

GOVERNOR'S MILITARY COUNCIL

Testimony in Support of HB 2587
House Standing Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
March 14, 2012

Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, I'm John Armbrust, Executive Director of the Governor's Military Council. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2587.

In today's environment of defense budget reductions and the possibility of future rounds of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), it is important for the State of Kansas to take all prudent actions possible to demonstrate Kansas is a military friendly state. This is especially true given the fiscal and economic impact of military activities in Kansas.

Several years ago Wichita State University conducted an analysis of the fiscal and economic impact of military activities in Kansas. They concluded that: military activities in Kansas add approximately \$7.5B per year to the state's Gross State Product; over 165,000 people are employed as a result of these military activities and their wages total over \$5.5B per year; and, military activities in Kansas generate approximately \$390M per year in property, sales and income taxes.

It is the light of significant DoD downsizing, a possible BRAC, and a significant fiscal and economic factor in our State being at risk that I assess the impact of HB 2587. As one looks at the criteria used by the Department of Defense in assessing which installations to downsize or close, the key criteria revolve around military value. Instrumental in determining military value is the lack of encroachment both today and in the future.

One of the ways we in Kansas have approached this encroachment challenge is through the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program. It is through ACUB that permanent Conservation Easements are acquired through which financial protection is provided to WILLING, participating landowners.

Passage of HB 2587 puts our military installations needlessly at risk by eliminating the military's best option for sustaining the capabilities of our nation's installations through mutually beneficial partnerships with its neighboring landowners.

It is for these reasons I recommend this Committee oppose HB 2587