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SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13(STA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/27/15

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES REINBOLD, Kawasaki, Lynn, LeDoux, Keller, Saddler, Josephson, Tilton, Johnson, Hughes, Wilson, Olson, Chenault, Pruitt, Millett, Neuman, Thompson, Gattis, Stutes, Herron

SENATORS Stoltze, Wielechowski, Costello, McGuire, Kelly, MacKinnon, Hoffman, Giessel, Bishop, Micciche, Egan, Stevens, Coghill

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

14 **WHEREAS** the United States Department of the Army must reduce and
 15 reorganize the structure of its combat-capable forces to achieve the fiscal reductions

1 required by P.L. 112-25 (Budget Control Act of 2011), as amended; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 **WHEREAS** the military programs of the University of Alaska Anchorage support
30 military personnel and their families throughout the area served by the University of Alaska
31 Anchorage, including by providing extension centers on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

1 that offer educational opportunities to about 1,000 military and civilian students with classes
2 designed so that students can fit coursework into their busy schedules using conventional
3 educational environments and electronic and other distance delivery systems; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature strongly urges the United States

1 Department of the Army to maintain and strengthen the current level of its combat-capable
2 structure in Alaska; and be it

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

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