you have asked. A similar letter is being sent to Chairman Goodlatte. Sincerely,

MIKE JOHANNS, Secretary.

BREAST CANCER RESEARCH STAMP REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to thank very much all of my colleagues for their support in extending the Breast Cancer Research Stamp for another 2 years.

This year, the strong bipartisan support of Senator HUTCHISON and 68 other Senators from both sides of the aisle.

Without congressional action, this extraordinary stamp is set to expire on December 31 of this year.

During the past 7 years, the U.S. Postal Service has sold over 650 million semipostal breast cancer stamps—raising $47.4 million for breast cancer research.

These dollars allow the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, DOD, to conduct new and innovative breast cancer research.

So far the NIH has received approximately $31 million and the DOD about $13 million for breast cancer research—helping more people become cancer survivors rather than cancer victims.

In addition to raising much needed funds, this wonderful stamp has also focused public awareness on this devastating disease and provided hope to breast cancer survivors to help find a cure.

The breast cancer research stamp is the first stamp of its kind dedicated to raising funds for a special cause and remains just as necessary today as ever. For example: breast cancer is considered the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in every major ethnic group in this country; over 2 million women in the U.S. are living with breast cancer, 1 million of whom have yet to be diagnosed; this year, approximately 21,420 women in this country will get breast cancer and about 40,410 women will die from this dreadful disease; and about 1,300 men in America are diagnosed with breast cancer each year though much less common.

Extending the life of this remarkable stamp is crucial so that we can continue to raise life saving funds for research programs to extend the breast cancer research stamp for 2 more years.

THE 2005 BRAC PROCESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, process that occurred this year. I have always voted to authorize base closure rounds in deference to the Department of Defense's stated need to restructure our military facilities to meet current and future needs. Nevertheless, the ceding of significant authority by Congress to an independent commission is an extra-ordinary step that should not be undertaken frequently or lightly. When Congress does lend its power to an independent commission, it must hold the responsibility to closely monitor the commission's deliberations and actions. I have done so with respect to the 2005 BRAC Commission, naturally paying the closest attention to the issues before the Commission that affect Iowa.

My observation of the Commission's final deliberations raised some concerns about the information and reasoning used in making its decisions. I followed closely to the Commission to clarify these concerns and have recently received a response that did nothing to allay my concerns. As a result, I have now concluded that I do not have full confidence that this was a thorough and fair process.

A joint resolution to disapprove the 2005 BRAC recommendations has been introduced in the House and has just been marked up by the House Armed Services Committee. It will now be considered under expedited procedures. I would encourage the House to approve this resolution. Obviously, if this resolution is not approved by the House, Senate action will be meaningless. But, if the Senate does take up such a resolution, I will vote to disapprove the 2005 BRAC recommendations.

The BRAC Commission is charged with reviewing the recommendations of the Department of Defense and altering those recommendations if they are found to be substantially not consistent with the BRAC criteria. On that basis, the Quad Cities community in Iowa and Illinois challenged some recommendations for the Rock Island Arsenal and did not challenge others.

One issue on which I thought we had a clear-cut case of a substantial deviation of the BRAC criteria was the proposed move of the U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command, or TACOM, organization at the Rock Island Arsenal to the Detroit Arsenal. This was essentially a footnote to a consolidation of what is called inventory control point functions from 11 separate organizations around the country that would now report to the Defense Logistics Agency. The consolidation of inventory control point functions would affect 52 people at TACOM Rock Island and was not challenged by the community. However, the DOD recommendation then, puzzlingly, proposed to move the rest of the approximately 1,000 employees of TACOM Rock Island to the TACOM Headquarters at the Detroit Arsenal in Michigan.

The facilities at the Detroit Arsenal are already strained to capacity. The base is encroached on all sides and has no room to grow. In fact, the Detroit Arsenal is rated far lower in military value than the Rock Island Arsenal.

