model to a post-Cold War security environment. Remember, the Department of Homeland Security has not been consulted, Mr. Chairman, on the impact these base closures pose to our domestic security.

Mr. Chairman, the world has changed enormously since the last BRAC round. Our threats are not static as they once were. Today we face an asymmetric threat from an enemy that knows no borders nor rules of warfare. The threat of international terrorism requires us to have the best tools available to respond to threats on our allies, our interests, and our homeland at a moment's notice, and I am afraid that the current BRAC recommendations hamper our ability to do so.

Take, for instance, the recommendation that the largest joint reserve base on the east coast should be closed. The Willow Grove Joint Reserve Base directly borders my district in Pennsylvania. Hundreds of my constituents rely on that base for their National Guard training. Thousands of my constituents rely on the customer traffic the servicemen and women stationed at Willow Grove provide for their local businesses that surround the base. And, on a larger scale, both my constituents and Americans from New York to Baltimore benefit from the base's protection. Willow Grove's strategic position allows its air assets to protect the ports of Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore. It serves as a FEMA alternative site, providing a staging ground so Federal resources can be distributed in the event of a natural disaster or a terrorist attack.

Militarily the base has a great track record of achievement by training combined arms jointly for over a decade, practically setting the standard for interoperability between branches of the armed services.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I believe I have the right to close. I have no other speakers, and if these gentlemen are ready, when they finish, I will close.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). The Chair will recognize for closing speeches in reverse order of opening. It will be the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON).

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself whatever time I have remaining.

Mr. Chairman, let me just pick up on a couple of the people that have spoken. I want to pick up on a point that Mr. DELAY made. He has an Air Guard unit returning to Ellington Air Force Base to a slap in the face, to essentially being told, you have done great work, thanks for what you did in Iraq; oh, by the way, we are closing your base. Now, what kind of a message is that? That was my point earlier on in my opening statement. We owe it to the people.

I ask Members to consider this: To the people who are doing the hard work in Iraq, the people that did the hard work in Afghanistan, this is not the way to say to them, job well done. It is not the way to say to them, you did a great job in standing up for democracy in Afghanistan and doing the hard work in Iraq. And, oh, by the way, there is no base to come back to, because your unit is being eliminated. Is that the message we want to send to the people who do the hard work, to the 130,000, 140,000 people now serving in Iraq, the citizen soldiers that have left their jobs and their families and left their communities? I do not think so.

The point that Mr. TAYLOR made, why not give Congress the responsibility, the Armed Services Committee the responsibility; why lay it off on somebody else? We should not be doing that. This is our responsibility. That is why we are elected, to make these decisions.

The report is flawed. You can say all you want about the great work that was done. I know people that serve on the base closing commission, and I know they spend a lot of time, but this work is flawed. This is a flawed report. This is our opportunity in the House to speak up and speak out. The Defense Department has had their say. The President had his say. The BRAC Commission had their say. Now it is the House's turn to say to the hard-working citizen soldiers, we appreciate your work, we are going to stand with you, we are going to allow these bases to remain open, we are going to vote for the resolution that says that this BRAC should not stand, that these recommendations should not stand. That is what the House should be saying today. I hope the majority of Members will do that.

I mentioned earlier, there is a law on the books, passed by Congress, that says that you cannot close air and Guard bases unless you get the authority from the Governors. We even had a report from one of the people that was working for BRAC that this law has standing. The BRAC ignored this. The Defense Department has ignored us on this. We should not be doing this. This is the wrong message. This is the wrong idea to send to our country, to send to the people who are doing the work and continue to do the work.

As I said earlier, I have supported the President and this administration and the Secretary of Defense, who is a friend of mine from Illinois, in everything they have wanted to do in Afghanistan and Iraq. I know a lot of Members have. The majority of the membership of this House has. Now we ought to say to them, we do not agree with your recommendations. We do not agree that we should be realigning

bases, turning people away, turning out bases and shutting down bases where the good work has been done.

So based on that argument, based on the flawed BRAC report, based on a law that is on the books, a Federal law that says you cannot close these air and Guard bases without the authority of the Governor, I ask Members to speak up today, to be a voice for the people, to be a voice for the military, to be a voice that says, this BRAC is not right, and I urge Members to vote for the resolution.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remaining time.

Several Members have spoken eloquently about the fact that this is our job. Mr. TAYLOR did an excellent job of that. Mr. ABERCROMBIE did an excellent job of that, that we ought to be making these decisions, that we should not turn it over to a commission. I would agree with that wholeheartedly, except this is a job that we simply cannot seem to do.

We did not close a major base in this country from the 1970s until the BRAC process began. I did not like supporting the BRAC process when the BRAC process was first introduced, but I saw it as the only way that we could ever deal with the question of excess inventory.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HEFLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I might point out to the gentleman that we in Congress did pass the basic BRAC law which we are following today.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HEFLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind the gentleman that this Congress closed the naval station at Roosevelt Roads without a BRAC.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, we did, following the introduction of the BRAC process, but we did close that. But we basically do not have the power to do that, because if I have the power to close Mr. SKELTON's base, he might vote to close my base, and we keep going around the room like that, and we are unable to do it.

So the BRAC process has worked for better or for worse. I see both sides of it. I chaired a committee that oversees the BRAC process. I do not want any more BRAC processes like this. But I would remind my colleagues again that if we vote for this resolution, and this resolution passes today, and we turn down this BRAC process, we will be back here in this room a year from now or 2 years from now, probably more like a year from now, we will be back in this room dealing with another BRAC process, and we will have the same arguments as we are having here today.

