

TESTIMONY OF
CONGRESSWOMAN DONNA F. EDWARDS
MARYLAND 4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGARDING FISCAL YEAR 2012 NATIONAL DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION ACT PRORITIES
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2011
9:30 AM
2118 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you allowing me to testify here today. Your leadership on national security and commitment to providing our servicemen and women with the tools they need to succeed in their missions and return home safe is appreciated and applauded. My testimony today will touch on two key issues: funding transportation needs around military installations affected by BRAC and contracting practices.

I represent the 4th Congressional District of Maryland; home to Joint Base Andrews. Andrews is home to Air Force One, the 11th Wing, and the 113th Wing that supports air sovereignty over the mid-Atlantic region.

Currently, 15,000 personnel work at Joint Base Andrews, including 7,000 active duty soldiers. Andrews has 887 residential

homes, 702 acres dedicated to outdoor recreation and an economic impact projected at \$1 billion per year. Like many military installations across the nation, Joint Base Andrews is an integral part of our community and economy.

When the 2005 BRAC process is complete, an additional 3,000 personnel will work at Joint Base Andrews. Unfortunately, when considering shifting resources, the Commission did not account for changes that would be required to deliver increased personnel to the installation and resources need to be shifted. In previous years, I have requested funds for improvements to roads around the base. While some improvements have been completed, many more are needed to address the influx of personnel.

I would encourage the Committee to look at BRAC affected installations around this country. Many improvements at these military installations, including Andrews, need to happen outside of the gate in order to effectively achieve the missions of the

military installations. Transportation funding outside the gate can dramatically impact the efficiency and ability to complete missions inside the facility and around the world.

By way of example, Joint Base Andrews has made significant gains in ensuring that contracts go to small and minority firms.

Last September, Joint Base Andrews announced an increase in its small business contracting goal from 43 to 50 percent of Andrews' contracts. Joint Base Andrews should be applauded for this effort.

This initiative will inject approximately \$10 million dollars more into small businesses, with approximately \$4 million going to small businesses in the State of Maryland, proving definitively the benefits that come from cooperation between installations and their surrounding communities.

This increase in contracting goal will create good local jobs. By raising the goal to 50 percent, Joint Base Andrews is demonstrating a clear commitment to form lasting partnerships in

the local communities and playing an active role in the economic development of the region. The Committee could do right by local communities by requiring DoD to reach out to business in the vicinity of military installations. An amendment I secured in the Implementing Management for Performance and Related Reforms to Obtain Value in Every Acquisition Act of 2010 directed the DoD to engage in outreach to businesses in the vicinity of DOD installations, businesses and increased opportunities to obtain contracts and subcontracts to perform work at such installations.

There are a host of contractors across this nation that would benefit from changes in the way installations conducting contracting and Request for Proposals from the DoD. Consideration should be given to unbundling large contracts and to educating contracting officers on the importance of using subcontractors. It is certainly easy to hand out contracts to a large firm that has an existing relationship with a contractor officer. Developing relationships

requires some work, but these new relationships could be fruitful and create quality local jobs.

Many smaller firms have demonstrated they are capable of partnering with larger firms at the subcontractor level. Yet, it appears some larger firms are reluctant to allow smaller firms to grow. The partnerships should be encouraged and we should help the smaller firms to develop skills and capabilities.

Military installations are an integral part of our local communities and can serve as anchors for improving entire regions. Improving transportation around our DoD installations is critical to well-functioning armed forces' facilities. The dollars spent by DoD can be leveraged to better the communities that support, house and partner with these installations.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to testify before your committee.