

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE BY REQUEST

Introduced: 3/28/12

Referred: State Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to Eielson Air Force Base and the strategic importance of retaining the 18th F-**
2 **16 Aggressor Squadron in the Fairbanks North Star Borough.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Defense, because of impending budget
5 cuts and a changing geopolitical environment, is reassessing United States defense strategy
6 and proposing to reallocate certain military assets; and

7 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Defense recently announced plans to
8 relocate the Eielson Air Force Base 18th F-16 Aggressor Squadron, which will reduce the
9 operational capabilities of Eielson Air Force Base and make it vulnerable in future base
10 realignment and closure rounds; and

11 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of Defense has designated several missions
12 as part of its overall defense strategy, including deterring and defeating aggression,
13 maintaining a secure and effective nuclear deterrent, and defending the homeland; and

14 **WHEREAS**, by enabling jet fighters to reach 95 percent of the industrial world within
15 nine hours, Eielson Air Force Base plays an essential role in the defense of the United States;
16 and

1 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base is at the forefront of protecting United States
2 interests in the Pacific theater and, with its fleet of KC-135 tankers, would be fully involved
3 in an air bridge role in the event of a conflict in the region; and

4 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base serves a critical function in reinforcing the
5 Pacific region and defending the state; and

6 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base helps to secure important oil infrastructure,
7 including the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, which supplies a significant portion of the
8 nation's energy needs; and

9 **WHEREAS**, as a self-contained base, Eielson Air Force Base produces its own heat
10 and electricity from locally mined coal, uses its own water supply and water treatment
11 facility, and receives jet fuel directly from a nearby refinery; and

12 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base is connected to the largest unrestricted airspace
13 in the United States, has large fuel storage capacity, and has a runway capable of handling the
14 military's largest aircraft year-round; and

15 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base employs approximately 2,500 military personnel
16 and has an economic effect of approximately \$252,000,000 annually, making it a critical
17 component of the economies of Interior Alaska; and

18 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base supports the ground-based midcourse defense
19 system; and

20 **WHEREAS** Eielson Air Force Base has unfettered access to an unparalleled training
21 environment, which contains the largest joint air and land training range in the United States
22 with minimal airspace congestion and is well-suited to perform live fire exercises, unmanned
23 aerial vehicle operations, and supersonic flights; and

24 **WHEREAS** the benefits and strategic importance of Eielson Air Force Base now and
25 into the future far outweigh the negligible savings achieved by the transfer of the squadron;

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the President of
27 the United States, the United States Department of Defense, and the United States Congress to
28 reconsider the relocation of the 18th F-16 Aggressor Squadron; and be it

29 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the
30 President of the United States, the United States Department of Defense, and the United
31 States Congress to consider the strategic importance of Eielson Air Force Base and to protect

1 it from closure or realignment in future base realignment and closure rounds.

2 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
3 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
4 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate;
5 the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
6 Leon E. Panetta, United States Secretary of Defense; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and
7 the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
8 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.