

# Military base realignments and closures

1988, 1991, 1993, 1995 and 2005

**June 6, 2017**

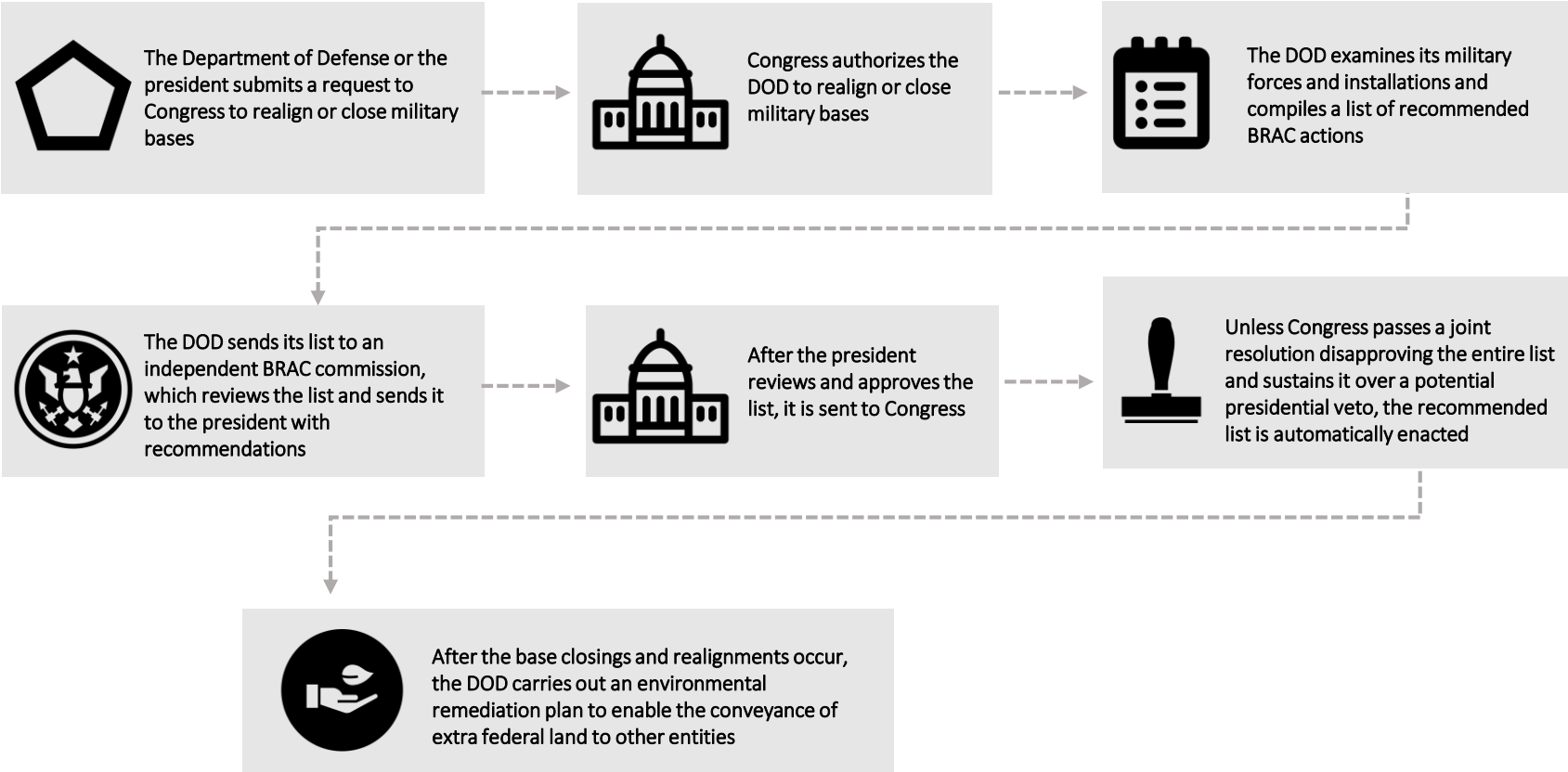
**Producer:** Libbie Wilcox

**Director:** Alistair Taylor

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# The BRAC process was set up to better address the US military needs after the Cold War

