

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2
2 INTRODUCED BY M. MILBURN

3
4 A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING THE
5 PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND CONGRESS TO
6 RECONSIDER THE PROPOSED RELOCATION OF THE F-15C/D MISSION OUT OF GREAT FALLS,
7 MONTANA, CONDUCT AN IMPROVED ANALYSIS BASED ON ACTUAL DATA INSTEAD OF ASSUMPTIONS,
8 AND RECONSIDER THE TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MONTANA AND BENEFITS TO THIS COUNTRY OF
9 RETAINING THE F-15C/D MISSION IN MONTANA.

10
11 WHEREAS, since the activation in 1947 of the Montana Air National Guard, Montanans have flown this
12 nation's premier fighter aircraft from the P-51 to the F-86, F-89, F-102, F-106, F-16, and F-15; and

13 WHEREAS, in Fiscal Year 2010, the Montana Air National Guard had payroll of \$41,248,479, which
14 supported 1,050 drill-status airmen and soldiers of which 340 members were full-time employees; and

15 WHEREAS, the Montana Air National Guard has received numerous national awards, including the Air
16 Force Outstanding Unit Award eight times, the Spaatz Trophy, the Hughes Trophy, and the William Tell Award;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the Great Falls community is the only community in the nation to be awarded the Fisher
19 Award from the Department of Defense recognizing humanitarian support of the U.S. military; and

20 WHEREAS, the Montana Air National Guard has honorably served this country with overseas missions
21 four times in the past decade and is currently serving an ALERT mission in Hawaii; and

22 WHEREAS, the Montana Air National Guard's reenlistment rate is at 94% as compared with the national
23 average of 86%; and

24 WHEREAS, Great Falls International Airport, which is home to the Montana Air National Guard, has
25 completed environmental impact studies for aircraft noise mitigation and, using taxpayer money, is currently
26 providing noise mitigation to surrounding homes that offsets noise levels of the F-15 and next-generation tactical
27 fighter aircraft; and

28 WHEREAS, Great Falls International Airport lacks encroachment issues and in times of emergency could
29 use the currently inactive Malmstrom Air Force Base runway for aircraft recovery by reactivating the runway using
30 the Federal Aviation Administration Military Airplane Program funding, upon approval by the Air Force; and

1 WHEREAS, the Great Falls International Airport Authority currently leases space to the Montana Air
2 National Guard at the airport for a fee of \$1.00 a year in exchange for the Montana Air National Guard providing
3 all firefighting services to the airport, which includes making available more than \$3 million in firefighting
4 equipment and \$2 million in firefighters' annual payroll; and

5 WHEREAS, 3 years ago the Montana Air National Guard was tasked with conversion from F-16 aircraft
6 to F-15 aircraft and completed the total conversion at a cost to the taxpayers of nearly \$80 million, including
7 construction of a new Corrosion Control Facility, a new Operations Facility, additional space for munitions
8 storage, and engine shop expansion. Added to that was pilot training at a cost to the public of \$55 million and
9 maintenance training at a cost of \$3 million. The total F-16 to F-15 conversion was accomplished with savings
10 to the taxpayers of more than \$2 million, with operational status achieved 1 year ahead of schedule; and

11 WHEREAS, the 7,000 square miles provided by the Hays Military Operations Area in northcentral
12 Montana offers a virtually unencumbered airspace unique in its capacity to provide full-spectrum joint, combined,
13 and integrated combat arms military training free of encroachment, electronic warfare constraints, and other
14 restrictions that are present at other areas in the continental United States. This "National Treasure" airspace is
15 particularly well-suited for future Air Superiority Mission training, particularly for next-generation tactical fighter
16 aircraft that require significant airspace for their "Supercruise" capability; and

17 WHEREAS, Montana in the past has lost military missions and assets with significant impacts to this
18 state's finances and jobs, including the base closure at Glasgow, which resulted in the loss of 16,000 residents;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, funding to maintain the F-15C/D mission in Great Falls is to end in Fiscal Year 2012, with
21 notification already sent by the Secretary of the Air Force and the federal government that the F-15C/D mission
22 is to be relocated from Great Falls, Montana, to Fresno, California; and

23 WHEREAS, the decision to relocate was based on an Air Force cost analysis that contains questionable
24 information and analysis and should be reconsidered based on presentation of actual data and accurate analysis.

25
26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
27 MONTANA:

28 That the Montana House questions the assumptions made and the accuracy of the analysis used in
29 making the decision to relocate the F-15C/D mission out of Great Falls to Fresno, California, and requests a
30 reconsideration of the decision based on further analysis and documentation regarding what truly is in the best

1 interest of Montana and federal taxpayers. The following should be included in the documentation:

2 (1) alert status impacts using three aircraft rather than the five aircraft used in the previous business case
3 analysis;

4 (2) inclusion of the costs of pilot training for Fresno pilots converting to F-15 aircraft;

5 (3) inclusion of the costs for backfilling alert missions during the conversion from F-16 to F-15 missions
6 in Fresno;

7 (4) exclusion of costs already incurred in Great Falls for MILCOM (military communications)
8 improvements;

