



Oklahoma
State
Senate

Legislative Brief

July 2003

Strategic Planning for Oklahoma's Military Facilities

Issue Background:

Oklahoma is home to five active military facilities: Altus AFB (Altus), Ft. Sill (Lawton), McAlester Ammunitions Depot (McAlester), Tinker AFB (Midwest City) and Vance AFB (Enid). These installations employ 52,025 military and civilian personnel, issue an annual payroll of \$1.821 billion, and have an estimated \$3.938 billion economic impact, according to 2002 data provided by the public affairs offices of these facilities. Five states (Florida, Georgia, California, Arizona and Virginia) surpass Oklahoma in military payroll and/or Department of Defense contract dollars. These states and others are competing with Oklahoma for limited defense dollars, new military missions and, during the 2005 BRAC round, retention of military bases.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions occurred in 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1995, during which 97 major base closures and 55 major realignments occurred. Only Oklahoma and six other states avoided closure of a major military installation during these BRAC rounds.

With BRAC 2005 quickly approaching, states are taking action to protect their military facilities. These actions include establishing advisory bodies to develop strategic plans (e.g., Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas). Other states have adopted financial incentives to encourage community and infrastructure planning or to attract defense industries (e.g., Arizona, California, Florida, and Virginia). Oklahoma has joined these states by adopting legislation that will enable Oklahoma to protect its military installations and preserve the economic impact they have on our economy.

Summary of Actions:

HB 1200 by Rep. Ervin and Sen. Fisher

2001 Legislative Session

In 2001 the 48th Legislature enacted HB 1200 to create the Oklahoma Military Base Closure Prevention Task Force. The Task Force was charged in part with addressing changes in state policy that would prevent the downsizing or closing of Oklahoma's military installations, increase Oklahoma's input into the BRAC process, and protect adjacent communities. The Task Force met eight times over the next year and issued its report and recommendations at its final meeting on December 18, 2002 (see [Final Report](#)).

HB 1396 by Rep. Braddock and Sen. Leftwich
HB 1397 by Rep. Braddock and Sen. Leftwich
HCR 1004 by Rep. Claunch and Sen. Aldridge
HCR 1005 by Rep. Hefner and Sen. Easley

2003 Legislative Session

In 2003, based on the recommendations of the Task Force, the 49th Legislature passed four measures to address the base closure issue:

HB 1396 creates the Oklahoma Strategic Military Planning Commission and grants it authority through December 31, 2010. The Commission consists of seven appointees: one from each of the military base communities, one House member, and one Senate member. The Commission will recommend to the Governor and Legislature state policies to prevent the closure or downsizing of Oklahoma's military facilities, maximize the state's input into the BRAC process, protect the interests of the communities adjacent to military facilities, mitigate the effect of any reduction in military or civilian personnel, and encourage relocation of military missions to Oklahoma bases.

HB 1397 creates the Oklahoma Strategic Military Planning Commission Incentive Fund, which received a \$1.5 million appropriation for distribution by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to local communities affected by potential closure or realignment of military installations. Monies from the Fund will to be used to match local funds and are to be expended according to a plan filed by the local community for public projects that will protect the interests of the community. The plan must be approved by a 2/3rds vote of the local governing body and the Strategic Military Planning Commission.

HCR 1004 encourages the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to review and modify its residency policies to ensure that dependents of all military families that were stationed in Oklahoma are not charged out-of-state tuition and fees and have the opportunity to participate in all scholarship and financial aid programs.

HCR 1005 directs the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to review projects affecting military installations and accelerate funding for or assign a priority funding code to these projects.

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