

CRATER PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

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Dennis K. Morris, Executive Director

October 22, 2009

Mr. Ralph Conner
Acting Associate Administrator
Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
U. S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW, Room 6105
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Mr. Conner:

Please allow this correspondence to serve as an official request of the Crater Planning District Commission to have a detailed review of the federal per diem rates that are currently in place for the Fort Lee, Virginia region.

The Crater Commission represents the localities that surround Fort Lee (cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell and Petersburg and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie and Prince George) and is heavily involved in identifying the impacts of the BRAC-related growth at Fort Lee upon the surrounding localities.

There is an obvious unevenness in the Fort Lee area's per diem rates with lodging at a low of \$70 and meals at \$36 to lodging at \$129 and meals at \$51.

In addition, the current Fort Lee per diem rates have not been adjusted for some time. We are certain that this situation is causing confusion and adding to the complexity of Fort Lee's lodging concerns.

The Fort Lee vicinity is a growing urban area, and yet one defined per diem region within the area is the lowest in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

With the above as background, the Crater Commission requests clarification on the following:

- 1) What federal entity has the authority to identify which hotels in the region may be used for temporary lodging for soldiers on assignment to Fort Lee?

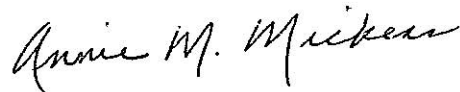
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- 2) What federal entity, if any, has the authority to direct military personnel to particular hotels?
- 3) What guidance is provided to federal personnel about the location of lodging they seek when on temporary duty?
- 4) What are the criteria for establishing per diem rates?
- 5) What process is there to reevaluate the size and location of per diem regions?
- 6) What process is available to request a reconsideration of the published FY 2010 per diem lodging rates?
- 7) How can concerned officials in this region provide input and factual information to your agency in advance of the FY 2011 per diem rates being set?

With the obvious anticipated growth taking place both on Fort Lee and off-post within the surrounding area, now is the ideal time to rectify a clear inequitable situation.

On behalf of the Crater region, I want to thank you for your attention to this most important issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Annie M. Mickens
Chair
Mayor of the City of Petersburg