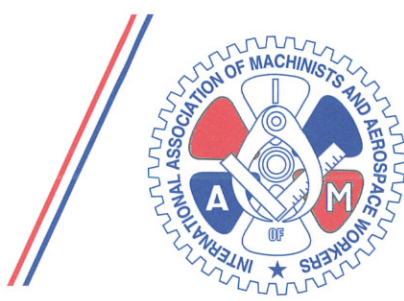


**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



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OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

September 12, 2017

Dear Senator,

I strongly urge you to oppose the McCain-Reed amendment (Number 498) to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This amendment would set in motion a new wave of expensive base closings during a time of constrained budgets and intense global uncertainty, including the very real threat of armed conflict on the Korean peninsula.

The McCain-Reed amendment seeks to save funds and use these savings to address defense readiness shortfalls, but the experience of the last round of base closings in 2005 shows that this is much more difficult and complex than was originally projected. The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round was predicted to save over \$35 billion while incurring costs of \$21 billion. In reality, the *cost* of the closings and realignments was more than \$35 billion while the savings are now projected to be less than \$10 billion over twenty years. This is because the closing of a defense facility is an enormous economic disruption to a local community. Often there are serious environmental hazards that need to be cleaned up. Tax dollars to fund schools and other essential services like police and fire protection dry up. Displaced workers and communities need significant transition assistance for retraining and economic development. The McCain-Reed amendment would solve this financial problem by capping “implementation costs” at a mere \$5 billion and, thus, leaving highly distressed communities and working families without the vital assistance needed to recover from a government imposed economic disaster.

Significantly, the amendment would effectively take local community involvement out of the BRAC process by eliminating the nonpartisan BRAC commission and leaving the highly political decision of which defense facilities would be closed in the hands of the Pentagon.

As a nation we need to be prudent in how we spend hard earned tax dollars while we make the necessary investments to ensure our economic and national security. Congress can start this process by getting rid of the so-called Budget Control Act and the looming threat of sequestration that would impose draconian budget cuts. Congress also needs to stop funding the federal government with short term budget resolutions that, as Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis has pointed out to Congress, result in less training for our military, expensive deferred maintenance of aircraft and ships, and higher acquisition costs. Taking these important steps will result in real long term cost savings and a more secure America.

Please contact Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert Martinez, Jr.
International President