

*Making the Promise of BRAC a Reality for Maryland***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Maryland was one of a handful of states that stands to gain high paying jobs and population from the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations. Maryland benefited greatly from its extensive military infrastructure—facilities like the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Fort Meade, the NSA, and the National Naval Medical Center—along with its talented workforce and strategic location near Washington. Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown believe that making the promise of BRAC a reality for Maryland will require an unprecedented effort to marshal the planning and financial resources of State and local governments. An O'Malley/Brown Administration will:

1. **Establish a BRAC executive coordinator with the authority to bring together all executive agencies to strengthen our installations – including workforce readiness, education, business development, and physical and community infrastructure – and make sure Maryland's investments strengthens the mission and programs supported at these locations.**
2. **Integrate federal, state, and local efforts to provide a regional approach to planning to ensure that a building frenzy does not compromise quality of life, trump local comprehensive plans, and overburden local infrastructure.**

**Introduction**

In 2005, the Pentagon announced plans to close approximately 180 military installations hoping to achieve \$50 billion in cost savings over the next 20 years. While this announcement was met with fear around the country, Maryland was one of a handful of states that stands to gain high paying jobs and population from the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations. Maryland benefited greatly from its extensive military infrastructure along with its talented workforce and strategic location near Washington. The potential exists for the creation of as many as 60,000 direct and related jobs over the next decade.

The BRAC recommendations, now enacted, will result in significant gains to such installations as Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Ft. George G. Meade, Andrews Air Force Base and the Bethesda Naval Hospital, over the next six years. These projected increases will provide many economic opportunities within the affected communities. However, the State must be proactive in addressing transportation, workforce, education and housing issues.

The BRAC realignment has the potential to transform the State's economic, employment, transportation, and housing landscapes for generations to come. Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown believe that making the promise of BRAC a reality for Maryland will require an unprecedented effort to marshal the planning and financial resources of State and local governments as well as working with local, community and business leaders, our Congressional Delegation and the Defense Department to support the future and changing defense needs of the United States.

### **Appoint a BRAC Executive**

An O'Malley/Brown Administration will charge a member of the Governor's executive staff with marshalling all of the resources within State government to support our federal installations, including BRAC implementation at APG, Ft. Meade and the National Military Medical Complex in Bethesda. This high level "one stop shop" will have the authority to bring together all executive agencies to strengthen our installations – including workforce readiness, education, business development, and physical and community infrastructure – and make sure Maryland's investments strengthens the mission and programs supported at these locations.

***Better Coordinate BRAC activities.*** The BRAC executive will serve as the focal point for BRAC efforts by:

- Convening a BRAC sub-cabinet. The sub-cabinet would be chaired by the Lt. Governor, staffed by the BRAC executive, and include the Secretaries of Budget and Management, Business and Economic Development, Environment, Housing and Community Development, Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Natural Resources, Planning, Transportation, and Education. Anthony Brown's military and legislative experiences make him the ideal person to ensure that we achieve the requisite levels of planning, coordination, and cooperation across State government so that Maryland maximizes the benefits of BRAC. The BRAC executive would be responsible for sharing timely and accurate information with all stakeholders and levels of government.
- Working with local jurisdictions (elected officials, growth management committees, economic and workforce development organizations, appropriate military installations and community groups) to prepare for and plan for growth issues.
- Collaborating with the federal delegation and State legislators to identify federal and State funds for prioritized local projects.

***Assemble a Regional Business Advisory Board for BRAC Implementation.*** Working with the BRAC executive, Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown will constitute a non-partisan board of business leaders to identify funding needs and recommend specific strategies for balancing growth for the impacted areas. This public-private partnership will involve the best and brightest minds to focus on the implementation obstacles and the quality of life concerns that will consume our state. Members on this board must be sensitive to the needs of the burgeoning

military intelligence corridor that stretches from Aberdeen Proving Ground through Baltimore to Ft. Meade along with growth resulting from the National Institutes of Health.

***Set policy and budget recommendations.*** In concert with the Regional Business Advisory Board and the BRAC sub-cabinet, the BRAC executive will make policy and budget recommendations to the Governor, and where appropriate the State legislature and Congress, including:

- Expedient planning, review and implementation of BRAC related transit and transportation projects consistent with Smart Growth criteria
- Impact aid to local jurisdictions
- Workforce housing
- Environmental and natural resource concerns
- Educational and magnet school programs
- Utility needs (i.e. water and wastewater expansion and gas and electric demands at impacted installations)
- Tax credits and incentives for the hiring and training of low-wage employees by BRAC-related defense contractors
- Security clearance processes
- State and local zoning needs and revisions
- Discussions with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, universities, colleges and community colleges to ensure that curricula meets the growing needs of Maryland's BRAC-related functions

***Publish an annual BRAC budget.*** It is critical that communities impacted by BRAC know that the necessary investments are being made to realize the full potential of BRAC and mitigate all potential negative consequences. Across operating and capital budgets, the development and publication of an annual BRAC budget would enable elected officials and stakeholders to understand and evaluate the totality of investments being made to advance BRAC-related efforts.