Now, it may be different people. Maybe some of the people that are dissatisfied today will be satisfied at the next round, but we would all have to go through this again next year or the next. And we would, all of our communities that have any base connected to them would have to go through this again. I am not sure we would get any better results, no matter what process we use, than we have today. Some would be happy, some would be unhappy, some would complain, some would want it to go just like it is. I think we would end up with the same kinds of results as we have today.

So while I agree that this is not a perfect process, I do not think we want to go through it again next year.

I would ask each of my colleagues to vote against this resolution, and let us proceed to make the best we possibly can out of this for the defense of this country.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chairman, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I reluctantly support the BRAC recommendations today, and oppose this motion of disapproval pending before the House.

I support these recommendations because I believe that the goals of BRAC are worthy—to maximize warfighting capability and efficiency for both traditional warfighting and counterterrorist efforts. An integrated military force able to communicate and coordinate effectively in response to conflict remains crucial to national security and the war on terrorism.

I am concerned by technical errors and the overall process used by the Pentagon and the Base Realignment and Closure—BRAC—Commission to reach the recommendations before us this evening, and it is my hope that in the future, significant improvements will be made on the current model when realignment and closure decisions are made.

However, within the current model, there are some successes to which we can point. For instance, the Pentagon and the BRAC Commission rightly highlighted the key role that Hanscom Air Force Base, located in my congressional district, plays in our national security efforts.

The process reaffirmed Hanscom's role as the military's pre-eminent development center for communication and intelligence technologies. Hanscom will clearly play a central role as we transform our military in the coming decades.

In its decisions on Hanscom, the BRAC process recognized that the success or failure of a base in fulfilling its mission relies on the availability of skilled and experienced personnel and the connections that develop in intellectual clusters.

Unfortunately, the Commission wrongly decided to move an estimated 200 jobs from Hanscom's Air Force Research Lab—AFRL—Space and Sensors Directorates. Those functions are best left at Hanscom to maintain existing synergies and human capital.

When the BRAC Commission held their New England Regional Hearing in Boston on July 6, I submitted testimony to the commission arguing that the decision to realign the AFRL at Hanscom was inconsistent with other aspects of the Pentagon's analysis of Hanscom, and could disrupt key programs operating there. I am deeply disappointed by the commission's decision to move these Directorates from their home at Hanscom.

I am concerned that the recommendation to realign the AFRL did not appropriately value the highly skilled workforce currently at these facilities, and that the expertise of many of these employees will be lost as the recommendations are implemented. The relocation of AFRL's Sensors and Space Vehicles Directorates will result in significant costs with few gains.

While I strongly protest this decision, I am pleased that overall, the commission's recommendations on Hanscom reaffirmed the value of the regional human capital capabilities in science and technology—and I am encouraged by the commission's indication that the Air Force will look to expand the mission at Hanscom outside of the BRAC process. I look forward to working with the Air Force as this process takes shape.

With respect to the overall BRAC process, I am concerned by flaws in the current model that led to a number of errors. For instance, questions remain unanswered about the Pentagon's failure to consult with State governors, State adjutants general, and the Department of Homeland Security on decisions related to the National Guard and key homeland security functions located outside the Pentagon's bureaucracy. These questions resulted in lawsuits against the Pentagon and the BRAC Commission by a number of States, including my home State of Massachusetts.

Additionally, a lack of organization was evident during the commission's consideration of the possible expansion of Hanscom, as well as the commission's overall recommendations related to Otis Air Force Base at Cape Cod.

While I support the 2005 BRAC recommendations, I am deeply concerned that these types of errors set a bad precedent for future BRAC rounds. The Pentagon must ensure that the Department of Homeland Security and other relevant stakeholders are appropriately included in their process, and that our Nation's homeland security needs are fully evaluated.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Chairman, today, the House will likely vote not to reject the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, moving the BRAC process one step closer to an end. This has been a very difficult BRAC round for the State of Maine. When the list came out 5 months ago, all of Maine's three facilities were in great jeopardy, and few believed that we had a chance of saving any of them. But the entire delegation, the governor, and the communities came together and presented the best possible arguments in all three cases, and as a result, Maine did better than anyone thought we could. We saved Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and in a victory that would have been unthinkable only a few months before, we actually grew DFAS Limestone, bringing jobs to an area that desperately needs them. These two actions represent tremendous victories for the people of Maine.

I strongly disagree with the recommendation to close Naval Air Station Brunswick. It was the wrong decision and I have fought it every step of the way together with the whole Maine delegation.

Today's vote is difficult. I deeply believe that Naval Air Station Brunswick should not be closed. Yet, when this process began, Maine stood to loose everything, and now we have

saved and expanded two of the three endangered facilities. The likely alternatives for the State were far worse. Indeed, if this resolution were to pass today and the BRAC process were to be reopened from scratch, there would be no guarantee of saving Brunswick, but Portsmouth could be closed and Limestone with its planned increase in jobs could be lost. That is why I am going to vote against the resolution to disapprove the BRAC list.

As we approach the end of this very difficult BRAC round, it is important that we remain focused on promoting the best interests of the entire State and that we continue to work as one Maine. I will do whatever I can to make sure that we build upon the successes of saving Portsmouth and growing DFAS Limestone, and that we make the best of a difficult situation by enabling the Brunswick community to build a bright future.

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, the base realignment process is designed to provide a more efficient and effective military structure. But, BRAC 2005 failed to meet these goals and that is why I will vote against implementing the recommendations of the Department of Defense and the Base Realignment Commission.

The base realignment recommendations fall short because they eliminate military resources and installations without producing meaningful cost-savings. And, the base realignment recommendations fall short because they call for the closure of Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, a military installation that plays a vital role in our Nation's security.

