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NEWS RELEASE

S.C. Military Base Task Force to Distribute $200,000 in Base-Preservation Funding

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Columbia, S.C. – Amid fiscal uncertainty in Washington, the state of South Carolina is committing financial resources and taking other measures to protect federal military installations located here.

These actions include allocating **$50,000 to each of the state's four military communities – Beaufort, Charleston, Columbia and Sumter** – to support their ongoing base-preservation efforts.

State funds totaling $200,000 are being distributed **next week** by the S.C. Military Base Task Force. The funds will be distributed during news conferences:

- **Monday (March 11) at 11:30 a.m. at the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce** (4500 Leeds Ave., Suite 100; North Charleston) (843-577-2510);
- **Monday (March 11) at 2:30 p.m. at the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce** (713 Craven St.; Beaufort) (843-525-8500);
- **Tuesday (March 12) at 10 a.m. at the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce** (930 Richland St.; Columbia) (803-733-1155); and
- **Tuesday (March 12) at 1:30 p.m. at the Greater Sumter Chamber of Commerce** (32 East Calhoun St.; Sumter) (803-775-1231).

Officials from the Military Base Task Force will attend each news conference. Local chamber and military policy officials also will be on hand at each of their respective news conferences.

The officials will discuss the base-preservation funding in the backdrop of ongoing across-the-board federal spending reductions known as **"sequestration,"** which carries vital defense and economic implications.

The S.C. Military Base Task Force works to preserve and enhance the state's military resources. The Task Force was created through an executive order by former Gov. Mark Sanford, and reconstituted by an executive order of Gov. Nikki Haley.

State Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom, who serves as chairman of the S.C. Military Base Task Force, expressed great appreciation to the General Assembly for appropriating these funds to support the efforts of the Task Force and the state's four military communities.

"This has been a real team effort. There's been excellent cooperation between the communities and the state," Eckstrom said. "Sen. Hugh Leatherman has made sure we've had the resources we've needed to do the job."

South Carolina's military installations contribute greatly to South Carolina's economy and to national security.

The state is home to eight military installations, the largest of which include Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base, Joint Base Charleston, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island.

In 2011, the state's military installations, the S.C. National Guard, and in-state defense contractors generated $15.7 billion in combined economic activity in South Carolina, according to a study by the S.C. Department of Commerce.

Released in November 2012, the study showed that the state's military sector supported more than 138,000 jobs in 2011.

The economic impact taken alone does not convey the significance of the state's military resources.

The installations contribute significantly to national security and provide economic benefits to the military. Having the 3rd Army headquarters co-located at Shaw Air Force Base exemplifies the economic contributions the state's installations provide the military.

Joint Base Charleston – home to Air Force, Navy, Army, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Homeland Security and other Defense Department missions – is another example.

Across-the-board federal spending cuts, known as "sequestration," began being implemented last week. These cuts are expected to total $85 billion this fiscal year and approximately $1 trillion over the next decade.

The military is slated to absorb half of them, on top of nearly $500 billion in other cuts in military funding previously authorized.

To cushion the state's installations from these reductions, the Military Base Task Force is taking other steps in addition to allocating $200,000 for base-preservation efforts in the state.

Among other actions, the Task Force is actively supporting several bills pending in the Legislature that would assist the state's active-duty service members and military retirees and their families.

The Task Force also is working to ensure that South Carolina accomplishes a 10-point blueprint for military support being tracked by the Defense Department.

The Task Force also is pursuing ongoing discussions with Pentagon, congressional and other national officials about the importance of South Carolina's military installations.

For more information please contact Eric Ward, public information director, at 803-734-2538; 803-206-6293 or eward@cg.sc.gov.

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