9 (5) inclusion of the costs of an upcoming 18-month environmental impact study that must be conducted
10 in the Fresno area because of a change in mission;

11 (6) inclusion of the cost of noise mitigation efforts and activities that will need to be undertaken in Fresno
12 related to F-15 noise issues, including the costs of buying and demolishing homes that already have undergone
13 taxpayer-funded noise mitigation for past missions but that now stand in what are considered unacceptable noise
14 contours for the F-15;

15 (7) inclusion of the costs of replacing VORTAC and TACAN systems in Fresno; and

16 (8) inclusion of the costs to fix clear-zone requirements for munitions in Fresno. The current munitions
17 facilities have active commercial taxiways in the explosive potential areas, and resolving this issue may add
18 considerable costs.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House ask THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE
20 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, AND the Secretary of the Air Force to stay the decision to relocate the F-15C/D mission
21 to Fresno while a federal investigation is underway regarding a limited number of pilots and commanders within
22 the Fresno Air National Guard and completely reconsider the decision if convictions are obtained based on the
23 investigation.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House protests the projected loss of 200 jobs of
25 drill-status members of the National Guard, which is a projected result of a conversion from the F-15 to a C-27J
26 Spartan aircraft mission. The loss of jobs includes the loss of 75 to 100 full-time National Guard employees, which
27 means a loss of \$9 million to the National Guard payroll a year, not including or considering the loss of spouse
28 or other family member employment in Montana. The financial loss also has a ripple effect on lost revenues from
29 medical payments and economic activities. Further, incorporation of the new C-27J mission is estimated at \$15
30 million, including a new corrosion control facility and a nose dock to be added to the large hangar building in

1 Great Falls. In addition, pilot training costs of \$20 million and maintenance training costs of \$3 million will be
2 charged to taxpayers. While the new rugged military airlift platform can be configured for troop, medevac, or cargo
3 transport, the C-27J aircraft has no firefighting or fire suppression capability.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House requests reconsideration of the decision made
5 by the Secretary of the Air Force that included expenditures of \$80 million to convert the Air National Guard in
6 Great Falls to the F-15C/D mission but now transfers that mission to Fresno, California, with an additional
7 expenditure of \$40 million projected in Montana to convert and modify these same new facilities for the C-27J
8 mission and a projected need for much greater expenditures to convert and modify F-16 facilities and training for
9 the F-15C/D mission in California. The Montana House further protests the loss of taxpayer dollars spent over
10 the last 3 years on a fighter mission that is to be relocated, particularly during weak economic times, with reduced
11 Department of Defense budgets.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House considers the loss of jobs, loss of local and state
13 revenues, plus the associated diminution of taxes related to loss of the F-15C/D mission, even with the addition
14 of the C-27J mission, to be catastrophic to the economy in Cascade County and to all Montanans.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House recognizes the rich and honorable tradition in
16 Montana of piloting fighter aircraft in defense of our great nation and that Air Force modernization of the F-15C/D
17 aircraft with Active Electronically Scanned Array radars and new efficient and more powerful engines are likely
18 to allow the F-15C/D aircraft to operate safely and effectively through at least 2025, as determined by full-scale
19 fatigue testing.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the national treasure of the Hays Military Operations Area, which
21 supports unencumbered aircraft use, is at risk of being lost if the F-15C/D mission is moved from the State of
22 Montana.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House considers Montana to be a growth area for
24 Unmanned Aircraft System technology, flight, evaluation, and testing as well as an ideal training ground for
25 unmanned aircraft systems and aircraft mitigation and defense training and that Montana's growing unmanned
26 aircraft system industry, if used in conjunction with a retained F-15C/D mission and ground-based radar in
27 Montana, could be key to addressing threats to the airspace and national safety of the United States posed by
28 unmanned aircraft systems.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House is concerned about possible reductions in
30 firefighting services or equipment at the Great Falls International Airport provided by the Montana Air National

1 Guard in exchange for a \$1.00 lease, a service that has been of great value to citizens that fly commercial aircraft
2 into Montana.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House considers issues of encroachment and munitions
4 safety to be nonproblems in Montana but still unresolved in California.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana House protests the appearance of a penalty against the
6 Montana Air National Guard and the State of Montana when a fighter mission is transferred out of Montana, after
7 numerous awards, a transition from the F-16 to F-15 fighters under cost and ahead of schedule, intense
8 community support, unmatched reenlistment success and employee retention, and great and effective leadership
9 at the local and state levels, to Fresno where portions of the Air National Guard are under an investigative cloud
10 for fiscal improprieties.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to PRESIDENT
12 OF THE UNITED STATES BARACK OBAMA, Secretary Robert Gates at the Department of Defense, ~~Secretary of the~~
13 ~~Air Force Michael Donley~~, SENATE MAJORITY LEADER HARRY REID, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
14 JOHN BOEHNER, Montana's Congressional Delegation, and the Governor, urging them to do all within their
15 authority to retain the F-15C/D mission at the Montana Air National Guard 120th Fighter Wing as a measure of
16 fiscal responsibility and safety for the people of Montana and the United States today and into the future.

17 - END -