



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1100 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1100

COMPTROLLER

APP 11-11-11

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2010, Public Law 111-118, Congress appropriated \$300 million in the Defense Health Program (DHP), Operation and Maintenance (O&M) account for transportation issues stemming from the realignments associated with the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions. The explanatory statement accompanying the Act stated that, after reviewing the report of the BRAC Health Systems Advisory Subcommittee of the Defense Health Board, "there remains deep concern about the state of the master plan to complete world class medical facilities." The explanatory statement also requested that the Department provide a report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations detailing its plans for spending the \$300 million funding increase. This letter responds to that request.

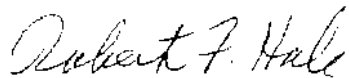
If Congress provides no further authority, the Department could only use the funds to address its own medical transportation infrastructure requirements associated with medical-related BRAC recommendations. Additionally, because O&M funds were appropriated rather than construction funds, the Department's use of those funds would be limited to actions that do not involve construction and that qualify for O&M funding. Absent further authority, the Department would use whatever portion of the funds is required for non-construction transportation needs associated with medical-related decisions made by BRAC 2005.

The Department recognizes that some BRAC 2005 recommendations have caused transportation problems in the communities surrounding those military installations receiving new missions. Some of these can be addressed under the existing Defense Access Road (DAR) program, where we have funded a total of \$51 million in transportation projects to date, and have requested an additional \$20 million in FY 2011. The Department is not aware of any unfunded DAR requirements.

The criteria used to determine whether a project qualifies under DAR are limited, however. In particular, they may not adequately address the scenario in which a defense action causes a significant increase in traffic congestion, as is likely to occur in one or more cases as a result of BRAC 2005 consolidation. In order to undertake transportation related construction projects itself or to transfer the funding to another government agency that can directly execute transportation related projects, the Department would need specific authorization.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the other congressional defense committees. Thank you for your continued support on defense matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert F. Hale". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

Robert F. Hale

cc:

The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member