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Sponsor Testimony

Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 8

House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security Committee

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Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Lanese, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony to you today on Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 8. This concurrent resolution urges the United States Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency (MDA) to select Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center as the preferred site for a future east coast missile defense system.

The MDA is currently considering sites for the installation of additional ground-based interceptors for homeland defense. While similar missile defense sites already exist along the western seaboard of the US, no such sites exist along the eastern seaboard.

Camp Ravenna, which straddles both of our districts, is currently being considered for such a site, along with sites in Michigan and New York. However, unlike Ohio, Michigan and New York have now hired lobbying firms in Washington DC to advocate for their states to be chosen as the site for an east coast missile defense site. It is for this reason that passage of this concurrent resolution is so urgent.

Not only would the selection of Camp Ravenna for this project provide a multi-billion dollar investment in the state of Ohio, but it would also create hundreds of high-paying, high-education jobs for the citizens of the Buckeye State. Additionally, Camp Ravenna's selection

would make it indispensable to the US military, greatly decreasing its chances of closure by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, or BRAC.

Furthermore, Camp Ravenna's location in Ohio and the US makes it uniquely qualified for the installation of a missile defense system, as it is within 400 miles of (and therefore would be able to defend) several large metropolitan areas, including New York City, Washington DC, and Chicago. Add this to the fact that Camp Ravenna is easily accessible via low traffic transportation hubs out of Akron and Youngstown, with the Youngstown Air Reserve Station (YARS) located within a half-hour drive, and the fact that the airspace over Camp Ravenna is already secure and has no conflicting missions, and you can see why Camp Ravenna is the ideal site for a missile defense system.

Additionally, this region of Ohio already has the technological base necessary for the installation of such a site, with the NASA Glenn Center located nearby in Cleveland, as well as the unique aerial spray mission and its engineering components at YARS in Vienna, OH. Adding such a site in Ravenna would serve to enhance collaboration between these northeastern Ohio installations and provide a tremendous socioeconomic boost to what is, historically, a fairly depressed region of the state.

Finally, according to impact studies that have already been conducted, there would be little or no effect to the area in which the site would be installed that would require costly environmental mitigation or remediation. Biological concerns are minimal, with a majority of the area to be utilized free of any protected species.

For these reasons and others that we may not have included in our testimony today, we trust that you, members of the committee, can see why urging the USMDA to select Camp Ravenna as the preferred site for a future east coast missile defense system is vital to the future prosperity of our great state. The desire for this mission amongst local businesses and leaders throughout our districts is strong. The people of the Mahoning Valley recognize the need for this system, and support among our community, state, and federally-elected leaders is, and will remain, unwavering.

In closing, we thank you for considering SCR 8 here in committee today and ask for your favorable consideration of it. We would be more than happy to answer any questions for you at this time.