

**House Concurrent Resolution 8 Written Proponent Testimony**  
**Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee**  
**December 4, 2024**

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Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address House Concurrent Resolution 8. My name is Steve Tugend. I chair the Central Ohio Defense Group and am an attorney at Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter. In my capacity as the Chair of the Defense Group, I offer this testimony as a proponent of House Concurrent Resolution 8 sponsored by Representatives Patton and Lampton.

The Central Ohio Defense Group is an organization comprised of government, nonprofit and corporate members that is concerned about preserving and growing defense-related jobs in the Central Ohio Region. The members of the group include Columbus 2020, the City of Columbus, the Columbus Partnership, One Columbus, the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, the City of Canal Winchester, Battelle, the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, the City of Whitehall, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, The Ohio State University, Franklin County, the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, and Kegler, Brown, Hill + Ritter.

The impact of Ohio's Department of Defense (DoD) employers in our region is significant. The DoD payroll for about 14,000 jobs is just under \$800 million annually and this yields an economic impact of about \$3 billion.

And we need to be vigilant in our protection of these jobs and resulting economic impact. Every few years, the Department of Defense undertakes a process known as Base Realignment and Closure (or "BRAC") where the country's military installations are evaluated using a cost benefit analysis. Those installations that score well are kept open or even expanded. Those that score poorly are closed. It has been since 2005 since the Pentagon last went through a BRAC process, so we believe that the next one is long overdue.

Increasingly, the Pentagon has indicated that one of the key evaluation criteria that will be considered in the next round of BRAC will be how military-friendly the installation's state laws are. Moreover, basing decisions are increasingly influenced by these criteria as well.

It is for this reason that the Central Ohio Defense Group is interested in HCR 8. Encouraging the federal government to name Ohio as the permanent location for the U.S. Space Command headquarters will make our state more military-friendly and, as a result, a more attractive site for military missions and jobs.

HCR 8 urges the federal government to select Ohio for the permanent headquarters of the U.S. Space Command. The U.S. Space Command is a unified combatant command of the U.S. Department of Defense that is responsible for military operations in space. Ohio has a rich history of space pioneers such as Neil Armstrong, John Glenn, and Judith Resnick. Furthermore,

Ohio is the home of Wright Patterson Air Force Base which is the headquarters for the Air Force Material Command. In addition, Ohio is the home to the National Air and Space Intelligence Center and the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. We believe that Ohio is uniquely positioned to also be the permanent headquarters of the U.S. Space Command.

As of recent estimates, around 1,000 personnel are directly assigned to the U.S. Space Command, including members of the U.S. military services, Department of Defense civilians, and contractors. And as the Command continues to grow and develop in response to the evolving space domain, it is likely that it will require even more personnel who would live and contribute to our local communities.

We appreciate the commendable sacrifices that our brave service men and women make, as well as their family members, having to move around the country and military bases around the world on a frequent basis. Ohio has a tradition of being very welcoming to military families.

The Central Ohio Defense Group supports HCR 8 and the message it sends to our federal government that Ohio is a military-friendly state and is prepared to be the permanent headquarters of U.S. Space Command, and being welcoming to its employees and their families. From my experience, the importance of the BRAC process necessitates that our state ensure that its military facilities have both the physical and legal infrastructure that is supportive of military missions. The U.S. Department of Defense is more likely to locate military installations and maintain them in states that are supportive of those who have worn our country's uniform. It is for these reasons that Ohio would be a prime location for the permanent headquarters.

Chair Johnson and members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.