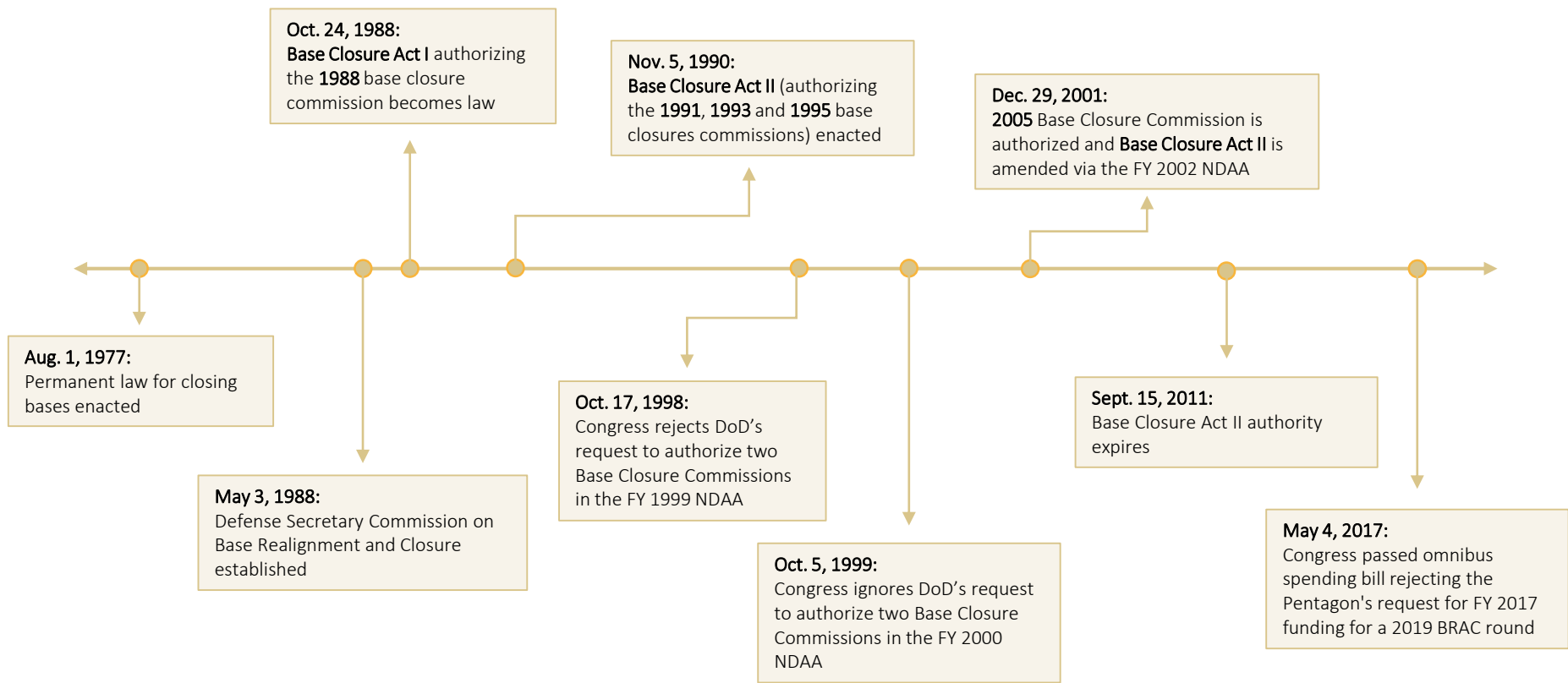
## How the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process works



Sources: Tadlock Cowan, “Military base closures: socioeconomic impacts,” Congressional Research Service, February 7, 2012.

