

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

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SENATE BILL 231

Short Title: Study Military Economic Zones. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators D. Davis, Brown, and Perry (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 13, 2019

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO STUDY THE CREATION OF
ECONOMIC ZONES AROUND COMMUNITIES THAT HOST MILITARY
INSTALLATIONS.

Whereas, North Carolina has a proud tradition of mutually beneficial cooperation with the military; and

Whereas, North Carolina has the fourth-largest population of military personnel of any state; and

Whereas, the military accounts for over a half million jobs, \$66 billion in gross State product, and represents 10% of the overall economy of this State; and

Whereas, North Carolina is home to many military installations; and

Whereas, some of those installations may be vulnerable to closure as part of the federal Base Realignment and Closure initiative; and

Whereas, a failure to adequately strengthen and protect the military in this State would make military installations in the State vulnerable to closure under the federal Base Realignment and Closure initiative; and

Whereas, a strong economy benefits both the military installations in this State and the communities that surround and support those installations; and

Whereas, the people of this State recognize the interdependence of the military and the communities that surround and support its operations; and

Whereas, it is in the best interest of the State to support the economic growth of the communities that surround and support our military installations; and

Whereas, the economic growth and success of one community in this State benefits us all; and

Whereas, this State has developed strategies to foster economic growth in targeted areas by categorizing those areas within distinct zones; and

Whereas, the use of economic prosperity zones has strengthened and bolstered the communities of our State to the benefit of all of its citizens; and

Whereas, this State must use its resources to determine similar ways to strengthen and bolster the economic growth of the communities that surround and support our military installations; and

Whereas, strong supporting communities are invaluable to the military institutions in our State and benefit the military as a whole and its continuing operations throughout the nation;
Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:



1 **SECTION 1.** The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, in collaboration with
2 the Department of Commerce, shall study the creation of military economic zones around
3 communities that host the military installations in this State. The study shall consider at least all
4 of the following:

- 5 (1) The feasibility of creating economic zones in and around the communities that
6 host and support the military installations of this State.
- 7 (2) Methods of incorporating existing economic development programs,
8 including Collaboration for Prosperity Zones, into prospective military
9 economic zones.
- 10 (3) Opportunities to leverage the unique and valuable characteristics of the
11 regions and communities that support our military installations.
- 12 (4) Ways to create synergies among the duties and missions of the various
13 Department of Commerce entities that specialize in economic development,
14 such as the Rural Infrastructure Authority, Rural Economic Development
15 Division, and the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center, as well as the
16 North Carolina Military Affairs Commission.
- 17 (5) The criteria used for previous recommendations for closures of military
18 installations by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission and
19 the extent to which economic development initiatives can bolster the
20 efficiency and effectiveness of the military installations in this State in
21 advance of future BRAC recommendations.
- 22 (6) Best practices from other states for economic development for communities
23 hosting military installations.

24 **SECTION 2.** The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall report the
25 findings of the study and any legislative recommendations to the Joint Legislative Oversight
26 Committee on General Government and the Fiscal Research Division on or before January 1,
27 2020.

28 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.