Mr. Chairman, at a time when we are fighting a global war on terror and facing new and very real threats, the Nation must be fully prepared. This BRAC round does not live up to the original goals of the process and, therefore, it should be rejected.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Chairman, I stand in support of House Joint Resolution 65, disapproving the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

This will be my first vote against a BRAC list, and it is not a vote I take lightly. I support the BRAC process as a whole as a reasonable and apolitical method for evaluating our Nation's defense infrastructure needs, and recognize the necessity of this first BRAC round in a decade. But while I salute the hard work of the BRAC Commission members in their deliberations and recognize the difficulty of their task, this BRAC round took place in the context of flawed methodology as regarded Air National Guard bases.

It was my expectation that the Department of Defense would solicit input from all relevant sources in evaluating our Air National Guard requirements—most importantly, the adjutant general of each State. But at no time in the Pentagon's development of its Air Force BRAC recommendations did it ask the Adjutant General of Ohio or any of the other 53 adjutants general for input. I find this shocking, considering that the Army consulted the adjutants general when crafting its recommendations—and considering that 37 of the 42 Air Force BRAC proposals involved Air National Guard units.

For the past 24 years, I have had the privilege of representing the guardsmen of one of those units: the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard, located at Mansfield Lahm Airport. The 179th has been a vital part of Mansfield and Richland County since 1948, with an annual economic impact of roughly $70 million. Members of the airlift wing have served more than 195,000 days just since 9/11 in support of homeland defense and the global war on terror.

More recently, the guardsmen of the 179th have flown sorties to the gulf coast region, delivering much-needed supplies and transporting hundreds of troops to assist those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Relief missions such as this are nothing new for the men and women of the 179th, who have answered the call during past hurricane relief missions in Florida and other States, and have assisted with vital defense operations in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and elsewhere.

I was disappointed, therefore, at the inclusion of the 179th on the Pentagon's proposed closure list in May. As I said in a letter to President Bush last month in support of the 179th, the unit has always stood ready to accept any flying assignment, and represents a wealth of expertise and professionalism that Ohio and the Nation can ill afford to lose.

Contrary to national trends, the 179th has consistently excelled in recruiting and retention, currently standing at 105 percent of assigned strength. Mansfield draws from a rich recruiting base, boasting the best personnel strength figures of any Air National Guard C–130 unit. The men and women of the 179th are highly experienced, with an average of more than 12 years of service; Mansfield's aircrews have an average of 16 years of military aviation experience. In just the last few years, all Mansfield aircrew members have flown combat sorties in the Middle East and Asia, and have received 116 air medals for their bravery, courage, and skill.

In its final deliberations, the BRAC Commission found that closing Mansfield was ''not supportable'' and recommended instead that a ''contiguous enclave'' be established at Mansfield Lahm. The commission further acknowledged that the Air Force did not adequately consult with governors and State adjutants general with respect to its Air Guard recommendations. Had there been consultation, better decisions could have been made about Air Guard infrastructure in view of our national defense and homeland security needs.

In short, the Air Force would have done well to follow the Army's BRAC model, which stood as an example of good consultation among parties. When the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center—located in Lima in my congressional district—was placed on the BRAC list with a recommendation to reduce manufacturing space by 27 percent, top Army officials working on the BRAC staff made themselves available to meet with representatives of JSMC and the community. The JSMC delegation explained that such a reduction would impede operations at the plant, resulting in a higher cost to the government for the weapons systems the plant produces. As a result of these discussions, the BRAC staff recommended that the commission remove the JSMC proposal from its final list, which it did. The Army's deliberations on JSMC were an ideal example of how the BRAC process works well: when information is shared and all relevant parties are consulted.

Even with the commission's decision to reverse the JSMC proposal—and even with the partial reversal of the Mansfield decision and the encouraging possibilities for obtaining a new mission for the more than 1,000 guardsmen of the 179th—I will vote for this resolution of disapproval. By statute, the purpose of BRAC is to reduce excess infrastructure. The current BRAC round, though, is being used to implement operational policies and transfer Mansfield's C–130s from the Guard to the Active and Reserve Forces. Such complex issues should not be handled within the BRAC procedure.

Although I strongly oppose the transfer of Mansfield's planes, I welcome the opportunity to work with the Department of Defense and State officials to obtain a new mission for Mansfield, should the BRAC recommendations be upheld. In just the last 8 years, more than $20 million has been invested in the 179th's facilities at Mansfield Lahm. Thanks to the efforts of Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid and other local officials, the city has made 163 acres adjacent to the airport available for Guard expansion or joint service activities. This significant investment and possibility for expansion should make Mansfield an even more attractive site for locating a new air-based mission.

Nonetheless, given Mansfield's solid track record as a C–130 unit and its many contributions to our Nation and world, I oppose the transfer of its planes. At a time when our troops are already stressed by operational tempos, and when our national recruiting and retention rates are reaching record lows, I fear any disruption to our well-equipped and well-manned Guard units. Our planes are only as good as the people who maintain and fly them, and our country cannot afford to lose their skills.

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.J. Res. 65, a resolution disapproving the recommendations of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

It is clear that we have too much military infrastructure in this country, whose operations and maintenance compete for scarce resources needed by our warfighter and modernization efforts. This BRAC process has become the most effective way to rid the military of installations that provide minimal military value.

I am pleased that the commission recognized the importance of keeping the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group—OSSG—at Maxwell-Gunter AFB in Montgomery, Alabama. After an extensive review, the BRAC commissioners did not adopt the Department of Defense's recommendation to realign the OSSG and its 1,251 civilian and military jobs from Maxwell-Gunter AFB to Hanscom AFB.

