

Texas sustains biggest hit on base closure list issued by Pentagon

□ The closings will cost Texas 7,000 jobs.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon swung its base-closings axe Tuesday, proposing its deepest cuts in defense-rich Texas.

The state would sustain the biggest job loss under the closure and realignment list issued by Defense Secretary William Perry, with a net loss of nearly 7,000 jobs.

Texans in Congress vowed an all-out fight before the independent Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, which now takes the Pentagon recommendations under consideration. The commission's list, due July 1, must be accepted or rejected in its entirety by Congress and the president.

Three of the 15 major installations proposed for closure by the Pentagon are located in Texas: Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, Red River Army Depot near Texarkana and Reese AFB in Lubbock. Their closure would cost Texas some 10,300 jobs — though gains from other states would reduce the state's net loss to just under 7,000 jobs.

A fourth Texas facility, Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, would find itself stripped of a pilot training mission that has been its pride and joy for more than 40 years.

Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, noted that the Texas congressional delegation has been battle-hardened by the three previous closure rounds.

New Mexico would face the second-largest hit, losing more than 5,100 jobs; while Alabama would be cut by almost 5,000.

Potential winners in Texas include Fort Bliss in El Paso; Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio;

Kelly and Lackland Air Force bases in San Antonio; Laughlin AFB in Del Rio; the Lone Star Ammunition Plant adjacent to Red River Army depot; Sheppard AFB at Wichita Falls; and Naval Air Station Kingsville. All of those facilities

Base and its nearly 4,100 military and civilian jobs, acknowledged that getting off the list is a difficult proposition.

Brooks' bad news wasn't shared by San Antonio's four other defense installations, which all stand to gain jobs or

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