

May 19, 2014

Dear Representative,

We are writing you today in support of House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith's proposed amendment to the FY2015 National Defense Authorization Act designed to allow the Department of Defense to find savings through the consolidation and closure of domestic military facilities via the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

The next BRAC must be focused on generating savings. To ensure this, the proposal requires the Secretary of Defense to certify to Congress that the primary objective of a new BRAC round would be to eliminate excess infrastructure and reconfigure the remaining infrastructure to maximize efficiency. In addition, any realignments or changes to infrastructure must yield net savings within five years of completing the action. The five BRAC rounds implemented thus far have created recurring annual savings of \$12 billion per year and further reductions can save even more.

Cost overruns seen in many Department of Defense projects come from changing plans mid-stream. This amendment would work to stem this project creep by requiring the department to submit master plans for each recommendation to the independent BRAC commission. These master plans would include the costs, scope, and timing of each construction activity. Once a closure or realignment is approved, the master plan associated with each closure or realignment would be the binding authority for expending funds from the BRAC account. Any proposal to carry out a construction activity not included in the master plan would require a specific authorization from Congress.

Ranking Member Smith's amendment would strengthen the independent commission and improve transparency in the BRAC process. Furthermore, the information used by the Secretary of Defense to develop recommendations would be made easily available to the public for review, including the unclassified assessment data on the condition of facilities and infrastructure, the environmental baseline of known contamination and remediation activities, and the standard rules used to calculate annual recurring savings.

The below signed groups agree that the Department of Defense can greatly benefit and find significant savings from an efficient and transparent BRAC and urge Congress to move that process along.

Center for International Peace  
Coalition to Reduce Spending  
Downsize DC  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Just Foreign Policy  
National Taxpayers Union  
National Security Network  
Peace Action  
Peace Action West  
Progressive Democrats of America  
Project on Government Oversight  
R Street Institute  
Taxpayers for Common Sense  
Taxpayers Protection Alliance  
US Labor Against the War  
Win Without War  
Women's Action for New Directions