The BRAC decision was due in large part to the world-class combat operational support provided by the OSSG to Air Force bases and DOD agencies around the world from Montgomery for more than 30 years. It did not need to be moved in order to continue to perform this critical national security mission. The OSSG is the only organization with experience fielding systems across the entire Air Force and DOD. Moreover, Gunter is home to one of four major Defense Information Systems Agency—DISA—nodes, which provide the backbone on which Air Force Systems run. The DISA presence, along with the OSSG, enables testing of enterprise-wide combat support software applications in an operational environment. With its extensive background, experience, and expertise, this organization is truly a one of a kind national resource and belongs in Montgomery.

While I intend to vote for the implementation of the commission's recommendations, I remain very troubled by some of the things the commission did not do. Specifically, I have trouble seeing the logic in overturning DOD's recommendation to move the Aviation Logistics School to Fort Rucker. I am disappointed that the commission failed to see the significance of co-locating the Aviation Logistics School with the aviation pilot training under one roof at Fort Rucker. This move would have consolidated Army Aviation training and doctrine development at Fort Rucker. I still hold the belief that consolidating aviation logistics training with the Aviation Center and School will foster consistency, standardization, and training proficiency. As the premier rotary wing aviation training center in the United States, this move would have completed the formation of the Army's decision to create an aviation branch in 1983. The benefit of being able to train the entire flight crew, from the maintainers to the pilots, is quite significant. A flight crew who must go to war as a team, should train as a team.

A second notable absence from the BRAC recommendations is consolidation of rotary wing pilot training at Fort Rucker. Although DOD did not make this recommendation, I believe a thorough review of the facts would have led the commission to include this in its final list. Currently, both the Army and Air Force conduct their rotary wing pilot training at Fort Rucker, which has sufficient capability to support Navy initial rotary wing pilot training as well.

Numerous reviews conducted by DOD and the GAD dating back to 1974 have been made regarding the relocation of this Navy mission. In addition, when Colin Powell was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he testified before the House Armed Services Committee that he supported this consolidation at Fort Rucker. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of the reviews have called for the Navy to move their operation to Fort Rucker for a number of reasons. Past studies have indicated that tens of millions of dollars per year could be saved by going through with this consolidation. Unit costs would be reduced for both aircraft maintenance and logistics. Additionally, both the Army and the Navy use the same training helicopter which would allow for further savings by using the Army's existing instructor pilots. This consolidation will also advance a key component of DoD's way ahead, jointness.

Finally, I was troubled to see that the commission supported the DOD recommendation to move the Aviation Technical Test Center—ATTC—to Redstone Arsenal. This issue is very close to me personally as I have been intimately involved with it for over 10 years. In the mid–90s, there was an effort made within the Pentagon to move the ATTC out of Fort Rucker. As is the case now, I was very disturbed by this, and began to investigate in an effort to determine if this would be best for the Army, highlighted by a personal meeting with the then-Secretary of the Army, Togo West. This culminated when my amendment was included in the House version of Fiscal Year 1996 National Defense Authorization Act—H.R. 1530—which blocked the Army's proposal to relocate the ATTC until an outside independent study of the proposal could be completed. After the Army reviewed this further, not only did the ATTC stay at Fort Rucker, but the Airworthiness Qualification Test Directorate was moved from Edwards AFB to Fort Rucker as well. I believe the arguments presented then still have substantial merit today.

At Fort Rucker, the ATTC is able to have their fleet of approximately 40 test aircraft maintained by the large maintenance and logistics operation that supports the training mission on post. A move to Redstone disregards these significant costs of keeping the test fleet flying. The vast pool of pilots and aircraft from the Aviation Center also facilitates the ATTC's ability to realize a greater return on the testing dollar invested.

Another problem with this recommendation revolves around airspace. As the home of Army Aviation, Fort Rucker is blessed with over 32,000 square miles of airspace to conduct its mission. This irreplaceable natural asset cannot be duplicated in Huntsville. A potential move also undermines the synergies that currently exist between the schoolhouse and the experimental pilots. Finally, with Fort Rucker being the Army proponent for unmanned aerial vehicles—UAVs, it is crucial that the ATTC be able to leverage the expertise associated with this proponency to conduct its tests on UAVs.

While I do not agree with all of the recommendations included in the commission's report, I do recognize that the BRAC process must go forward. At present, DOD has excess infrastructure which needs to be realigned or closed in order to achieve the billions of savings which will result from the implementation of these recommendations. As costs of weapons systems crucial to winning the war on terror continue to rise, it is important that we explore all avenues in order to find the money necessary to give the warfighter everything he or she needs to complete their mission. In conclusion, I would like to thank all of the commissioners and their staffs for their tireless efforts on one of the most thankless jobs in government. I urge a no vote on the resolution and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 65, to disapprove the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission—BRAC.

Closing surplus military infrastructure makes sense, but only if it is done in a proper strategic context and through a rational, deliberative, and fair process. The 2005 base closure round does not meet these tests.

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld proposed this BRAC in 2001, before September 11 and our occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. The world changed, but the Defense Department's BRAC process did not.

I voted against this BRAC in 2001, on the grounds that it presumptively put infrastructure decisions before force structure decisions. At the time, I said that with "uncertainty about our future military needs in the new security environment, I believe that this is not the right time to add a new layer of uncertainty to our military communities in Maine by approving a new base closure round."

My view has been validated by the statements of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission itself. In its final report, the commission faulted the Department of Defense—DOD—for making infrastructure decisions prior to conducting a "comprehensive review of the underlying strategic issues that is to be set forth in the [2006] Quadrennial Defense Review [which] may have better informed and assisted the Commission in making its final recommendations."

The commission also criticized DOD for failing to provide necessary source data on its proposals for as long as a month after the DOD list was submitted. This delay hampered the ability of the commission to do proper analysis and hamstrung communities trying to defend their bases.