Moving in 1,000 new employees will require major military construction. That includes building two parking garages to replace the already limited parking space that would be used up. That's in addition to the already high locality pay in the area, it will cost significantly more in the long term to pay those employees at the new location. You also lose some unique facilities currently used by the Arsenal, like a machine shop and live fire range. In addition, there will be no space to house the outside contractors currently embedded with TACOM Rock Island, who would also need to move but aren't counted in the BRAC data.

The Quad Cities community challenged this proposed move on the basis of military value, and the enormous costs both up front and in the long run. In fact, the move would cost the taxpayers millions more than the Rock Island Arsenal and would require major military construction. That includes building two parking garages to replace the already limited parking space that would be used up.

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You also lose some unique facilities currently used by the Arsenal, like a machine shop and live fire range. In addition, there will be no space to house the outside contractors currently embedded with TACOM Rock Island, who would also need to move but aren’t counted in the BRAC data.
Furthermore, despite all the briefings from the community, the BRAC staff presented a summary of the community’s concerns that omitted the critical issue of the long-term costs of the move. The summary’s only reference to a relatively minor concern that the number of positions to move were underestimated. When Commissioner Skinner asked how increased estimates of the military construction costs at the Detroit Arsenal would affect the payback, the BRAC staff responded that “Payback with the new scenario, new MILCON, is $1.8 billion over 20 years, still a large savings.” However, that figure refers to the entire recommendation package, not just the otherwise unrelated TACOM move. I believe that response by the BRAC staff was intellectually dishonest and misleading.

The disturbing fact is that the TACOM move will actually squander $128.23 million in taxpayer money. I pointed out this problem in a message delivered to Commissioner Skinner before the Commission’s final vote on the BRAC report, but no action was taken. Only after the final vote has the Commission admitted to me in a letter that the TACOM move, taken by itself, would cost $128.23 million over the 20 year time frame used in their estimate. The Commission’s letter also confirmed that the Commissioners were never to refer to the cost of the TACOM move by itself.

In its response to me, the BRAC Commission continued to justify considering the cost of the TACOM move in terms of the net present value of the entire recommendation. However, in reference to another portion of the same recommendation regarding a cryptological unit at Lackland Air Force Base, the slide used by the BRAC staff for its presentation read, “The extent and timing of potential costs outweigh the payoffs with implications for the payback of investment.” The same could have been said about the TACOM portion of the recommendation. The Commission then voted to overturn the portion of the recommendation to realign Lackland Air Force Base. In this case, the Commission did consider one portion of the larger recommendation separately, including a staff analysis of the payback for just that portion of the recommendation, and voted to overturn that recommendation. The Commission’s justification for its failure to do so with respect to the TACOM portion of that recommendation therefore falls flat.

In fact, there is evidence that the selective presentation of facts by the BRAC staff resulted in Commissioners misunderstanding the issue when voting. In justifying his decision on the TACOM move in an interview with the Rock Island Argus, Commissioner Skinner said of the BRAC staff’s analysis, “There’s still the same concern about the payback by doing that and that was the major objection that they (the community) had.” Commissioner Skinner should have known the most about this proposed move from his site visits to both the Rock Island Arsenal and the Detroit Arsenal, but his statement is inaccurate. It seems clear from this quote that he was misled by relying on the faulty presentation by the BRAC staff.

Of course, while cost is a major consideration in BRAC, it is not the only consideration. Still, if a recommendation contains significant costs, like the TACOM move, there must be a very compelling case for an increase in military value to justify the costs. In this case, I think it is clear that more is lost in terms of military value than is gained. Moreover, the Commission never got to this point since the BRAC staff represented that the move was justified based on cost.

I don’t believe that DOD made this recommendation based on a conclusion that consolidating TACOM in one location would increase military value in the first place. Several smaller components of TACOM in other locations were not proposed for consolidation. Still, if there was a compelling case for merging the two TACOM organizations together, then why wasn’t the Rock Island Arsenals receiving site? The Rock Island Arsenal could accommodate all the personnel at Detroit Arsenal without major military construction, possibly even allowing Detroit Arsenal to be closed entirely. The Rock Island Arsenal was never considered as a receiving installation by DOD since it was assumed to be closing during much of DOD’s internal BRAC process.

