

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Resolution on Encroachment of Military Facilities

Resolution Summary

U.S. military bases, reservations, and facilities provide training and support to the men and women who are sent overseas to protect American lives and interests. These facilities also contribute significant revenues to local and state economies. The two Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) cycles have demonstrated that the “new” military must operate more efficiently and that each facility is in competition with others of like-kind for its mission and survival. It is unrealistic to assume that a third BRAC round will not occur within the next decade.

One of the lessons learned from the BRAC experience is that military-civilian interactions matter in the determination of which bases survive. The issue is far more complicated than just whether the military and civilian leaders and populations have cordial and mutually supportive relations; it is intrinsically related to how civilian activities encroach on the military training and testing capabilities of each facility.

Civilian encroachment on military facilities is not just geographically related (i.e., how close to the base perimeter is a home), but what types of civilian encroachments impede the training and testing mission of the facilities. For example, a shopping center with tall parking lot lights and extended sales hours near a training facility in which the soldiers use night vision equipment has the very real potential to negate the training capacity of that facility. Construction of cellular telephone towers along military airport flight paths can have a negative impact on the viability of the airbase; as can homes being constructed so that noise abatement requirements curtail flight operations.

One way in which state governments can help protect the viability of military training and testing facilities is to facilitate the donation or sale of civilian-owned land surrounding military facilities to create buffer zones. These buffer zones protect the training and testing integrity of the facility and the long term viability of the base. Encouraging states and the federal government to provide tax incentives for persons to sell or donate land to create these encroachment buffer zones is responsible public policy to protect both an economic resource for the local community and the nation’s defense capability.

Resolution Management Directives

Passage of this resolution will encourage Governors, State Legislatures, Congress, and the military leaders of this nation to seriously engage in discussions about how best to work in partnership to protect the training and testing facilities. It will also place all parties on notice that passively accepting the BRAC process is completed is erroneous. The military’s strength is predicated on its ability to train and test equipment for the next

conflict; many local and state economies are based on revenues directly and indirectly resulting from military facilities and personnel. Expanding the partnership in a proactive manner will benefit both parties and the nation.

It is expected that this resolution will be sent to the Governors of all 50 states, the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and each member of the U.S. Congress.

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WHEREAS, realistic training of soldiers, sailors, air men and marines and realistic testing of their equipment is essential to military readiness and our national defense; and

WHEREAS, viable military installations are the key to realistic military training and testing; and

WHEREAS, the long term viability of military training and testing facilities is adversely impacted by the encroachment of local communities around those bases; and

WHEREAS, persons selling or donating lands around such military facilities are providing a significant economic benefit to the surrounding communities as well as helping to preserve the training capabilities of the facility; and

WHEREAS, local community encroachment on military facilities increases installation-community disputes and misunderstandings;

BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED, that The Council of State Governments (CSG) supports programs that encourage and permit persons to sell or donate land and interests in land around military facilities to serve as buffers against encroachment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CSG supports the enactment of tax credits for persons donating land and tax incentives for persons selling lands to the military for such encroachment buffer zones; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be provided the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, each member of the U.S. Congress and to Governors of each state.

Adopted this 4th Day of December, 2005 at the
CSG Annual State Trends and Leadership Forum
In Wilmington, Delaware



Governor Ruth Ann Minner
2005 CSG President



Assemblyman Lynn Hettrick
2005 CSG Chair