My view has been validated by the Overseas Basing Commission, which found that the "massive realignment of forces requires that the pace of events be slowed and reordered." It faulted the administration's plans to bring 70,000 troops home from overseas without a full analysis of the infrastructure to accommodate them.

My view has been validated by a recent revelation by BRAC Commissioner Phillip Coyle that information gathered to support some of DOD's BRAC recommendations were based largely on Google searches. The commission observed that several DOD plans to consolidate multiple military facilities were based not on in-depth analytic work but on Internet search engine queries used only to match facility names and functions.

Lastly, my view has been validated by the questions my constituents repeatedly asked me:

Why are we closing military installations when we are at war?

Why are we building new bases in Iraq while closing them in America?

Will our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan have the right facilities to come home to?

I don't have good answers to those questions, but neither does the Pentagon.

By pushing BRAC at the wrong time, our Nation risks losing key assets that can never be reconstituted. We jeopardize our security if we close infrastructure before we first come to consensus on an overall defense and homeland security strategy.

The BRAC Commission's decision to remove several major bases from DOD's list demonstrates that the Pentagon put the cart before the horse. For example, the commission voted to keep open the submarine base at New London, CT, and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, in my district. The commission expressed serious doubts about DOD's force structure plan and the submarine force's ability to confront uncertain future threats.

In addition, I object to this BRAC list due to the inexplicable and unwise closure of the Brunswick Naval Air Station—NASB. This facility is the last remaining fully operational military airfield in the northeast. Its loss will hamper our capability to perform homeland defense and maritime patrol missions in the region, leaving a vulnerable flank for the entire Nation.

NASB was the only major base closed by the commission that was not recommended for closure by DOD. I believe the commission failed to adequately justify its decision that the base was "not needed." The commission completely ignored the combined military value judgment of combatant commanders that Brunswick is a vital strategic asset. It failed to explain how, or at what monetary or mission cost, the military could perform essential maritime patrol missions in the northeast without Brunswick.

In closing NASB, the commission appeared to deviate from its own charter. It justified closing the base merely in order to ''reduce excess capacity and result in significant savings,'' despite its own directive to seek a balance between the goals of realizing savings and rationalizing our military infrastructure to meet the needs of future missions.

I was pleased that the commission listened to the arguments put forth to them and voted to reject the closure of two facilities in Maine: the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Limestone, where the commission also agreed to double the number of jobs. Despite these positive outcomes, however, the unjustified closure of Brunswick affirms my opposition to this BRAC list, as well as the underlying fact that this was the wrong time in our Nation's history for this BRAC.

The fundamental purpose of BRAC is to save money. Let's put its ''savings'' in perspective. The 20-year savings (approximately $800 million) from the closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station is the equivalent to half a week of operations in Iraq. The entire projected 20-year savings from the BRAC list—$36 billion—are exhausted by just 6 months in Iraq. The entire savings is also merely half that of the President's proposed tax cuts this year—$70 billion, and minuscule compared to the $4 trillion in Federal revenue losses from upper-income tax breaks passed since 2001.

The BRAC process is also a huge unfunded mandate on communities. I commend my congressional colleagues from Maine and New Hampshire, Governors John Baldacci and John Lynch, the employees, unions, management, local government officials, task force members and volunteers for the long hours devoted to defending Maine's defense facilities. While it was a worthy cause, I regret that we were forced to spend so much time on BRAC, rather than on new initiatives to improve our communities. The lost human productivity caused by BRAC, not only for communities but on DOD personnel as well, is something we must calculate if we ever debate a future BRAC round.

Again, I urge passage of H.J. Res. 65 to reject this BRAC list. In a time of uncertainty, we risk losing national assets we can never recover.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I stand in opposition today to H.J. Res. 65, a resolution to disapprove the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. I oppose this resolution not because I support this BRAC round and the closure and realignment of these bases, but because the Department of Defense should not be authorized to execute another one anytime soon. A no vote on this resolution will spare the Armed Forces, our defense budget and our base communities the unnecessary stress of another BRAC round if the current recommendations are approved.

I opposed this BRAC round from the start for several reasons.

First and foremost, Mr. Chairman, were—and remain—a nation at war. We have troops abroad fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan and globally as part of a broader war on terrorism. I argued that we need to focus all of our energy on supporting those troops in the field. We should not be distracted with the complicated burden of realigning our whole military base structure.

In October of 2003, I went to Iraq and learned that the troops desperately needed armor on their vehicles. In November of 2003 the Secretary of the Army said that getting armor into the field was a ''top priority''. And yet today there are still tens of thousands of vehicles that are still not armored.

Just last week the Armed Services Committee held a hearing on the issue. Chairman Hunter discovered that the Army was sitting on hundreds of armored humvees in Texas and Kuwait. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if Congress would have unearthed this hidden problem earlier had it not been faced with the time-consuming BRAC process.

I opposed BRAC because we need to recapitalize our aging defense platforms and our shrinking fleets. Our Armed Forces have been on a strict diet because of a procurement holiday that has been in effect since the end of the Cold war.

Mr. Chairman, the average age of an Air Force bombers is over 30 years old. The average pilot is younger than his aircraft. Yet there are planned procurement cuts to the F–22 program. We have been living on the Reagan buildup of the 1980s, but those systems are all nearing retirement. What's left from the 80s is old and undependable. This threatens our military readiness and the safety of our service members.

Mr. Chairman, this year the Navy planned on building only four ships—the same as Canada and less than most of our European allies. If we stay on this track, our fleet will shrink from a little under 300 to just 120. China is on no such diet. Its shipbuilding rates are so high that its fleet win overtake ours by about 2015. By that time, China will have twice as many submarines as the U.S.