# The complex process of closing bases is often marked by power struggles between the legislative and executive branches

## Major events in the evolution of BRAC



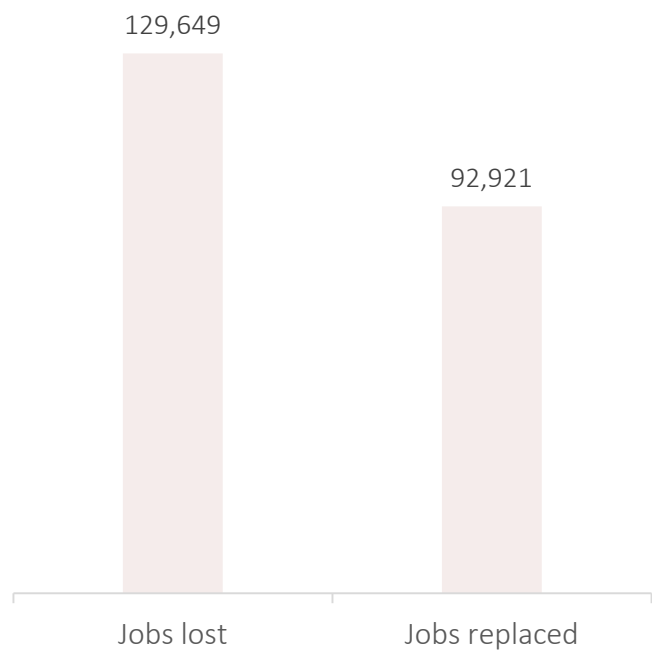
Sources: George Schlossberg, "How Congress cleared the bases: a legislative history of BRAC," Journal of Defense Communities, 2012.

# Most communities affected by the first four BRAC rounds recovered from its economic impact

## Economic recovery progress report

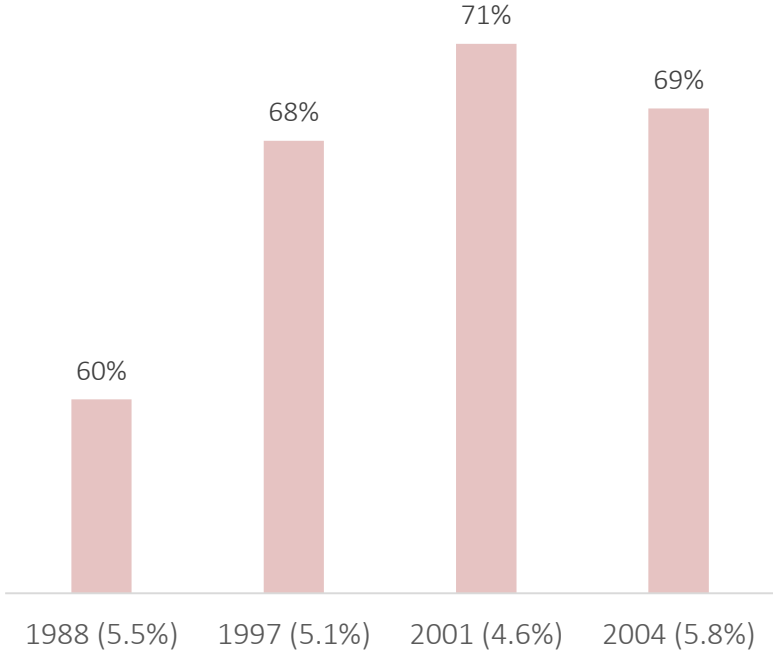
### Number of local jobs recovered in BRAC-affected communities

