



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Robert F. McDonnell
Governor

October 27, 2010

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Gates:

I write today to follow up on the September 28th breakfast meeting with Deputy Secretary Lynn, General Cartwright, members of your staff, and most members of the Virginia congressional delegation to discuss your August 9 announcement to close JFCOM and reduce defense contractors by 30%. Thank you for your letter of October 1, 2010, responding to my September 30th making various requests for action. I very much appreciated your exceptionally prompt response to my letter, and personal involvement evidenced by your hand written note (copy attached). While I was disappointed at your rejection of my request for public hearings in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads, and a delay in your JFCOM closure plan to accommodate consideration by the 2011 Congress, I was encouraged with your written pledge to meet with me and the congressional delegation in person, and your agreement to open up communications so that my team and yours could engage in dialogue on your initiatives affecting Virginia. Our appreciation was communicated electronically to your staff on October 5th as well.

Four weeks have now elapsed since the breakfast meeting was held and the letters were exchanged. I am disheartened at the lack of any significant follow through with regard to the promised meeting and coordinated communication. My point of contact from our Cabinet on these matters, Mrs. Terrie Suit, has continued to contact representatives at your office requesting our meeting be scheduled, and requesting that your designees working on the courses of action for implementing your recommendations be allowed to communicate with members of my Commission reviewing these same issues. Despite repeated attempts, no progress has been made on either request to date.

You and your team have communicated to me that you believe these matters are urgent, and that final decisions will be made in the very near future. I asked Deputy Secretary Lynn not to make decisions without adequate state input, and not to make announcements right after the election with no chance for Congress to review the

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materials they requested to address the issues with you. Your October 1 letter pledges that you were "prepared to establish a more formal channel of communication," and you directed your staff to formalize the necessary details. The letter also offers to conduct a meeting "before I make any final decision on implementing the recommendation to disestablish JFCOM." Thus, I repeat my request that our meeting be scheduled and conducted as soon as possible, and that a bi-directional communication channel be immediately established between my team and your JFCOM taskforce. As you know from Chairman Ike Skelton's recent letter to you, as well as Senator Jim Webb's pledge to place a hold on Pentagon confirmations, there is much concern about aspects of the DOD plans. We appreciate very much your leadership in this time of war, as well as the need to reduce spending in this time of unprecedented federal debt. Yet on behalf of the citizens of Virginia, we request more information, answers, and constructive input.

Thank you again for your personal involvement in this important matter. Mrs. Terrie Suit will continue to be my personal contact for your recommendations affecting Virginia. She can be reached 804-225-3623.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bob McDonnell", written in a cursive style.

Robert F. McDonnell

RFM/tls

cc: Virginia Congressional Delegation
The Honorable William J. Howell
The Honorable Richard L. Saslaw
The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
The Honorable Ward L. Armstrong
The Honorable Tom Davis
The Honorable Owen Pickett
The Honorable Terrie L. Suit
The Honorable Martin L. Kent



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

OCT 1 2010

The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell
Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor McDonnell:

Thank you for your letter of September 30, 2010.

First, I appreciate that you and a number of members of the Virginia Congressional delegation took the time to meet with Deputy Secretary Bill Lynn and other Department of Defense officials earlier this week. The Department is committed to sustaining this dialogue as we go forward in developing the implementation plans for the disestablishment of Joint Forces Command (JFCOM). In this respect, we welcome the opportunity to benefit from the information and perspective that you and your team are able to bring to the effort.

As Secretary Lynn outlined in his meeting with you, we are prepared to establish a more formal channel of communication for this purpose, and I have asked my staff to reach out to your office to formalize the necessary details. In addition, I look forward to meeting with you and members of the Virginia Congressional delegation to receive your direct input before I make any final decisions on implementing the recommendation to disestablish JFCOM.

As the process to develop an implementation plan is ongoing, we will not be able to participate in public forums or hearings outside of the customary Congressional process. Over the course of the past two days, Department of Defense officials have publicly testified before two Congressional committees and conducted briefings for two additional committees. During the course of these engagements, the Department has presented and fully explained the rationale and basis for my decisions regarding JFCOM and other elements of the efficiencies initiative I have asked the Department of Defense to pursue.

Our next step is to complete the development of specific implementation plans involving detailed options on how best to achieve the desired management and budget efficiencies while ensuring the continued proper execution of the Department's national defense mission. While I am pressing the Department to complete this phase quickly, it will take us well into this fall to carry out this important task.

Finally, I understand your request to defer this matter until next year. However, the task of moving this massive Department to a different, more sustainable budget path

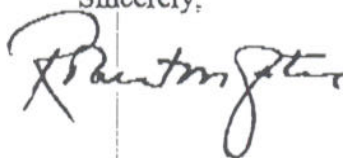


is of such urgency that we simply cannot wait. While you have identified two specific areas of concern to Virginia, our efforts are considerably broader and involve a fundamental review of dozens of defense missions, functions and organizations. It is likely that some of these efforts will naturally flow into the customary budget process, but others that lend themselves to quicker action will not.

Virginia and the numerous local communities that support our military throughout the Commonwealth are important and valued partners. You have my commitment that as we continue this effort, the Department will keep you informed, thoroughly consider your input and work with you to mitigate the impact and dislocation that may result from this process.

Thank you again for your continued engagement, and I look forward to discussing these issues with you personally and in more detail.

Sincerely,



James -

I believe some elements of JFCOM will need to be preserved. How and where will be part of our analysis and deliberations. I welcome your suggestions in that regard.