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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ROSA L. DeLAURO
3RD DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

July 13, 2008

The Honorable Pete Geren
Secretary
United States Department of the Army
Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-1600

Dear Secretary Geren,

I am writing regarding the proposed construction of a new Armed Services Reserve Center, Organizational Maintenance Shop and Army Maintenance Support Activity (ASRC, OMS & AMSA) in Middletown, Connecticut. This facility was approved and Middletown, Connecticut was designated via the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Final and Approved Recommendations.

The Middletown community is open to the idea of being home to this new Armed Services Reserve Center, however, serious concerns have been raised regarding the site-identification process and, in particular, the newly identified preferred site located on Boardman Lane in Middletown. This site, though locally zoned for industrial use, is home to an operating farm as well as several acres of undisturbed, open space. Additionally the property abuts several residential neighborhoods. Local residents are understandably concerned that the construction and operation of this Armed Services Reserve Center would irreparably harm both the proposed property as well as the existing neighborhoods. They have recently posed several concerns to me that I believe the Army should fully address prior to moving forward at this site.

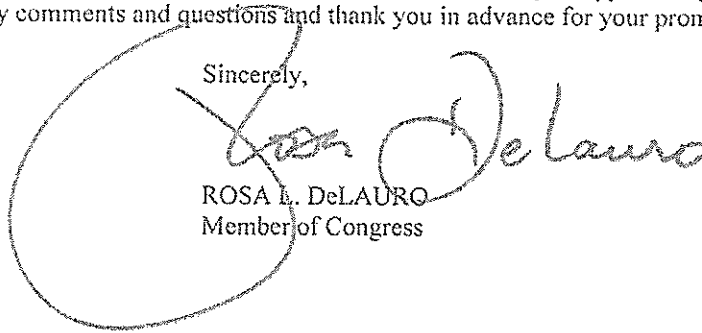
- 1) Boardman Lane is a secondary road that is inadequate to accommodate the added traffic and the specific nature of the traffic flow into the new facility. Currently there is a prohibition of truck traffic on Boardman Lane.
- 2) Middle Street, a cross street with Boardman Lane, is a two-lane thoroughfare that already has significant commuter traffic flow.
- 3) Adjacent roads such as Bell Street and Sawmill Lane are small roads that are used by cyclists and hikers that could not accommodate large military vehicles and trucks without seriously impacting regular and pedestrian traffic.
- 4) The proposed parcel of land is isolated from the main commercial and retail areas of Middletown. Placement of the facility on that parcel of land would not be of great economic benefit to the city as it is likely that military and civilian personnel would travel to the closer towns of Berlin and Cromwell.
- 5) The use of this property by the Army would mean a loss of tax revenue to the City given its current Interstate Travel (IT) zoning designation.
- 6) The property is located between two (2) trap-rock ridges which would require extensive blasting in order to make the property viable for the proposed facility. Such blasting could affect residential structures such as homes and wells over 2,000 feet away.
- 7) Water pressure may not be adequate to meet the water consumption needs of the new facility in addition to the needs of neighboring Westfield residents. In fact, there have been incidents in which newly constructed homes had difficulty easily accessing wells in the area.

8) This property is surrounded by residential lots as well as an historic cemetery.

Given the mounting local opposition to the construction of this facility at the Boardman Lane location, it would seem to me that, as was the case with the original preferred site on Freeman Road, further environmental assessment or investigation is a waste of both time and resources. It is my understanding that City officials have identified other possible options which may not been fully vetted. I would again urge the site-identification team to work with the City of Middletown's Economic Development personnel to select a site which both meets the Army's specifications and requirements while also serving the best interests of the Middletown community.

As I am sure you can understand my constituents are anxious for some additional details regarding these issues. I would once again strongly urge that the Army and/or its site identification team fully consider the issue and concerns that have been raised by local residents as it would seem that these render this site unsuitable for this project. In working with the City of Middletown, I am confident that you will be able to identify a more appropriate location for this facility. I appreciate your time and consideration of my comments and questions and thank you in advance for your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A large, handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosa DeLauro". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

ROSA L. DeLAURO
Member of Congress