I also opposed BRAC because our strategic environment remains in flux. The threats from North Korea, China and Iran are rising while we are still engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan. We benefited from neither the Quadrennial Defense Review nor the report of the Overseas Basing Commission because they were not yet delivered. How could we know, what our Nation's future basing requirements will be? We couldn't!

I opposed BRAC because DOD still maintained dozens of bases that were slated for closure that remain open. How could we target another 100 bases when we had a hundred waiting on death row? Closing bases costs billions of dollars in environmental clean up costs. The Department of Defense cannot dispose of this property until it is clean. But the investment of these ''clean-up'' dollars takes dollars away from our troops in the field during war.

I opposed this BRAC round because we have hundreds of thousands of troops in the Middle East, Europe and Korea that will hopefully return home soon.

Congress authorized the BRAC round anyway. The Department of Defense relatively little time to develop a set of recommendations for the President. Not surprisingly, some mistakes were made. The biggest mistake was the recommendation to close Naval Submarine Base New London, the world's greatest center of excellence for undersea warfare. My good friend, the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, IKE SKELTON, noted that the BRAC round so suffered from secondary agendas designed to achieve policy outcomes under cover of base closure and realignment. I agree with him.

The BRAC Commission had even less time than the Pentagon, but was ultimately able to fix the largest mistakes. Chairman Anthony Principi's commission took New London and other bases off of the list after looking at the big picture. They looked at the overall effects on the Nation and the individual services. They listened to the arguments of outside experts. They considered the advice of key defense industry partners, senior retired officers, Members of Congress, and even a former U.S. president. In the end the BRAC Commission gave the President and Congress a good product given the circumstances.

So, Mr. Chairman, I will vote no on the resolution because the BRAC solution before us is the best of a bad situation. It would have been better never to have attempted this round of base closures. Our military is no better for it, and our Nation is no safer. Nevertheless, a vote for yes is a vote for another, painful and counterproductive BRAC round that will drain resources and time from the critical tasks at hand.

Mr. Chairman, our Nation faces great national security challenges right now. For this reason, I will vote to put BRAC behind us today and for the foreseeable future.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant support of the resolution to reject the recommendations of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

I support the BRAC process and believe that over the years it has led to the orderly reorganization of our Nation's defense infrastructure.

I believe the Pentagon and the BRAC Commission made a good-faith effort to carefully examine every base.

Nonetheless, I continue to believe the Commission made a terribly shortsighted decision when it voted to uphold some of the Pentagon's recommendations for Naval Base Ventura County.

I am particularly disappointed the Commission voted to move some of the RDT&E missions away from the base.

In my view, the Commission ignored a number of important factors.

First, the Commission's vote went against the recommendation of its professional staff.

The staff correctly recognized that Naval Base Ventura County has significant military value, and its missions contribute to the readiness of our war fighter.

Second, relocating the vital functions performed by the personnel at the base will have lasting consequences for our national security.

The activities conducted at this site for the Navy, Air Force, Missile Defense Agency, and others cannot be replicated anywhere else in the Nation.

Moreover, the base's sea range is linked with other inland ranges in California—providing an unmatched capability to the Defense Department.

The realignment will diminish these existing operational capabilities and efficiencies and negatively impact the ability of our fighting men and women to get their jobs done.

The effect of this would be immediately felt in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Finally, realigning the base's missions will waste, not save, taxpayer dollars.

We cannot afford to spend a lot of money to move missions and personnel when there's no long-term savings involved.

Especially now that we're looking at spending more than $200 billion to help rebuild the

Gulf Coast areas devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Mr. Chairman, the BRAC process must be logical and fair. I do not believe this round of closures met those criteria.

I continue to strongly believe the missions at Naval Base Ventura County are a critical element of our national security system and an important asset to our local community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the resolution of disapproval.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the bill before us to reject the BRAC recommendations; and I thank the gentleman from Illinois for his work on this bill.

While this process has proceeded during a global war, many of us in Congress—including me—have taken issue with the timing. Doing this during a war and before we establish our global military footprint through the Quadrennial Defense Review sends the wrong signal to our allies and to the soldiers and families who may depend on services at the bases we are closing.

I have fought this from the get-go. The BRAC list hit my South Texas district hard with the closure of Naval Station Ingleside in San Patricio County. It was a base into which the taxpayers of Nueces County and the State of Texas plowed $50 million to assist the Navy in bringing the base there.

The main thing that worries those of us in South Texas—and elsewhere along the Gulf Coast—is that after BRAC the Gulf of Mexico will be a less safe place for all of us. We have been concerned over the past couple of years about the illegal immigrants known as OTMs—other than Mexicans—that are routinely released by law enforcement into the U.S. population. Many law enforcement officers believe we have—or could be—releasing potential terrorists who will do us great harm.

Our nation's refining capability and trading lanes run through the Gulf of Mexico. For these reasons—and many more—we must have a Navy presence in the Gulf. After BRAC, there will not be a single surface Navy base in the entire Gulf. The Gulf holds the nation's bread basket and is the primary provider of petrochemicals and refined products to power the nation's cars, heaters, and other machines we depend upon hourly in our daily lives.

Those are my primary concerns. Now, the other concerns I have deal primarily with how the South Texas community I represent will recover from the economic devastation that is part of a base closure in local communities. As BRAC Chairman Principi said in an early statement, this will be a tsunami in South Texas.

So if the House chooses to support the BRAC list today, we will bear no ill will . . . and we will work very hard to make the transition as painless as possible.

While our community is less concerned about the disposition of the property itself—it should revert to the local port—we believe the local community should not have to pay a $200 million cost to retain the base. We are increasingly concerned about the enormous task before us in the coming years: how to deal with depressed property values after the base is to close . . . how to retrain the area workforce . . . and how our schools and housing market can recoup the losses we will most certainly feel in the coming years.

