

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS

February 10, 2009

1:43 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Carl Gatto, Chair
Representative Bob Lynn
Representative Kurt Olson
Representative Jay Ramras
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative John Harris
Representative Scott Kawasaki

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 12
Relating to the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System.

- MOVED HJR 12 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HJR 12

SHORT TITLE: GROUND-BASED MIDCOURSE DEFENSE SYSTEM

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) DAHLSTROM

02/02/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/02/09	(H)	MLV, STA
02/10/09	(H)	MLV AT 1:30 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

ANGELA BLANCHARD, Staff
Representative Nancy Dahlstrom
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HJR 12 on behalf of the sponsor,
Representative Dahlstrom.

McHUGH PIERRE, Director of Communications
Legislative Liaison
Office of the Commissioner/Adjutant General

Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA)
Fort Richardson, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided comments during discussion of HJR 12.

BRIGADIER GENERAL JULIO (RANDY) BANEZ, Assistant Adjutant General

Space and Missile Defense

Alaska Army National Guard (AK ARNG)

Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA)

Fort Richardson, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided comments during discussion of HJR 12.

ACTION NARRATIVE

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CHAIR CARL GATTO called the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 1:43 p.m. Representatives Gatto, Lynn, Olson, Ramras, and Buch were present at the call to order.

HJR 12 - GROUND-BASED MIDCOURSE DEFENSE SYSTEM

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CHAIR GATTO announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 12, Relating to the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System.

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ANGELA BLANCHARD, Staff, Representative Nancy Dahlstrom, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Dahlstrom, sponsor, asked the committee for its support of HJR 12, which urges Congress to [provide the necessary funding for the ongoing development, operation, and maintenance] of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System, which is one of the country's lines of defense against foreign ballistic missile threats. The program's first interceptors were placed at Fort Greely, Alaska, in 2004, and have the capability of intercepting and destroying a missile mid-air. The nation's defense of its citizens is the primary reason to continue financing this program, though its economic impact on Alaska is substantial in that it brings \$250 million into the state as well provides over 700 jobs, 200 of which are at Fort Greely itself. The military continues to

promote the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System as a successful program; as recently as 2008, the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System at Fort Greely successfully intercepted a missile launched from Kodiak. In conclusion, she indicated that the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System is supported by Alaska's congressional delegation.

REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS disclosed a possible conflict of interest in that [his company] conducts a lot of business with Boeing and with a lot of "ground missile defense entities."

MS. BLANCHARD, in response to a question, offered her understanding that the program's most recent [test] was successful.

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McHUGH PIERRE, Director of Communications, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Commissioner/Adjutant General, Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA), said that the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System has been successful with a number of test launches. A radar system was set up in Juneau; missiles were sent from Kodiak to simulate a missile launch from the area of North Korea; and interceptors were launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. What occurred was an "inertia destruction of the attack vehicle," in that a solid object was launched, was guided by radar, and collided with the attack vehicle in space. In conclusion, he relayed that the DMVA supports HJR 12, and urges the committee and the legislature to support it as well because of its economic impact on Alaska's communities, and because it provides training and longevity for the guard members involved.

REPRESENTATIVE RAMRAS characterized the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System as being good for Alaska, the country, and for the safety of the world.

REPRESENTATIVE LYNN relayed that he's been to Fort Greely, was impressed with the professionalism of the activities occurring there, and had the opportunity to watch a simulation of a missile intercept, which he characterized as sophisticated.

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BRIGADIER GENERAL JULIO (RANDY) BANEZ, Assistant Adjutant General, Space and Missile Defense, Alaska Army National Guard (AK ARNG), Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs (DMVA),

related that the ground missile defense system is the cornerstone of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency's multilayered missile defense architecture. Ground missile defense is designed to detect, track, discriminate, intercept, and destroy long- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles during the midcourse - the exoatmospheric - phase of flight. The weapon system consists of land-, sea-, and space-based sensors, command and control operations, and silo-based interceptors, which are located at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and Fort Greely in Alaska.

BRIGADIER GENERAL BANEZ said the economic impact of this program on Alaska is significant, accounting for over \$65 million in economic activity in salaries and expenditures annually from Fort Greely. The military built a new public library and an elementary school in Delta Junction a few years ago, and currently there are several "quality of life" projects at Fort Greely. This summer "we" will start building 126 new homes, taking about six years to complete; a new community center and a fire station will break ground next year with an estimated completion time of two years; and a total of over \$75 million in building projects are programmed for the next several years.

BRIGADIER GENERAL BANEZ said that additionally, Fort Greely is programmed to continue to improve the missile field with hundreds of millions of dollars for a future power plant in 2009/2010, and for additional silos. During a recent interview, he noted, Delta Junction mayor, Mary Leith-Dowling, acknowledged that the City of Delta Junction and the military enjoy a strong relationship. Today, he continued, roughly 200 soldiers of "the 49th Missile Defense Battalion, your Alaska guardsman," operate the ground missile defense system 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year in order to defend the homeland of 300 million Americans. With the AK ARNG manning and protecting the missile defense system, Alaska is playing a critical role, as well as a high-visibility role, in the defense of America and in world affairs.

MR. PIERRE, in response to a question, explained that although at one time Fort Greely had been scheduled for closure, groundbreaking and construction activity for the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System instead began in 2002/2003.

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REPRESENTATIVE LYNN moved to report HJR 12 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

There being no objection, HJR 12 was reported from the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.