As of 2003 from previous 4 BRAC rounds



### Number of BRAC-affected communities at or below the average national unemployment rate

Through the implementation of 1995 BRAC rounds

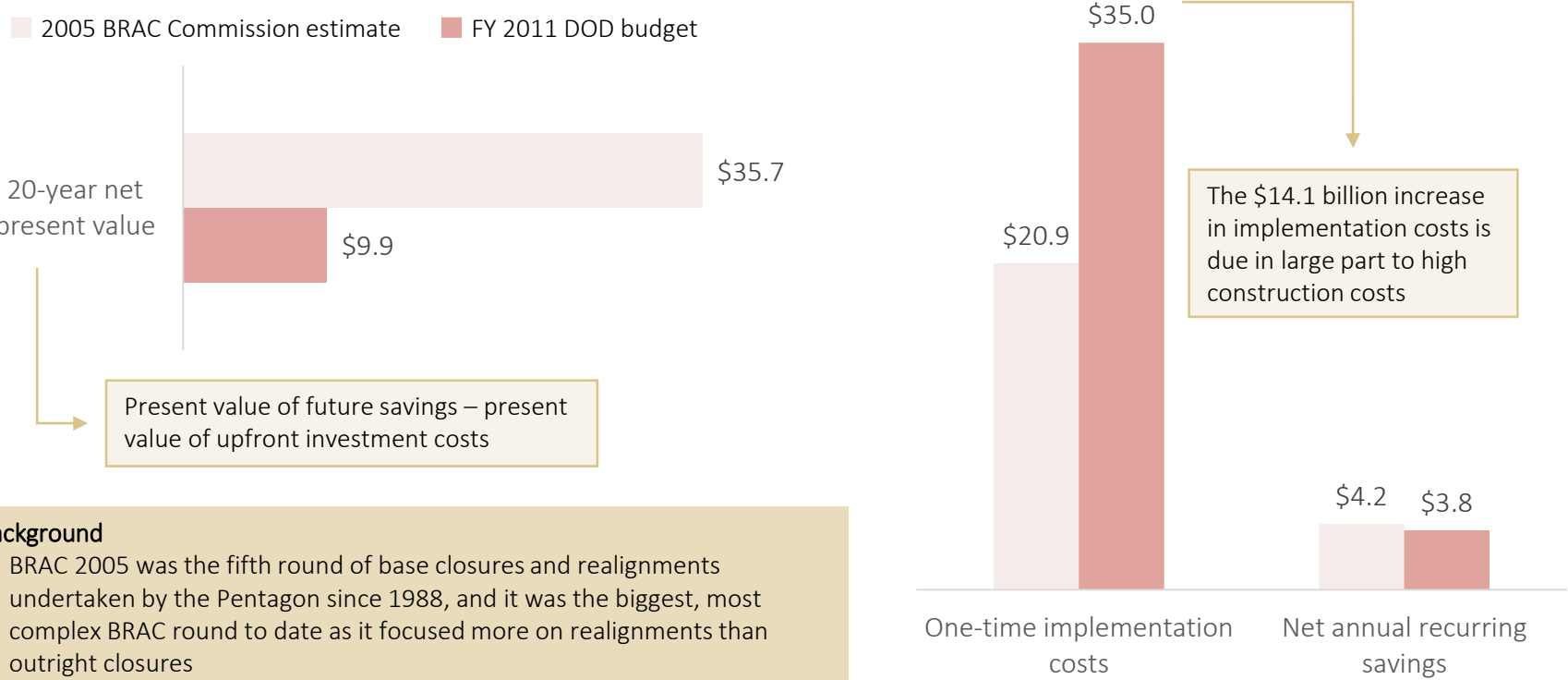


Sources: US Government Accountability Office, "Military base closures: updated status of prior base realignments and closures," January 2005.

