



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

OCT -6 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Implementation of the Naming Commission's Recommendations

The installations and facilities that our Department operates are more than vital national security assets. They are also powerful public symbols of our military, and of course, they are the places where our Service members and their families work and live. The names of these installations and facilities should inspire all those who call them home, fully reflect the history and the values of the United States, and commemorate the best of the republic that we are all sworn to protect.

To uphold these values and respond to the will of the United States Congress, and pursuant to section 370 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, I established the Commission on the Naming of Items of the DoD that Commemorate the Confederate States of America or Any Person Who Served Voluntarily with the Confederate States of America (the Naming Commission). After 18 months of work, including extensive consultations with experts, historians, and the communities rooted in the bases in question, the Naming Commission has completed its analysis and has provided me with recommendations in its final report, including its plan pursuant to subsection (c)(4) of section 370 (the renaming plan) to remove from all assets of the DoD "the names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America (commonly referred to as the 'Confederacy') or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America."

I concur with all of the Naming Commission's recommendations, including the renaming plan. In the words of Admiral Michelle M. Howard, the Naming Commission's chair, the commission's goal was to inspire Service members and military communities "with names or values that have meaning." The Department's implementation of the Commission's recommendations will do just that — and will give proud new names that are rooted in their local communities and that honor American heroes whose valor, courage, and patriotism exemplify the very best of the United States military.

I fully support the efforts and recommendations of the Naming Commission on this important matter, and I am committed to implementing all of the Commission's recommendations as soon as possible, subject to the expiration of the 90-day waiting period mandated by section 370(g), and no later than January 1, 2024. To that end, I direct the relevant DoD and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Component heads to begin planning for implementation of the Commission's recommendations immediately.

Although the Department will not implement the renaming plan prior to the expiration of the 90-day waiting period on December 18, 2022, several of the Naming Commission's

recommendations — including those related to changes to the Department’s memorialization and naming processes — are not subject to the Congressional waiting period. I therefore direct the relevant DoD and OSD Component heads to begin to implement those recommendations immediately. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) will provide additional guidance for the implementation of those recommendations.

In addition, I have established a Naming Commission Implementation Working Group (the Working Group) led by the USD(A&S) to oversee the full implementation of the Commission’s recommendations. In support of the Working Group, each relevant DoD and OSD Component head will review the Commission’s report and develop a plan of action and milestones (POAM) for implementation of all of the Naming Commission’s recommendations. Each DoD and OSD Component head shall submit its POAM to the Working Group no later than November 18, 2022. The USD(A&S) shall issue a planning memorandum providing pre-implementation instructions to relevant DoD and OSD Component heads no later than October 13, 2022.

DoD and OSD Component heads should plan to use their existing resources to implement all recommendations.

I thank the Commission for its tremendous work and dedication, its determination to respond to the directives of our elected representatives in Congress, and its sensitivity to the concerns and emotions raised by this important discussion. The Commission’s thorough and historically informed work has put the Department on a path to meet Congressional intent — and to remove from U.S. military facilities all names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederacy. The Commission has chosen names that echo with honor, patriotism, and history — names that will inspire generations of Service members to defend our democracy and our Constitution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. J. Austin", is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.