In fact, the preliminary assumption that the Rock Island Arsenal would close is why it was not considered as a receiving site for the consolidation of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Installation Management Agency, and Civilian Personnel Operations Center. Ideally, it should have been voted to keep open, but it was not. Moreover, the Commission did not recommend full closure as first contemplated. The Commission did not refute the concerns raised by the community. No evidence was produced that the TACOM move made economic sense or would be more efficient. Instead, the staff gave a misleading presentation that gave the impression that the move made economic sense when it didn’t.

However, what I saw in the BRAC Commission’s final deliberations took me by surprise. The Commission did not refute the concerns raised by the community. No evidence was produced that the TACOM move made economic sense or would be more efficient. Instead, the staff gave a misleading presentation that gave the impression that the move made economic sense when it didn’t. As a result, I cannot endorse their final product.

I ask unanimous consent to have the Rock Island Argus article to which I referred printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SKINNER: ARSENAL DODGED A BULLET
By Edward Felker
WASHINGTON—BRAC Commissioner Samuel K. Skinner on Thursday said the Rock Island Arsenal “dodged a major bullet” in the base closing process by losing jobs but not closing completely.

During a brief interview, Mr. Skinner, who visited the Arsenal on behalf of the commission, defended the panel’s effort to send 1,129 Quad-Cities jobs to the Detroit Arsenal. The panel approved the move despite protests that the transfer will cost too much and not foster Army integration.

Mr. Skinner said that he looked into arguments that the Detroit Arsenal did not have...
the space for the incoming workers, but was satisfied that additional construction costs will not hamper expected savings to the taxpayers.

"They said there's still significant payback by doing that," he said of the BRAC staff's review of the move, "and that was the major objection that they had."

He explained that it was only fair to keep open the Arsenal's 251-job Civilian Personnel Office and Civilian Human Resource Agency. It was originally slated to move to Fort Riley, Kan., as part of a sweeping consolidation of defense personnel offices.

But Mr. Skinner urged the panel to delete it because it was targeted as part of a complete closure of the Rock Island Arsenal, and the move was never re-examined after the Pentagon decided to keep the Arsenal open.

"They had no chance to be heard, it wasn't even considered, and on that basis it wasn't fair. So we got a little life," Mr. Skinner said.

He also defended the closure of the Arsenal's 301-job Defense Finance and Accounting Service office. The commission voted to keep other offices that the Pentagon targeted for closure, but Mr. Skinner said they were on bases of higher military and had the worst economic closure impact among DFAS locations.

He said the overall result for the Arsenal was better than it could have been. "They dodged a major bullet. Not perfect, but it could have been a lot worse."

GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we are facing times of record spending. Whether it is in the form of relief to the hurricane ravaged gulf coast, financing the war on terrorism, or meeting our obligations to seniors with the Medicare prescription drug benefit, Federal spending is higher now than ever. We have committed ourselves to funding these priorities.

In doing so, I believe we must also look for ways to save in other areas to offset these added costs. As an example, I liken our current fiscal situation to that of any common American household. When emergencies or unforeseen obligations arise, such as an illness or a major repair, you find a way to pay the bill. But in doing so, you must also look at your household budget and find places to save.

So I come to the Senate floor today to speak a little bit about legislation I recently introduced to require regular reviews of Federal programs with the goal of identifying areas where savings can be made. S. 1399, the Government Reorganization and Program Performance Improvement Act, will create the necessary mechanisms to require Congress and the executive branch to regularly and formally examine whether Federal programs and agencies are achieving, or have achieved desired results for the American people, and make the necessary adjustments.

