

DEREK KILMER
6TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE,
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September 23, 2015

Mr. Donald Tison
Designated Federal Officer
National Commission on the Future of the Army
700 Army Pentagon, Room 3E406
Washington, DC 20310-0700

Dear Mr. Tison,

Thank you for providing the people of Washington State the opportunity to publicly voice their support for the continued presence of our United States Army in our community. Our region is stronger – economically and otherwise – because of the men and women who serve this nation. These service members are our friends, neighbors, and family members. They have made our community more vibrant and, in addition to playing an absolutely vital role in protecting our nation's security, they have bolstered a variety of industries in our area. With that in mind, I respectfully ask that no further reductions are made at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

JBLM is a popular installation among service members. The communities that surround this installation are supportive and eager to serve the men and women serving our nation. The communities across the district I represent, and the rest of our state embraces the military populations that are embedded within them. This has led to a high number of separating members and retirees calling Washington home. In fact, representing more than 81,000 veterans in Washington's Sixth Congressional District, I have seen the impact our military has had on our state, and the impact our state has had on our military.

The numerous investments that have been made at JBLM and its surroundings are further reasons why reductions should not be made. This includes modernizing the base in ways that have improved the quality of life of its residents. The new barracks that the department invested in have raised the quality of life for service members. The new Class A Wastewater Treatment Facility was a massive investment to meet the needs of the growing installation. Further investments have been made to improve the elementary schools, and Morale Welfare and Recreation Facilities are proof that JBLM is an installation that should continue to grow, not be reduced.

Perhaps most importantly, the Pacific Northwest aligns with the Pentagon's realignment for rapid power projection and strategic deployment in the Pacific Rim. Each of the services has realized this and continues to invest in infrastructure to accommodate this alignment. The landscape provides the services the protection that they need while allowing each component to prevent, deter and defeat any action by a nation or group who intends to do harm to our nation. Given the strategic placement of installations in our region, the Joint Base Lewis-McChord is exceptionally well positioned to maintain stability across the Pacific Rim.

I want to thank the commission once again for your consideration of my comments, and those of my fellow Washingtonians. Given the investment in this region's military presence, as well as our strategic location, I believe you too will see that further reductions are not only unwarranted at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, they are harmful to our national security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Kilmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Derek" being more prominent than the last name "Kilmer".

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress