



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Robert F. McDonnell  
Governor

September 3, 2010

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

Dear Secretary Gates:

I renew the request made in my letter dated August 13, 2010 for a meeting with you and senior members of your staff to discuss your recommendation to close USJFCOM. I would appreciate Dr. Clifford Stanley and Mr. Robert Rangel being included in the meeting.

The unprecedented manner in which you announced the intent to close USJFCOM will have significant and detrimental consequences on the ability of the armed forces to integrate operationally in both the current fight and future engagements. The fact that neither the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review nor the 2005 BRAC made any mention of closing USJFCOM raises serious doubt about the level of review that went into this recommendation. Finally, foreign governments with policies that are not always in the overall best interests of the United States that have expressed interest in this recommendation causes deeper concerns about the impact of this move at this particular time in our history.

As you may know, these are times of extreme economic hardship and unemployment rates in the Commonwealth that are much higher than I can accept. It is, therefore, difficult to understand that you would, in essence, recommend the elimination of over six thousand federal and contractor jobs without any consultation or sharing of information with the officials of this Commonwealth. I am aware of no reasons for your Department to move at the pace and with the lack of transparency to close a command that has contributed significantly to the successful mission execution by the armed forces of the United States, the development of future technologies associated with modeling and simulation, and the development of solid and lasting relationships with all of the colleges and universities in the Hampton Roads Virginia area.

Members of my staff participated in meetings with your Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs, Dr. Paul Stockton, on August 26th and 27<sup>th</sup> in a working group with other staff members representing the Council of Governors. Throughout the working group session, Dr. Stockton referred to the desire of the Department of Defense to establish transparency and communications with the governors and the individual states. Unfortunately, the transparency that Dr. Stockton insists is the objective of the Department is not apparent in the process that you have chosen to accomplish the closure of the USJFCOM.

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I have established a gubernatorial commission whose first meeting will be September 9, 2010 to assist me in reviewing the military and national security facilities located in the Commonwealth to insure that any process of reviewing military commands and federal facilities for continued viability in the Commonwealth is subject to as transparent a process of review and decision making as is possible. The lack of transparency that has been displayed in pursuing the closure of USJFCOM is contrary to the fundamentals of democracy that were established in this Commonwealth by our founding fathers. I intend to invite the co-chairmen of that Commission, former Congressmen Tom Davis and Owen Pickett, the members of the Congressional delegation representing the Commonwealth, and a member of my cabinet who is my senior advisor on this matter, Mrs. Terrie Suit, to attend this meeting with me.

Again, I recommend that both Dr. Clifford Stanley and Mr. Robert Rangel of your staff be in attendance at this requested meeting. Given that the Senate Armed Services Committee contemplates hearings on the matter of the closure of JFCOM in September, I would appreciate meeting with you prior to that date.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert F. McDonnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Robert F. McDonnell

RFM/jh