

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2015

Source

SCS CSHJR 13(STA)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**

4



Urging the United States Department of the Army to maintain and strengthen the current level of its combat-capable structure in the state and not to reduce personnel at Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the United States Department of the Army is preparing for structural reductions to its forces in 2020, and it would be in the best interest of Alaska and the nation for the United States Department of the Army to determine that no personnel reductions be made for Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage; and

WHEREAS Headquarters, United States Department of the Army, is continuing to reduce the maximum number of active duty personnel from a wartime peak of 570,000 personnel to 450,000 personnel by the end of the United States government's fiscal year 2017; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of the Army must reduce and reorganize the structure of its combat-capable forces to achieve the fiscal reductions required by P.L. 112-25 (Budget Control Act of 2011), as amended; and

WHEREAS the reduction and reorganization must be consistent with the national military strategy issued by the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and

WHEREAS General Order Number 2012-01 of Headquarters, United States Department of the Army, directs the United States Army to conduct listening sessions at 30 military installations across the United States that are being evaluated for potential personnel reductions; and

WHEREAS the primary purpose of the listening sessions is to provide members of affected communities with an opportunity to comment on the reductions under consideration in their community; and

WHEREAS Anchorage and its vicinity could lose up to 5,300 military and civilian positions at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson; and

WHEREAS Fort Wainwright could lose up to 5,800 military and civilian positions; and

WHEREAS the nation's primary concern must always be national defense and the security of the United States, including Alaska; and

WHEREAS the geographic location of Alaska, including its access to polar air routes, provides a vital strategic advantage for current and future United States Department of the Army missions, force mobilizations, offensive operations, and defensive operations; and

WHEREAS Alaska's strategic global position has been recognized since World War II as providing a prime location to defend the United States against the potential aggression of hostile nations, including Russia and North Korea; and

WHEREAS, from bases in the state, United States Army combat forces can rapidly deploy by air or sea to areas in and around the Pacific, Asia, and Europe and can cross the Arctic to Europe faster than by flying from the East Coast of the United States; and

WHEREAS the six major military installations, more than 23,000 active duty service members, and more than 37,000 family members of active duty service members in Alaska make the military presence in the state economically vital to Alaska; and

WHEREAS the military programs of the University of Alaska Anchorage support military personnel and their families throughout the area served by the University of Alaska Anchorage, including by providing extension centers on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson that offer educational opportunities to about 1,000 military and civilian students with classes

designed so that students can fit coursework into their busy schedules using conventional educational environments and electronic and other distance delivery systems; and

WHEREAS the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex consists of 63,000 square miles of training areas and provides a training and readiness complex that is unique in the world; and

WHEREAS Red Flag Alaska, a series of Pacific Air Forces commander-directed field training exercises, hosts allied nations from around the world in the unrestricted air space needed for the exercises that is found in Alaska, but that is quickly becoming a premium in the United States; and

WHEREAS the proximity of United States Air Force and Alaska Air National Guard units to Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson provides joint training opportunities for the United States Army units stationed in Alaska and outside Alaska; and

WHEREAS United States Army and United States Air Force facilities are located together at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, providing a unique and efficient deployment base for the two military forces; and

WHEREAS Alaska has demonstrated its strong commitment to the United States Army by investing more than \$88,000,000 in transportation infrastructure to provide the United States Army with access throughout the year to training areas for maneuvers in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex; and

WHEREAS Alaska is the only state in the nation with direct access to the Arctic, and the United States Army soldiers in Alaska are experts in extreme cold weather operations; and

WHEREAS Alaska is home to the United States Army's Cold Regions Test Center and has been the site of the United States Army's Arctic and cold weather testing since before World War II; and

WHEREAS Alaska serves as a site activation command for the United States Missile Defense Agency; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Defense recognizes Alaska as an important strategic location and has recently increased and upgraded its missile defense capability in the state;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the United States Department of the Army to maintain and strengthen the current level of its combat-capable

structure in Alaska; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the United States Department of the Army not to reduce personnel at Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ashton B. Carter, United States Secretary of Defense; the Honorable John M. McHugh, United States Secretary of the Army; General Martin E. Dempsey, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.