

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 92

BY SENATOR JOHN SMITH AND REPRESENTATIVE ARMES

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the governor of Louisiana to express support of the United States Armed Services Active Duty, Reserve Component and National Guard; to recognize the impact of the military on Louisiana's economy; to resource adequately those efforts designed to protect and promote the missions, quality of life and economic viability of Louisiana's military installation and defense communities.

WHEREAS, Moody Analytics' *Precis* lists the number one, four and five largest employers in Louisiana other than state government as Fort Polk, Barksdale Air Force Base, and the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Statewide Military Economic Impact Analysis, commissioned by the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, indicates an annual military economic impact of \$8.7 billion to the Louisiana economy; and

WHEREAS, the military economy supports 82,800 jobs throughout Louisiana, representing 4.35% of total state employment, annually contributes \$287.3 million in state and local revenue, and represents 2.20% of Louisiana's gross domestic product; and

WHEREAS, the military economy is measurable in every region of Louisiana, having an impact of: \$286 million in the Acadiana region, \$527 million in the Bayou region, \$793 million in the Capital region, \$1.76 billion in Central Louisiana, \$141 million in Northeast Louisiana, \$1.86 billion in Northwest Louisiana, \$2.86 billion in Southeast Louisiana, and \$508 million in Southwest Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Barksdale Air Force Base provides an annual impact of \$1.15 billion to the Louisiana economy; and

WHEREAS, Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center provides an annual impact of \$2.17 billion to the Louisiana economy; and

WHEREAS, the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base-New Orleans, based in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, provides an annual \$573 million impact to the Louisiana economy; and

WHEREAS, the Marine Corps Support Facility-New Orleans, home of the Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North Commands, which combined are the largest commands in the United States Marine Corps, provide an annual \$269 million impact to Louisiana's economy; and

WHEREAS, the Space and Naval Warfare Systems (SPAWAR) Center Atlantic, Detachment New Orleans, provides an annual impact of \$147 million to Louisiana's economy; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana National Guard provides an annual impact of \$694 million to Louisiana's economy; and

WHEREAS, the proposed fiscal year 2015 budget for the U.S. Department of Defense will shrink by more than \$75 billion over the next two years and could shrink even more pending full enactment of "Sequestration"; and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget calls for reducing the size of the Army to as low as 440,000 active duty soldiers from its current size of 520,000; and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget envisions a five percent reduction in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve; and

WHEREAS, the Air Force proposes to eliminate the entire A-10 "Warthog" fleet, having begun these cuts originally in 1992, then in 2005, and again in 2012, at Louisiana military installations; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2015 budget proposes a round of base closures and realignments to occur in 2017; and

WHEREAS, these strategic cuts are applied to the U.S. Armed Forces across the globe and these actions and their predecessors have been felt in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the United States Army's 2020 plan to reduce the force from 570,000 to 490,000 personnel threatened to eliminate the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, the largest brigade at Fort Polk; and

WHEREAS, the Army's current Programmatic Environmental Assessment continues to restructure the force to as low as 440,000 soldiers, thereby revisiting the possibility of deep cuts at Fort Polk; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Air Force initiated cuts to the overall A-10 fleet, resulting

in the loss of approximately 500 personnel at Barksdale Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Air Force proposed to eliminate the 259<sup>th</sup> Air Traffic Control Squadron of the Louisiana Air National Guard, which provides air traffic control services to both civilian and military aircraft, particularly those in support of training operations at Fort Polk; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the U.S. Navy eliminated the VAW-77 "Night Wolves" squadron of E-2s and its critical drug interdiction mission, resulting in the loss of approximately 150 personnel; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Navy VFA-204 "River Rattlers" squadron of F/A-18s continues to experience persistent underfunding of maintenance requirement, potentially jeopardizing the airworthiness and mission capability of the squadron, and potentially denying U.S. air combat forces ideal adversarial training; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Air Force proposes to eliminate three F-15s from the Louisiana Air National Guard 159<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, which maintains the only Active Duty mission at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base and is among only five Alert Missions in the United States that remain on 24-hour standby to protect America's perimeter defenses; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Navy Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) instituted a rule in 2013 preventing Navy Working Capital Fund enterprises like SPAWAR New Orleans from supporting mission requirements of non-Navy federal programs and clients, including the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, force restructure and cuts to Louisiana-based personnel and assets have largely occurred outside the bounds of congressional oversight or in the formal environment of an official Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC); and

WHEREAS, unchallenged, these threats to operations and assets at Louisiana installations will persist, potentially resulting in loss of personnel, assets, missions and installations; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's defense communities have struggled financially to meet the challenge of these threats, and in some cases have been incapable of mounting any efforts to challenge these threats.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby

express its support for the commitment, sacrifice and honor demonstrated by the service personnel of the United States Armed Services Active Duty, Reserve Component, and National Guard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the irreplaceable impact of the military on the Louisiana economy and that action to protect Louisiana's defense communities must be swift and sufficient.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its support, and likewise urges the governor of Louisiana, to adequately resource those efforts designed to protect and promote the missions, quality of life and economic viability of Louisiana's military installations and defense communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Governor Bobby Jindal.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES