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**J. Randy Forbes**  
**United States Congress**

**4th District, Virginia**  
November 19, 2009

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The Honorable Susan Davis  
Chairwoman, House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee  
2120 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Davis:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed lodging facility at Fort Lee, Virginia. As there is no up or down vote on this particular proposal, I appreciate the opportunity to provide my views.

Over the last several months, I have met with the Greater Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition several times regarding this proposal. Together, our efforts led to an extension of the public comment period for this project by 30 days and resulted in the Army providing a cost-benefit analysis at the request of Senators Webb, Warner, and myself. The Army also responded to two additional rounds of questions submitted by the Coalition to my office.

In addition, I was pleased to host a meeting between the Army, six representatives of the Greater Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition, and a member of your staff regarding this project yesterday before the deadline set by the Subcommittee. During the meeting in my office, the Department of the Army committed to four changes to the current proposal to accommodate the concerns raised by the Greater Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition:

- To reduce the number of on-post rooms by 577 rooms if off-base demand does not meet the Army's forecasts (by postponing renovations of the current lodging facility);
- To work to reduce the rate of student no-shows at off-post hotels;
- To review lowering the Army's lodging fee in the Fort Lee area from \$4 to \$2; and
- To support efforts to increase the local per diem rates around Fort Lee, Virginia.

Before the meeting concluded, I asked if there were any additional questions from either the Coalition or the Department of the Army for each other, and there were none. Following the meeting, the Coalition did not reach consensus on this proposal and has developed additional questions about the proposal.

As the Representative of the Tri-Cities region, I had hoped to provide a response to the House Armed Services Committee that would meet the needs of the Army and the Coalition. I understand that the Coalition needs additional time to weigh information and options. Since I am now faced with the Committee's deadline, I encourage you to consider the attached concerns

from the Coalition as you weigh the merits of this project. I am hopeful that you will achieve an outcome that represents the best interest of our soldiers and the local community. With kind regards I am,

Yours Truly,



J. RANDY FORBES  
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Joe Wilson  
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee  
2120 Rayburn HOB  
Washington DC 20515

The Greater Tri-Cities Coalition  
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Enclosure: Additional Questions Submitted by Greater Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition

**Greater Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition**  
**Additional Questions Submitted**  
**November 19, 2009**

- The Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition has little confidence in the projected student demand identified by the Army. What documentation does the Army have that explains how the estimated number of 2300 students per day was reached?
- Has any analysis been done to consider how the size of Ft. Lee classes will be impacted between wartime conditions and peacetime conditions?
- Was the Army requirement for the number of rooms based on a 2004 impact analysis by the firm RKG? If so, has the decision on the number of rooms to build been revisited based on current (2009) analysis, especially if it confirms that sufficient new rooms exist "Off- Post" today that did not exist in 2004?
- The Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition has questions about the validity of the \$120 million cost estimate for the proposed hotel. Has a study been conducted to ascertain the projected cost and thus avoid cost overruns?
- The Tri-Cities Hospitality Coalition has questions about whether Army Lodging can feasibly operate a 1000 room hotel financially on a \$52.50 daily rate (75% of per diem rate). Does the Army have evidence to demonstrate that it can do so?
- There is concern about the security of a multi-story facility occupied by soldiers as a possible terrorist target. Has the security of this facility been considered?
- Is the economic impact on the community considered in the decision to build this lodging facility?
- RKG, an independent consultant, is completing a study on the effects to the local economy if a 1000 room Army Lodging Hotel were built. Would the Committee consider waiting for the results of that study?