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32nd District



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Sponsor Testimony: Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 11
Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee
February 19th, 2020

Chair Schuring and members of the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee, thank you for allowing us to present sponsor testimony to you today on SCR 11, legislation which urges the United States Department of Defense to select Youngstown Air Reserve Station as the home for the new C-130J Hercules aircraft.

With nearly 1,450 military personnel, the Youngstown Air Reserve Station in Trumbull County serves as the home for the 910th Airlift Wing Air Force Command, tasked by the United States Department of Defense (DoD) to maintain the DoD's only large area fixed-wing aerial spray capability. This capability is used for many different reasons, including to control disease-carrying insects, pest insects, undesirable vegetation, and to disperse oil spills in large bodies of water. Missions may be executed in combat areas, on DoD installations, or in response to disasters or emergencies as declared by the President of the United States.

To conduct their missions, the 757th Airlift Squadron pilots, navigators, flight engineers, spray operators, and entomologists use six of their eight C-130H aircraft (originally built in 1989 and 1990) equipped with the Modular Aerial Spray System. The C-130 is capable of operating from rough dirt strips and is also the prime transport for airdropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. Using its aft loading ramp and door, the C-130 can also accommodate a wide variety of oversized cargo, including everything from utility helicopters and six-wheeled armored vehicles, to standard palletized cargo and military personnel.

The C-130J is the latest addition to the C-130 fleet, replacing aging C-130Es and some of the "high time" C-130Hs. The C-130J incorporates state-of-the-art technology, which reduces manpower requirements, lowers operating and support costs, and provides life-cycle cost savings over earlier C-130 models. Compared to older C-130s, the J model climbs faster and higher, flies farther at a higher cruise speed, and takes off and lands in a shorter distance. Other major improvements include advanced cockpit controls, fully integrated defensive systems, improved fuel, environmental, and ice-protection, and an enhanced cargo-handling system.

Currently, the Air Force Reserve Command is in the process of choosing where to place four newly funded, state-of-the-art C-130Js, with the Youngstown Air Reserve Station in Trumbull County as one of just two finalists (the other being the 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado). With delivery slated for 2023, the Air Force Reserve Command is now in the process of conducting site surveys prior to making a final placement decision.

For many reasons, including the fact that Youngstown Air Reserve Station possess the personnel, facilities, experience, and capacity to serve as the home for the new C-130J aircraft, as well as the fact that districts with military installations must constantly be vigilant for new ways to protect their local bases from future BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) processes, we must do all we can to ensure Youngstown Air Reserve station is selected as the future site for these new aircraft.

This is why we have introduced SCR 11 and are here before you today. As state lawmakers, we must do all we can to encourage the federal government to select our base for these important aircraft, and we think SCR 11 could go a long way toward doing just that.

Chair Schuring, and members of the committee, thank you again for allowing us to present SCR 11 to you today. We are more than happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.