# Reluctance in Congress to approve another BRAC round stems in part from negative perceptions of the 2005 BRAC process

## DOD 2005 BRAC cost estimates vs. results

Current-year dollars in billions



**Background**

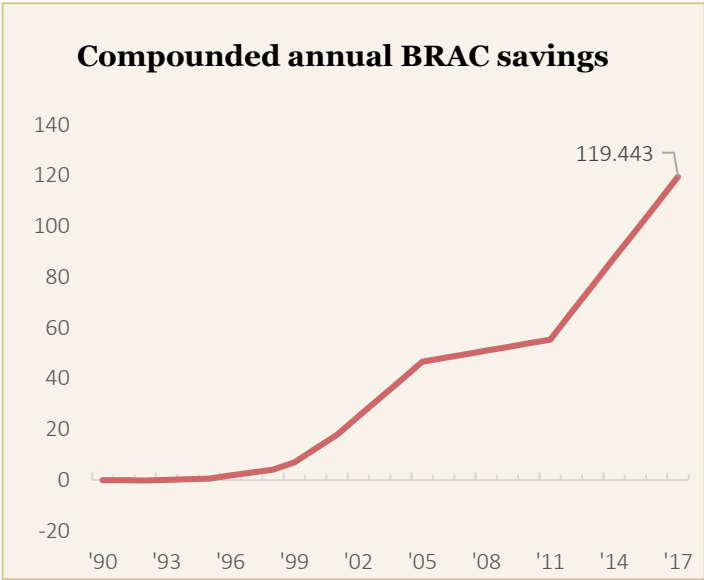
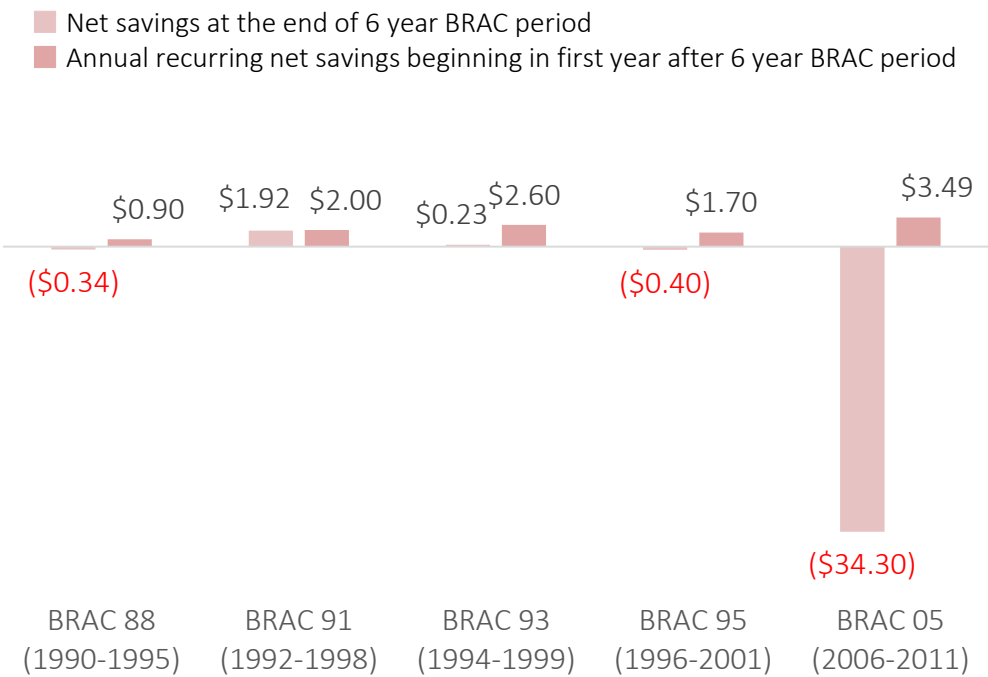
- BRAC 2005 was the fifth round of base closures and realignments undertaken by the Pentagon since 1988, and it was the biggest, most complex BRAC round to date as it focused more on realignments than outright closures
- The process dramatically exceeded original cost estimates and is widely considered to have been mishandled

Sources: Jim Garamone, "Pentagon official says DOD needs more BRAC," DOD.gov, Nov. 22, 2013; Rebecca Kheel, "Pentagon says 22% of military bases will be excess by 2019," The Hill, April 15, 2016; U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Military base realignments and closures, updated costs and savings estimates from BRAC 2005," June 29, 2012.