That will be the challenge before us in South Texas for probably the coming decade if the House today fails to adopt my colleague's bill to disapprove the BRAC recommendations.

Mr. FRELINGHUSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 65—a resolution disapproving the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission as approved by the President of the United States.

In total, the BRAC Commission recommended, and the President endorsed, the closure of 22 major military bases and the realignment of 33 others.

While I am deeply concerned about the recommendation to close the Army's Fort Monmouth, I note with pride the strong vote of confidence in the past, present, and future contributions to our warfighters of Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County, New Jersey.

With the support of the President, the Department of Defense and the BRAC Commission, Picatinny Arsenal will be the 'joint center of excellence' for guns and ammunition and the military's unparalleled leader for producing the latest and most advanced weaponry for our warfighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I strongly support this recommendation. It is well-founded on the facts and advances the DoD's "transformation."

Picatinny Arsenal is already home to: the "Single Manager for Conventional Ammunition for DoD"—PEO Ampmo; an armament engineering organization which provides fully integrated life cycle systems engineering for weapons and munitions; and 70 unique mission facilities with 16 state-of-the-art laboratories staffed by an adaptable, highly specialized workforce;

The DoD BRAC analysis found Picatinny to be the "center-of-mass" for DoD's guns and ammunition (research, development and acquisition.) It has a workload in this area more than an order of magnitude greater than any other DoD facility. It has the greatest concentration of military value in guns and ammunition (research, development and acquisition.)

Mr. Chairman, this BRAC Commission recommendation is transformational. It builds on the joint single manager for conventional ammo to create a robust guns and ammunition "joint center." It will provide for greater synergy and more efficient operations, all to benefit the warfighter—the young men and women who are protecting us at home and overseas. .

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the RECORD important correspondence between the Chairman of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, the Honorable Anthony Principi, and the Honorable Michael W. Wynne, Chairman of the Infrastructure Steering Committee of the U.S. Department of Defense.

I urge defeat of the resolution.

DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE
AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION,
Arlington, VA, September 8, 2005.

Hon. MICHAEL W. WYNNE,
Chairman, Infrastructure Steering Group, Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY WYNNE: I am sending this letter for clarification of language contained in BRAC amendments 186–4a and 186–4d concerning DoD Tech–19, Create an Integrated Weapons & Armaments Specialty Site for Guns and Ammunition.

The purpose of amendments 186–4a and 186–4d was to leave existing energetics activities in place at Picatinny Arsenal, Naval Surface Weapons Center Indian Head and Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. The language included in the Commission's recommendation for Tech–19 does not intend to consolidate these activities in anyone location, nor is it the Commission's intent to create a separate "Center of Excellence" for energetics.

Picatinny Arsenal will become the DoD Gun and Ammunition "Center of Excellence" as described in the Dodd Tech–19 recommendation and as modified by our recommendations.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI,
Chairman.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 65, a resolution of disapproval of the 2005 base closure and realignment recommendations.

I am proud that my state delegation—commonly referred to back home as "Team Connecticut"—was successful in saving Sub Base New London from closure. Together our congressional delegation, Governor Rell, members of the New London community and military experts put together an airtight case for the survival of the base. As a result, the commission realized what Connecticut knew all along: That Sub Base New London is not only a critical asset to our State, but a vital part of our current and future national security.

The members of the 2005 BRAC Commission were given an extraordinary responsibility and performed their duties in a thoughtful and responsible manner. However, they were given the job of examining a flawed proposal based more on achieving the bottom line then ensuring the security of our Nation. If passed, H.J. Res. 65 would put an end to the current BRAC process—one that I have long believed to be the wrong process at the wrong time for our Nation.

Since 2002, I have voted in the Armed Services Committee and on the floor to either repeal or delay BRAC 2005 because I have felt all along that the process had serious flaws. With 150,000 of our men and women in uniform serving overseas in the Middle East, continued operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and failures to meet recruiting goals, now is not the time to close or realign major portions of our military infrastructure. We should not be closing and consolidating bases and infrastructure here in the States now, when in another two years we may be bringing a significant amount of troops and equipment back from Europe and other forward deployed locations and we would have to spend more money again to reopen or recreate space for them. We should not be closing or realigning before the completion of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which projects the threats our nation will face and guides our force structure for the next two decades. The Commission simply and rightly called conducting BRAC before the completion of the QDR "inverse" and "illogical." This is simply the wrong time for BRAC.

The final report before us for consideration includes a wide-ranging realignment of the Air National Guard that was completed without the input or consultation of our State Governors and Adjutants General. Rather than conducting an inclusive process—as in the case of the Army National Guard recommendations—the Pentagon chose to craft their Air Force proposal by shutting out the very people that both the law and common sense dictate need to be included in changes to State Guard units.

As a result the final Air Force recommendations disproportionately impact the Air National Guard, with 37 of the final 42 Air Force recommendations making changes to Air Guard units in States across the Nation. Governors and Adjutants General widely opposed this plan, citing the impact on recruiting and retention of Guard members, lack of consultation, and reduced availability of personnel for vital State emergency response and homeland security functions. Although the Commission ultimately approved a scaled down version of the Pentagon's Air National Guard plan crafted in the final days of their work, the final BRAC report states that the lack of coordination between the Pentagon, Governors and Adjutants General "unnecessarily cost the Commission additional time and resources and damaged the previously exemplary relationship between the Air National Guard and the Air Force."