This bill would do this through the creation of a sunset commission and individual results commissions. The sunset commission would hold the Federal Government accountable for performance by reviewing and providing recommendations to retain, restructure, or end Federal agencies or programs. Congress and the President would enact a 10-year schedule for the administration to assess the performance of these sunsetting programs. Acting on those assessments, the seven-member bipartisan sunset commission, appointed by the President in consultation with Congress, will recommend ways to improve effectiveness and spend taxpayer dollars more wisely.

The commission will provide an important framework to facilitate the reform, restructuring, or possible elimination of those agencies or programs that have achieved their intended purposes or outlived their usefulness.

A second key feature of this important measure is the creation of individual results commissions targeted at specific programs or policy areas where duplication and overlapping jurisdiction hinder the performance of various programs and agencies by restructuring and consolidation. This will reduce unnecessary costs and waste paid for by the American taxpayer.

We need to continue to evaluate the way the Federal Government spends money by ways to make it more cost effective for the long term. I believe this legislation presents a good step toward dealing with the large number of Federal programs out there, many of which are, frankly, wasteful and unnecessary. S. 1399 provides a commonsense framework for reorganization and review of Federal programs, and provides for a way to abolish them if determined unnecessary.

S. 1399 is a good government measure. It is about efficiency, accountability to the American taxpayer, and identifying potential savings. It is a fiscally responsible measure that will provide a way for the Federal Government to save even as it meets its spending obligations in the future. I invite my colleagues to take a serious look at this proposal and to join me in advancing this effort.

AUGUST 2005 CODEL TO LATIN AMERICA

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, from August 14 to the 22, I traveled to Latin America to investigate first hand important issues relating to national security, immigration and the war on drugs. I would like to share the details of this trip and some of the insights I gained with my colleagues.

On Sunday, August 14, we flew to Havana, Cuba. Upon our arrival we drove to the U.S. Mission where we met with James Cason, our chief of mission, and members of his staff. I started off the meeting by asking my hosts if Cuba could help the U.S. combat the smuggling of illegal drugs into our country. Mr. Cason told us that Cuba does not deal with the smuggling of drugs. Mr. Cason who currently serves as the U.S. Drug Interdiction Specialist based in Havana, noted that there is a good working relationship between the Coast Guard and the Cuban Border Guard on drug interdictions.

The form of the Cubans sharing information with the United States as to suspicious ships passing through its territorial waters. The United States then intercepts these ships when they cross into U.S. waters. While the number of such reports has fallen in recent years, Mr. Rojas believes that this is a testament to the success of Cuban efforts: now that they know they will be reported, drug smugglers seem to be avoiding Cuban waters.

These reports confirm my long-held view that we should be working more closely with Cuba on drug interdiction efforts. This is why since 2001 I have sought to include language in the Foreign Operations appropriations bill to fund joint drug interdiction efforts between our two countries. This language is in the Senate version of the fiscal year 2006 bill, and I intend to press to secure its retention in the bill through conference.

From this positive report on the drug interdiction situation, our conversation turned to a troubling report on the current human rights situation in Cuba. Mr. Cason told us that there has been a deterioration of human rights in Cuba in recent years as Castro has cracked down on political dissidents. In 2003, Castro jailed 75 dissidents and has thus far released fewer than 20 from this group. These arrests were followed by others including the arrest of over 100 dissidents earlier in the year. In addition to arrests, Castro has begun to employ other atrocious practices including having dissidents assaulted on the streets and generating demonstrations at the homes of dissidents to prevent them from stepping outside.

This repression has spread to the economic realm as well. In the late 1990s, Castro had opened a very limited window to free enterprise in Cuba by issuing licenses for private businesses. This trend reversed and would have followed the path of China and Vietnam towards a limited market economy and higher living standards. Instead, Castro has abandoned this liberalization and cut back the number of licenses for private business. Both politically and economically there are signs that Cuba is going backwards.

Finally, our conversation turned to the issue of immigration. In an effort to provide a legal outlet for immigration and avoid the massive boatlifts of the past, the United States allows 20,000 Cubans to legally immigrate every year. This number includes family reunifications, visas given out by