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Athens, GA - In response to this morning's announcement that the Athens Navy Supply Corp School has initially been selected for closure and relocation, 12th District Congressman John Barrow (D-GA) issued the following statement:

"Today's announcement is a disappointing blow to our community, to our local veterans, and to the future of the United States military. Closing or realigning bases in times of war is a mistake in and of itself, but deciding to close a base whose core capabilities are smarter, faster, and cheaper than any other Department of Defense school is indefensible.

"The Navy Supply Corps School fully complies with the BRAC criteria. It is the blueprint for a 21st

Century American military installation - a cost effective, logistical think tank that provides state-of-the-art training to all branches of our armed forces.

Being in Athens makes it possible for the Navy School to keep its costs down, while giving members of the military access to research and educational opportunities available nowhere else.

In addition, 22,000 military retirees from across the area rely on the Navy Supply School for their medical and dental care.

"Since the last round of base closings in 1995, this base has done more with less, increasing its number of missions and training facilities, while decreasing costs. It's a model of military efficiency and success.

"I can't forecast the final outcome in this round of base closings, but I can promise that I'll continue to make the case that the Navy and the entire military defense infrastructure are better off with this base in Athens than anywhere else."

Congressman Barrow will join Governor Perdue, Senator Chambliss and Senator Isakson later today for a press conference in Athens. Details to follow.

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