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**From Tuesday's Sun**

### **BRAC report puts price tag for preparations in billions**

**Lt. Gov. Brown unveils final 'action plan' focusing on education, transportation**

By Bradley Olson

Sun reporter

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Maryland will need to spend billions of dollars on work force training, education and transportation projects to prepare for an influx of more than 15,000 defense-related workers and their families, Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown said Monday.

"There's considerable work to be done in Maryland," said Brown, who unveiled the final report of a committee formed by Gov. Martin O'Malley to ready the state for the thousands who will relocate here with their families as part of the Defense Department's extensive restructuring of its domestic military bases. "The action plan is our playbook for success."

Brown said the state will focus most of its effort on two areas: education and transportation. The state needs to revamp math, science, engineering and technology curricula and add other secondary and higher education programs to prepare state residents to fill the transferred military posts and related high-tech civilian jobs, Brown said.

The plan also calls for the state to invest \$1.6 billion in 26 transportation projects in the next five years related to the base realignment and closure program, which is often referred to by its Pentagon acronym, BRAC.

The report identifies nearly \$800 million in transportation, school, and water and sewer projects that need to be funded next year alone, and it singles out about 120 projects in need of funding, although officials have cautioned that the state will need to spend far more to prepare for as many as 28,000 households that will come by 2011 with the new military posts and accompanying civilian jobs. Most of the jobs will be added in Anne Arundel and Harford counties.

Speaking on behalf of O'Malley's "BRAC Subcabinet," which represents 11 state agencies, Brown also called on the General Assembly to pass new legislation that would fund higher education initiatives directly tied to the new work force and facilitate cooperation between local, state and federal agencies on development related to the expansion.

Lawmakers are expected to consider the legislation when the General Assembly convenes next month for its regular 90-day session.

"Maryland is strong, and Maryland is ready for BRAC and all the responsibilities and opportunities that come with BRAC," O'Malley said after Brown presented him with the report. "We have an obligation not just to preserve our quality of life, but to improve it."

O'Malley did not commit to funding every project in the report, noting that no governor in the nation would say about his or her state that "we have every penny we need" to fund every transportation project.

"That's our challenge ahead," he said.

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