# The combined savings from the past five BRACs has saved the Pentagon around \$120 billion

## Costs and savings from BRAC

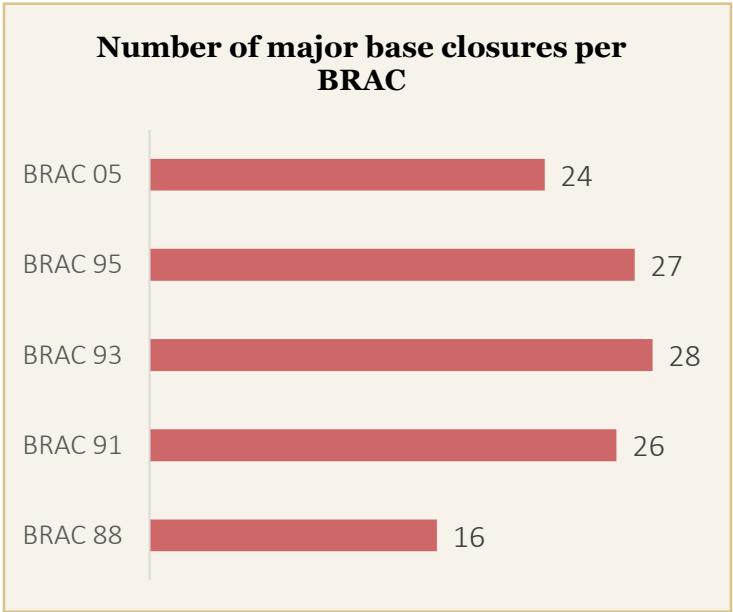
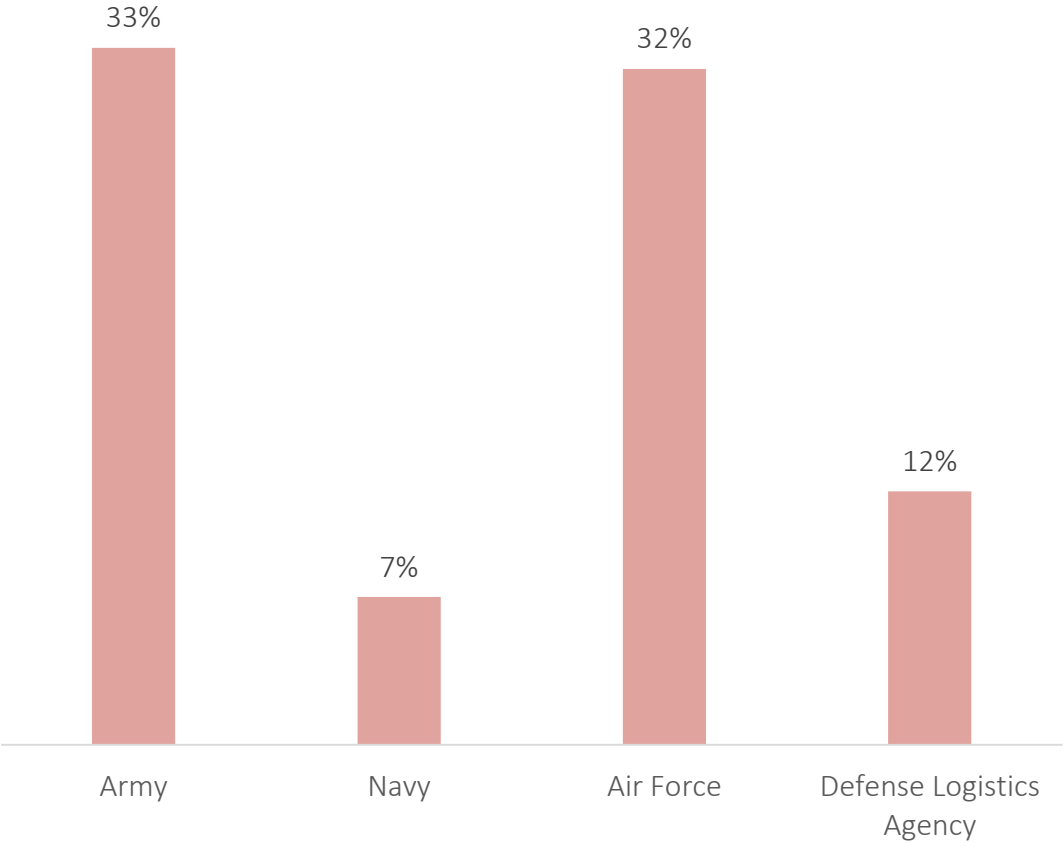
*In billions of dollars*



Sources: "DOD base realignment and closure: executive summary, fiscal year 2017 budget estimates," Department of Defense, February 2016; "Comparing BRAC Rounds," Department of Defense, October, 2005.

# The DOD estimates that by 2019, 22% of bases will be excess

Excess infrastructure broken down by service for 2019



Sources: Jim Garamone, "Pentagon official says DOD needs more BRAC," DOD.gov, Nov. 22, 2013; Rebecca Kheel, "Pentagon says 22% of military bases will be excess by 2019," The Hill, April 15, 2016; U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Military base realignments and closures, updated costs and savings estimates from BRAC 2005," June 29, 2012.

# President Trump’s budget requests authorization for a new BRAC round beginning in 2021

## The path to a sixth BRAC round



- DOD has not conducted a BRAC round since 2005, but has requested BRAC authority every year since 2013



- According to the Pentagon, another BRAC round would close down 5% of the estimated 22% excess infrastructure and save an estimated \$2 billion or more annually by 2027



- In FY 2018 budget negotiations, it is likely a new BRAC round will be a subject of debate



- Democratic leadership on the House and Senate Armed Services Committee support base closures, but many representatives with bases in their districts oppose closures due to concerns over the effect on local communities

### Major players in Congress

#### Senate Armed Services Committee



Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)



Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI)

#### House Armed Services Committee



Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX)



Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA)

Sources: Office of Management and Budget, “A new foundation for American greatness,” May 23, 2017; Leo Shane III, “McCain blasts congressional ‘cowardice’ in avoiding base closings,” Military Times, January 24, 2017.