



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
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Military Preparedness Commission

JEFFERSON CITY – U.S military bases in Missouri are vitally important to our nation's security and vitally important to the economic well-being of the communities adjacent to those bases. Until now, communities located near a military facility responded to the threat of a base closing in an ad hoc fashion, with schools, chambers of commerce and other community organizations lobbying independently to protect and preserve those facilities.

This session the legislature established the Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission to help communities facing military base reassignments and closures speak with a single voice when presenting their cases to the Pentagon.

Senate Bill 252, approved by the General Assembly and signed by the governor in May, created this permanent advisory panel to advise the governor and the legislature on military-related issues. During legislative debate on the bill, there were concerns the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure Commission might include Fort Leonard Wood in Pulaski County or Whiteman Air Force Base in Johnson County in its latest list of recommended base closings. While those two important military bases were spared, Missouri does stand to lose close to 3,700 jobs under the most recent BRAC recommendations.

The Pentagon wants to eliminate the 131st F-15 Fighter Wing at Lambert Field in St. Louis, the Army Human Resources Command in St. Louis, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service offices in St. Louis and Kansas City. Those proposed closings will be the subject of public hearings scheduled in St. Louis on Monday, June 20.

Senate Bill 252 also provides that spouses, primary or secondary age children, and children under the age of 24 of military personnel assigned within the state under military orders will receive in-state tuition at Missouri public higher education institutions.

The act also authorizes an individual income tax deduction for income received for military service in a combat zone, as long as the income is included in the individual's federally-adjusted gross income.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.