



NFFE News Story

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LOCAL 1429 AND CONGRESSMAN TEAM UP TO PROTECT JOBS AT LETTERKENNY ARMY DEPOT

Last week in Chambersburg, PA, the members of NFFE Local 1429 met with Congressman Bill Shuster (R-PA) to discuss strategy for protecting Letterkenny Army Depot from closure in the event of another round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said on Feb. 24, 2014 that the Pentagon will ask Congress for another round of BRAC for 2017. That message was reiterated on April 2, 2014, when Katherine Hammack, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment called on Congress to authorize a 2017 BRAC in Congressional testimony. While Congress has yet to authorize another round of BRAC, preparations for protecting installations considered vulnerable, including Letterkenny, are already underway.



Local 1429 Meets with Congressman Bill Shuster (R-PA)

In the meeting with the Union, Congressman Shuster expressed the need and his willingness to work with NFFE Local 1429 to protect Letterkenny from downsizing or closure. Discussions are underway to establish a group similar to the "Friends of Letterkenny" coalition that was successful in protecting the Pennsylvania Army depot from harm during the 2005 round of BRAC, a coalition of which NFFE Locals 1429 and 1442 were key participants.

"It's all about the team," said Shuster to reporters after the meeting. "You need a buy-in from everybody. We have 18 months to get ourselves in shape. We'll be working this every day [in Washington, D.C.]"

The members of NFFE Local 1429 shared their concerns about the prospect of a closure or significant downsizing at Letterkenny. As the largest employer in Chambersburg and the surrounding areas, the Army depot serves as the economic heart of the region. Union leadership also expressed a commitment to work with Congressman Shuster and his colleagues in Congress, along with the state of Pennsylvania to defend Letterkenny from BRAC.

"The Union is committed to protecting our jobs here at Letterkenny Army Depot," said Chris Barlow, President of NFFE Local 1429. "We take the threat of another BRAC very seriously, and we are going to do everything we can make sure our work stays here. That is why we asked Congressman Shuster to come and speak with our members. We want to get on the same page and get geared up for this fight if another round of BRAC is coming."