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Finance

Finance Subcommittee on
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Natural Resources
Chair

Chairman Hoagland, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Veterans and Public Safety Committee, thank you for your consideration of House Concurrent Resolution No. 7. It is great to be here and share with you the significance of the 179th Airlift Wing of the United States Air National Guard to District 02, the surrounding area, and the State of Ohio.

When Major General John Harris, Adjutant General for Ohio, recently testified in the House, he highlighted the important work of our National Guard units around the state. As General Harris mentioned, in addition to the key role they play in our national defense strategy, 2020 provided an opportunity for the National Guard to “validate its role as the nation’s primary homeland response team.” While the COVID-19 epidemic has been unprecedented, the National Guard’s response has not. As many of you know from your own military service, our military men and women, full-time, reserve or guard, run toward danger, no matter the cause.

Over the past 73 years, the men and women of the 179th Airlift Wing have honorably served the United States through many missions and countless deployments, home and abroad. They have proven to be a great community partner for Richland and Ashland Counties and an economic driver in our area. The 179th is located at Mansfield Lahm Airport, named in 1967 for Brigadier General Frank Purdy Lahm, a native of Mansfield. The base and airport are contiguous with a local industrial park representing thousands of Ohio jobs and is integral to business retention and attraction for our area.

As stated in the resolution, the 179th Airlift Wing has supported variations of the C-130 aircraft for over 40 years and is well-equipped to continue this mission. Also, the United States Transportation Command’s 2018 Mobility Capabilities and Requirements Study recommended 300 aircraft and recapitalization of the Reserve Component C-130H fleet to the C-130J. Therefore, we respectfully request passage of HCR 7 urging the U.S. Congress and Department of Defense to restore the mission of the 179th Airlift Wing while awaiting a decision from the Air Force regarding the Information Warfare Wing mission.

Chairman Hoagland and members of the Veterans and Public Safety Committee, thank you for your time and consideration.