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Ameze Washington

July 30, 1993

The Honorable John Murtha
Chairman, Defense Appropriations Subcommittee
2423 Rayburn HOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Murtha:

As the Chairman of the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees, I am writing on behalf of the Board to express our unified support for the establishment of a CSU campus on land conveyed under public benefit transfer in accordance with the procedures contained in the base closure law. Establishing such a campus will eventually provide education opportunities for over 25,000 students who for the most part are the first in their families to attend college and who are atypical of the traditional college student.

The California State University has applied for, with strong support from the surrounding communities and the State, the conveyance of over 1200 acres and the corresponding buildings on the Fort Ord military base for the establishment of a comprehensive four year university. The federal Department of Education, which would sponsor the public benefit transfer, has indicated its strong support for such a project.

In order to turn the conveyed property into a viable four-year institution of higher education, the buildings need to be converted, renovated and upgraded to meet health, safety and seismic standards and ADA requirements. Over a four-year period such upgrading would require \$136 million in total, with at least \$25 million allocated in the first year. As I am sure you are well aware, California is experiencing a serious downturn in its economy from the number of military bases situated in the state that are scheduled for closure and from the downsizing of the defense industry. For example, in the period from June 1990 to December 1992, the State of California alone accounted for 27 percent of the total U.S. unemployment. It is clear that external assistance will be required if the campus is to become a reality.

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We believe that converting this property into a four-year, comprehensive university can serve as a model for other areas which are experiencing base closures. Additionally, this conversion will provide an economic stability to the communities surrounding the base in a period of upheaval and significant stress.

The CSU Board of Trustees supports the efforts that are being made in the Congress to obtain funding for this conversion. As Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, it is important for you to have a clear understanding of the projects and activities for which funds are being sought, and to be able to assess the outcome and benefits that will result from the funding and the support such funding has. Establishing a CSU campus at Fort Ord is a project which will have a long-lasting effect on the region and the State, will effect the lives of many, and which has strong support at all levels.

Sincerely,



Anthony M. Vitti
Chairman

kmc

cc: Governor Pete Wilson
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Diane Feinstein
Representative Ron Dellums
Representative Sam Farr
Chancellor Barry Munitz