This misguided recommendation hits home in my district and State, where the 103rd Fighter Wing at Bradley Air National Guard base is slated to lose their A–10 Warthogs—leaving Connecticut as the only State in the Nation without an air national guard flying mission. In presenting our case to the Commission, our message was simple: The Pentagon not only used flawed data that did not take into account many of the unique capabilities of Bradley, but failed to consult our Governor in major changes to our State's militia. While Adjutant General Thaddeus Martin, the staff of the 103rd and the State delegation made a strong case for Bradley, the base was unfortunately included in the final realignment plan. The men and women of the "Flying Yankees," and indeed all the members of the Air National Guard, deserve better than an ad-hoc transformation plan that has the potential to seriously impact the future of these citizen soldiers and their mission.

In late August 2005, I joined Connecticut Governor Rell, Attorney General Blumenthal and Senators DODD and LIEBERMAN in filing suit to prevent the realignment of the Bradley Air National Guard base. We were forced to take this action because the law is simple and clear: the Bradley A–10s cannot be removed without the consent of our Governor. Regardless of the result of today's vote, Connecticut has the law on its side and I am confident that we will secure the future of the "Flying Yankees."

One of our most important duties is to provide for the defense of our Nation. We should not be closing and realigning our bases at a time when our nation is engaged in the Middle East and faces unprecedented threats from abroad. Rejecting BRAC 2005 is simply the right thing to do for our men and women in uniform, the security of our nation, and for the future of our Air National Guard. I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 65.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this important' legislation as I make a final push to keep Forts Gillem and McPherson open by voting in support of a joint House resolution to reject the president's approval of the 2005 round of base realignments and closures. I cosponsored the measure, H.J. Res. 65, which disapproves the recommendations of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as submitted by the president to Congress on September 15, 2005. I am disappointed that H.J. Res. 65 failed to pass the House today by a vote of 85–324. Congress had until October 30, 2005 to pass a joint resolution of disapproval of the list.

Unfortunately, this round of base closings and realignments has failed to accomplish the military goals of shedding excess operations and facilities without seriously weakening our national security and homeland defense. I strongly oppose the president's recommendations to close Ft. Gillem and Fort McPherson, and I have tried to make a strong case in their defense at every opportunity available to me, including directly addressing members of the BRAC Commission and urging President Bush to consider their unmatched military value and unique strategic readiness for homeland defense.

My efforts to remove Forts Gillem and McPherson from the BRAC list of closings proved partly successful since I secured the extension of six Federal functions at an enclave at Ft. Gillem, blocking a complete closing of the military base. These functions include the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, Georgia Army National Guard, 3rd MEDCOM, SE Army Reserve Intelligence Center, FEMA, and Red Cross.

I am very disappointed by the outcome of today's vote and that Ft. Gillem and Ft. McPherson remained on the BRAC list for closure despite the vital role they continue to play in coordinating the deployment of troops abroad and Federal response to national disasters like this year's string of devastating hurricanes. Following today's vote, the Defense Department is now charged with carrying out the recommended closures and realignments. Therefore, I will work with defense officials and the Local Redevelopment Authority during the upcoming transition period for Forts Gillem and McPherson.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. All time for debate has expired.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 65

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission as submitted by the President on September 15, 2005.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to section 2908(d) of Public Law 101–510, the Committee rises.

□ 1245

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) having assumed the chair, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the resolution (H.J. Res. 65) disapproving the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, pursuant to section 2908(d) of Public Law 101–510, he reported the joint resolution back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2908(d) of Public Law 101–510, the question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on H.J. Res. 65 will be followed by 5-minute votes on motions to suspend the rules on H.R. 3945 and H. Res 368.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 85, noes 324, answered "present" 1, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 548]

AYES—85

Abercrombie
Akin
Allen
Andrews
Barrow
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Clay
Cooper
Crowley
Davis (IL)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dent
Doolittle
Drake
Edwards
Emanuel
Emerson
Evans
Fattah
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Forbes
Ford
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gingrey
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Hinojosa
Hobson
Holt
Hostettler
Hulshof
Jackson (IL)
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
LaHood
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lewis (GA)
Lynch
Manzullo
McCaul (TX)
Menendez
Miller (FL)
Mollohan
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nussle
Ortiz
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Paul
Pickering
Poe
Rothman
Rush
Schakowsky
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sherman
Smith (NJ)
Stupak
Taylor (MS)
Udall (NM)
Watson
Weller
Wicker
Wilson (NM)

NOES—324

Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Harman
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Holden
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)

Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Maloney
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore (KS)
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Oberstar
Olver
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Pastor
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ross
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Saxton
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwarz (MI)
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Strickland
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Cuellar

NOT VOTING—23

Boswell
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Cunningham
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Foley
Gohmert
Hall
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Mack
Obey
Payne
Rangel
Reyes
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Sensenbrenner
Shaw
Simmons
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Wexler

□ 1310

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mrs. KELLY, Ms. McKINNEY, Ms. HART, and Messrs. CARTER, BONNER, RADANOVICH, BAIRD, WALSH, LUCAS and SULLIVAN changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mrs. EMERSON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Messrs. EVANS, FATTAH, DENT, JOHNSON of Illinois, JACKSON of Illinois and CARDOZA changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

Mr. CUELLAR changed his vote from ''no'' to ''present.''

So the joint resolution was not passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 548, I was off the floor meeting with consitutents and unfortunately missed the above listed rollcall vote. Had I been present I would have voted "no."

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 548 on H.R. 65, I mistakenly recorded my vote as "yes" when I should have voted "no."

HURRICANE KATRINA FINANCIAL SERVICES RELIEF ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 3945, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3945, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 0, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 549]

YEAS—411

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Harman
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ross
Rothman
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—22

Boswell
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Cunningham
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Foley
Gohmert
Hall
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Mack
Obey
Payne
Reyes
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Sensenbrenner
Shaw
Simmons
Tauscher
Wexler
Whitfield