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CONTACT: Susan Sullam
410-962-4436

TEAM MARYLAND: GAO REPORT FINDS STRATEGIES IN PLACE TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES FOR BRAC MOVE TO APG

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In another affirming sign that Team Maryland is ready and committed to ensuring the smoothest possible transition of mission and jobs from Fort Monmouth in Monmouth County, New Jersey, to Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Harford County, Maryland, a Government Accountability Office (GAO) assessment released this afternoon noted the Army is aware of and prepared for any potential challenges and has a strategy in place for the full implementation of the move. A copy of the report is available at: <http://www.gao.gov>.

In December 2007, Army Material Command developed a step-by-step timeline for moving assets into Maryland and a detailed funding plan to support the movement of over 5,000 high tech jobs from Fort Monmouth to APG while ensuring no disruption in support for the warfighter. Today's GAO report determines that the Army's strategy, outlined in the December report, effectively accomplishes the moves of missions and jobs to APG while oversight mechanisms will allow the Army to address the challenges associated with the transition of such a highly skilled workforce. The GAO report also provides valuable insight for the Army and members of Team Maryland for how to ensure the most seamless move of these jobs and missions to APG.

“In 2005, the BRAC Commission concluded that moving much of Fort Monmouth's mission to Aberdeen Proving Ground would strengthen the Army's ability to meet its current mission and adapt to future challenges,” said **Senator Benjamin L. Cardin**. “Today's report affirms that the Army has the right mechanisms in place to execute the move.”

“Today's report tells us what we already know: the Army and the Department of Defense (DOD) have a detailed and comprehensive plan to ensure the successful implementation of the BRAC recommendation that creates a new Joint Center of Excellence at APG,” said **Senator Barbara A. Mikulski**, chair of the Maryland delegation and a senior member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee. “I am committed to fighting for whatever support and resources are needed to provide tools and equipment for a seamless transition.”

“I'm pleased that today's GAO report confirms that the upcoming move from Fort Monmouth to Aberdeen Proving Ground is on track to be a success,” said **Congressman Steny Hoyer**. “This affirms the positive partnership first created during the BRAC rounds in the 1990s when Maryland successfully absorbed a significant influx of Department of Defense workers through strong local, state, federal, and private partnerships. We are poised once again to have a smooth and seamless transition.”

“This new GAO report is a reaffirmation of the BRAC recommendations to consolidate missions at Aberdeen Proving Ground,” said **Congressman Roscoe Bartlett**, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee. “The GAO report provides assurance that plans are in place to support the smoothest possible transition of the missions and jobs from Fort Monmouth to Aberdeen Proving Ground.”

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“This BRAC decision has now been addressed in multiple reports, as well as in Congressional hearings, and we continue to see that the Fort Monmouth move is a good move, both for the State of Maryland and for our national security,” said **Congressman Elijah E. Cummings**, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and Readiness Subcommittee. “This most recent GAO report indicates that many of the key challenges we are facing are consistent with those of other 2005 BRAC decisions. It provides a clear analysis of the key challenges being faced by this move, allowing us to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to safeguard its rapid implementation in the most effective and efficient manner possible – including the Army’s ability to directly hire employees, establish necessary infrastructure, and secure proper funding.”

“Today’s GAO report confirms what we already know,” said **Congressman Chris Van Hollen**. “The 2005 BRAC recommendations will bring both opportunities and challenges to our state, but will ultimately make both our military and our region stronger.”

“Team Maryland is diligently working together to ensure a smooth transition as more jobs move from New Jersey to Maryland through the BRAC process. The GAO study proves that Maryland is successfully doing this. Maryland is at the ready to support the warfighter and make sure there is no disruption in their mission,” said **Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger**, a member of the House Appropriations Committee.

“This report again confirms the BRAC Commission’s sound logic for this move to Aberdeen Proving Ground and Maryland,” said **Congressman John Sarbanes**. “We continue to work diligently at the federal, state, and local levels to help the Army complete this transition, with a focus on maintaining the environmental integrity and quality of life of Maryland’s communities.”

“The new GAO report erases all doubt that Maryland’s Aberdeen Proving Ground is the right location,” said **Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards**. “I look forward to working with members of the Maryland Delegation to help ensure a seamless transition for all those involved.”

The 2005 BRAC recommendations will bring thousands of new employees to the state. This includes 10,000 new jobs that will never leave the country, in addition to 85,000 existing jobs on bases and up to 40,000 non-direct jobs.

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