



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

Subject: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Open Meeting 24 September 2015 Minutes

Date: 24 September 2015

Time: 1500-1630 hours

Location: Red Lion Hotel, Tacoma, Washington

Attendees:

Commissioner Thomas R. Lamont, Commission Vice Chairman
Commissioner Raymond F. Chandler
Commissioner Jack C. Stultz
Mark R. Von Heeringen, Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
LTC Mike Lockwood, Alternate Designated Federal Officer
MAJ Cory Simpson, Commission Legal Advisor
MG (Ret) Ray Carpenter, NCFA Executive Director
COL Richard Miller, NCFA Staff
COL Kristen Dixon, NCFA Staff
Kerry Schindler, NCFA Staff
Jason Southerland, NCFA Staff
LTC Brian Rice, NCFA Staff
CPT Sarah Moore, NCFA Staff

Attendees: In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public from 9:00 A.M. to 12:04 P.M. There were approximately 41 members of the public present for this event.

Documents Submitted to Commission:

1. Tiffany Speir, South Sound Military and Communities Partnership, letter to NCFA
2. Dr. Stan Fleming, BG(R) United States Army Reserve, written statement
3. Tom Pierson, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, written statement
4. Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington, letter to NCFA
5. Derek Kilmer, 6th District Representative, Washington, letter to NCFA
6. Denny Heck, 10th District Representative, Washington, letter to NCFA

Meeting Summary

Vice Chairman Lamont opened the meeting at 1500 hours by introducing the Commission members, welcoming the attendees to the meeting, and briefly discussing the Commission's charter. DFO gave an explanation of the Federal Advisory

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Committee Act (FACA) and discussed ground rules for the registered speakers. Following the opening remarks, the Commission heard from the following speakers, in order of appearance:

1. Tiffany Speir, Program Manager, South Sound Military and Communities Partnership (SSMCP)

Ms. Speir highlighted specific sections of the letter she submitted for the record from the South Sound Military and Communities Partnership. Her statements outlined the mission of the SSMCP and highlighted the organization's six core objectives. They are to formalize new methods of regional collaboration, improve access to information, improve access to existing services, promote Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) as a center of regional economic significance, improve support for military families, and improve regional mobility.

2. Dr. Stan Flemming, BG(R) United States Army Reserve

Dr. Flemming read from a prepared statement he handed to the Commissioners. He discussed the budgetary restrictions and fiscal uncertainty our Nation faces and the difficult choices our leaders will have to make to retain an Army that is trained and ready. He also stressed the role the United States Army Reserve plays as a force multiplier to the Army and the economic impact Army Reserve Soldiers have on the state of Washington.

3. Wayne Perry, Military spouse

Mr. Perry made an oral statement to the Commissioners about family and recruiting issues that he feels the military may face in the future. He explained that the military will face hard times if the minimum wage rises to fifteen dollars per hour, the government gives free healthcare, and the government or state provides free college. Additionally, he highlighted the reduced military benefits that once were considered advantages of joining the military.

4. Tom Pierson, President and CEO, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber

Mr. Pierson read from a prepared statement where he highlighted the importance of JBLM's location, the significance of the Pacific Rim Region economically and its indispensable role in the defense of our nation. Additionally, he discussed the significant role JBLM plays in the national strategy to "Rebalance to the Pacific" and the critical worldwide logistics infrastructure that facilitates the shipment of goods and equipment. He also highlighted a federal legislative package that recently passed to provide increased funding for I-5 and other transportation and infrastructure improvements.

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5. Nico Guzman, Owner, Mind and Body Boot Camp

Mr. Guzman gave a brief overview of Camp Empower (a 501c3 Non-profit Mind Body Bootcamp) which has devoted its energy advocating for the hungry, needy, and politically under-represented. Their focus is at-risk youth, homeless youth, and suicidal youth. Mr. Nico Guzman wants to partner with the NCFA (U.S. Army) to target Soldiers in need.

6. Jim Baumgart, Policy Advisor for Governor Jay Inslee

Mr. Baumgart paraphrased key points from a letter Governor Jay Inslee wrote to the NCFA. He highlighted the Governor's support for the conversion of the 81st Armored Brigade to a Stryker Brigade, his support to retain the 66th Theater Aviation Command, and how JBLM and the surrounding area is uniquely positioned for the shift in strategy to the Pacific. His closing points centered on how the state of Washington supports Soldiers while actively serving and how the state innovates to help successfully transition Soldiers out of active duty.

7. Don Anderson, Mayor of Lakewood, Washington

Mr. Anderson stated the City of Lakewood is the host community for JBLM, the west coast's only power projection platform. Lakewood also borders Camp Murray, the headquarters of the Washington Military Department, which includes the Washington Air National Guard and the Washington Army National Guard. He is an advocate of base closure and realignment, but feels JBLM and the surrounding area's infrastructure is the right fit for the Nation.

8. Michael Brandstetter, Councilmember, Lakewood City Council

Mr. Brandstetter emphasized the importance of the City of Lakewood to the military community and the military's contribution to the city. He stated he is a retired Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) who decided to stay in the area upon retirement. An area of his focus is the continued support for a strong leader development program in the Army; especially the NCO corps, which he feels is the envy of the world's armies.

9. Lourdes E. 'Alfie' Alvarado-Ramos, Director, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

Ms. Alvarado stated that the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs helps connect veterans and their family members to the benefits and services earned through military service. Her main focus is ensuring robust services are available to every service member as they transition into the community. A specific initiative the Department is working is enabling military job or professional certifications to transition to civilian equivalent certifications (e.g., a military truck driver's license should transfer to a commercial driver's license).

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10. Roel van der Lugt, Military Affairs Director/Senior Policy Advisor, Washington's 10th District Representative - Denny Heck

Mr. Roel van der Lugt covered key points on a letter prepared by Congressman Denny Heck to the NCFA. His comments reinforced that all branches of the Services are represented in the region. Deep water ports, rail, airfields, and training areas are all located in the area, providing a national asset and a value for the investment made. He highlighted the Active Army's association with National Guard and Reserve units as longstanding relationships. His closing comments emphasized that the communities surrounding JBLM want the Army to be there. He cited investments in infrastructure, multiple (military) support organizations, transition assistance, and JBLM being one of the most requested duty stations.

11. Eric Williams, Staff Member, Washington's 6th District Representative - Derek Kilmer

Mr. Williams read a letter Representative Derek Kilmer submitted for the record to the NCFA. The letter highlights Representative Kilmer's support for the military in the state of Washington and specifically in the 6th District. Additionally, the letter emphasizes how the region aligns with the national shift in strategy to Asia and the role installations and facilities play to meet that objective.

12. Graham Hunt, State Representative, 2nd District, (R-Orting)

Mr. Hunt spoke about his personal willingness to sponsor or propose legislation to aid with veteran transitions to the civilian communities in the State.

13. Najla Munshower-Neumann, Military spouse

Mrs. Neumann stated Washington set the standard for the Nation in its treatment of Soldiers while in uniform and when they retire. She, being a military spouse, was extremely impressed in the transition services provided by the JBLM community, the leaders in the civilian community, and how they are engaged in mentoring and empowering the transitioning military member.

Mr. von Heeringen officially closed the meeting at 1630 hours after briefly reminding the audience of the dates and locations for the next open meeting and providing the information for accessing the Commission's public website.