



Chamber, Illinois Officials Release Results of First Military Economic Impact Study

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SPRINGFIELD – A new, groundbreaking report released today indicates that military bases in Illinois directly or indirectly pump \$13.3 billion into the state's economy and support nearly 150,000 jobs. The Illinois Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with Illinois Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon's office, the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies, local chambers and private businesses, initiated this study.

"No one's ever thought of us as a defense state, but here we are with a report that shows that defense assets account for 2% of the Illinois gross domestic product," said Todd Maisch, Illinois Chamber of Commerce President and CEO. "This report is a perfect example of how investment by one entity—in this case the U.S. Department of Defense—makes a direct impact and that investment drives an economic engine for an entire region. A \$13.3 billion industry is one that we need to keep."

The study specifically looks at the economic impact of the state's three active military installations: Scott Air Force Base near Belleville, the Rock Island Arsenal in the Quad Cities, and the Naval Station Great Lakes. "These installations accounted for \$9.4 billion in economic activity and more than 88,000 jobs," explained Maisch. "DoD contracts mean \$3.1 billion in economic activity, and the National Guard adds another \$156 million."

In addition, a total of \$9.6 billion of military and defense spending is for income for Illinois residents.

The study findings were shared at a press conference at Eckert's Country Store and Farm in Belleville, Ill., a popular destination for the military families affiliated with nearby Scott Air Force Base. The findings reveal that Scott AFB remains a vital economic engine for the St. Louis region, which for the purposes of this study included

the 12th congressional district in Illinois, as well as several counties on the Missouri side of the Bi-State area.

Across this region, the operations of Scott AFB and related economic activity supported an estimated 40,339 jobs. The economic activity generated more than \$4 billion in regional Gross Domestic Product. These numbers indicate that Scott AFB's regional economic impact has continued to grow since the last comprehensive study was completed just three years ago.

The comprehensive new study includes an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing each of the active military installations in Illinois. For Scott AFB, the strengths are numerous, and include robust community support, quality of life, local leadership adapting and developing new opportunities for public-public, public-private partnership, unconstrained military operations and new cybersecurity squadrons coming to the base.

“As we continue to look for opportunities to strengthen and grow Scott Air Force Base in this climate of decreased defense spending, the detailed information in this study will be very helpful to our efforts,” noted Mark Kern, Chairman of St. Clair County, which is home to the base. “It reinforces what a powerful economic engine Scott continues to be for our region, and its many existing strengths position the base well to attract additional new missions in the years to come.”

Numbers from this report will be used if the state faces spending cuts by the DoD or by another BRAC (base alignment and closure).