### **Integrate Federal, State, and Local BRAC Planning Efforts**

State and local planning shops must contemplate, reflect, and track all public sector efforts related to BRAC. To maximize success, we need a regional approach to planning and soliciting federal funds from Maryland's Congressional delegation. An investment program of this size—DOD estimates that construction costs at APG alone may reach \$1.2 billion—necessitates creative approaches to ensure that a building frenzy does not compromise quality of life, trump local comprehensive plans, and overburden local infrastructure. An O'Malley/Brown Administration will promote the following:

***Expanding use of Enhanced Use Leasing (EUL) to work through BRAC-related construction needs.*** The State should expect construction delays. As a result, State planning efforts should promote creative approaches like Enhanced Use Leasing (EUL). EULs reduce construction and operating costs, maximize use of property on post (as opposed to residential areas), and increase homeland security and mission performance by co-locating many contractors alongside the federal offices they service. EULs have proven successful already in the Greater Baltimore area,

which boasts three of the largest EUL proposals ever: two at APG and one anticipated for public announcement in August at Ft. Meade.

***Undertaking effective planning: workforce housing.*** To increase workforce housing in the BRAC growth areas, an O'Malley/Brown administration will work with the Secretary of Housing and Community Development to present alternative methods to increase the capacity of the Maryland Housing Fund and the Department's bond program to provide qualified workforce housing, subsidized mortgage rates, down-payment assistance, closing cost help, mortgage insurance and to support development projects that ensure workforce housing and workforce grants for low and moderate-income families and vital public employees such as police, firefighters and teachers.

***Undertaking effective planning: transportation.*** MDOT's current BRAC transit plan has a 30-year implementation schedule that encourages "pie in the sky" commitments and serves as a recipe for non-action. There is no evidence to suggest that MDOT has preserved room within the Transportation Trust Fund to address the growth dynamic linked to BRAC. Without appropriate transportation options for the influx of new individuals, agencies and businesses, productivity will be impacted. Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown will aggressively pursue projects to mitigate congestion and air pollution by seeking real solutions within years, not decades, including:

- Working with Maryland's Congressional Delegation to establish priorities for federal assistance for transportation improvements required in the BRAC-affected communities.
- Forming a BRAC working group with local, state, and federal officials to expedite the environmental review and make urgent improvements and request immediate reimbursement of funds from the federal government for specific projects, including necessary mass transit rail expansions.
- Looking to create a Maryland Installation Facility and Transportation Improvement Fund and program. Such a fund would be akin to a tax increment financing program. Martin O'Malley and Anthony Brown would establish and dedicate revenue by an increase in assessment for all property in a BRAC district (for only the state property tax) up to \$40 million annually. Proceeds from the fund should be allocated by the BRAC executive, in consultation with the Governor and the Secretary of MDOT, to highway priority transportation infrastructure improvements in BRAC-affected communities.
- Working with the federal government to set up additional telecommuting centers in the state to allow government units and contractors to start the local hiring now and avoid gridlock.

***Undertaking effective planning: education.*** The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has done little to help local school districts prepare for increased enrollments. A search for "BRAC" on the MSDE website yields zero results. The new Aberdeen High School opened

in 2004 and has already exceeded capacity due to growth in the area. Harford County's response has been strong and swift—\$200 million for school construction.

***Working to amend Federal law in the Department of Defense Appropriations Authorization to facilitate infrastructure planning and coordination between BRAC affected military installations and local governments.*** This language should stipulate that the Secretary of Defense direct commanders of all military installations netting direct job changes as a result of BRAC establish committees with all local governments located within ten miles of the military installations and within the state in which the installation is located to examine the impacts of new jobs upon land use patterns and transportation infrastructure of the neighboring communities, and to develop recommendations to address such issues.

***Aggressively recruiting employees from New Jersey and Northern Virginia.*** An O'Malley/Brown Administration will travel to New Jersey and Northern Virginia and take the following tangible steps to help permanently attract new families to Maryland:

- Developing a down payment assistance program. Modeled after highly successful Live Baltimore program, this program will provide incentives for transferred employees to buy homes instead of renting apartments.
- Offering job fairs and employment counseling for BRAC spouses.
- Waiving the one-year residency requirement for in-state tuition at Maryland's colleges and universities. Similar to policy promoted during BRAC efforts at Patuxent River Naval Air Station in the 1990s.