

1 State of Arkansas
2 88th General Assembly
3 Fiscal Session, 2012

HR 1001

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5 By: Representatives Pennartz, S. Malone, D. Altes

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7 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

8 URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE,
9 THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND THE
10 NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU TO RETAIN THE 188TH FIGHTER
11 WING IN FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS.

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14 **Subtitle**

15 URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
16 THE AIR FORCE, THE UNITED STATES
17 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND THE NATIONAL
18 GUARD BUREAU TO RETAIN THE 188TH FIGHTER
19 WING IN FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS.

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21
22 WHEREAS, the 188th Fighter Wing, Arkansas Air National Guard, located at
23 Ebbing Air National Guard Base in Fort Smith, Arkansas, plays an important
24 role in the defense of our nation and has been deployed in the past six
25 years for expeditionary combat support for Operation Enduring Freedom,
26 Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other contingency operations worldwide; and

27
28 WHEREAS, during the summer of 2005, the Fort Smith region rallied with
29 the 188th Fighter Wing when the Pentagon recommended through a Base Closure
30 and Realignment Commission action that the Arkansas Air National Guard unit
31 be stripped of its flying mission; and

32
33 WHEREAS, the unit's unique and unmatched attributes, including its
34 range, airspace, joint forces training capabilities, and cost-effectiveness,
35 and stellar performance record since its inception in 1953, along with
36 assistance from local, state, and federal elected officials and private



1 entities compelled the members of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2 in 2005 to take unprecedented action and award a new flying mission to the
3 188th Fighter Wing, known as the “Flying Razorbacks”; and
4

5 WHEREAS, members of the 188th Fighter Wing are preparing for a third
6 combat deployment in seven years with two different weapons platforms and for
7 the second time during those three deployments are faced with not knowing if
8 they will have a job when they return; and
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10 WHEREAS, the 188th Fighter Wing recently was awarded the United States
11 Air Force’s second highest unit award, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award,
12 for its performance from October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2010, by:
13

14 Completing the weapons system conversions from F-16s through two
15 separate A-10 Thunderbolt II “Warthog” upgrades ahead of schedule;
16

17 Maintaining a mission capable rate for the A-10 above the Air National
18 Guard average and achieving the highest A-10 unit in the Air National
19 Guard from August 2009 through July 2010;
20

21 Acing an Air Combat Command Unit Compliance Inspection in 2009 with an
22 overall mark of 99.4 percent;
23

24 Earning the coveted Patriot Team Award as the Air National Guard’s top
25 national recruiting office;
26

27 Developing an avionics solution for Air Force-wide problems with A-10s,
28 earning the designation as the only unit authorized to perform repairs
29 outside the standard repair parameters and saving more than \$1.5
30 million annually; and
31

32 Logging 2,700 combat hours in Afghanistan without missing a single
33 mission tasking assignment, less than one month after completing the
34 conversion to A-10s; and
35

36 WHEREAS, the 188th Fighter Wing operates as the most efficient and cost-

1 effective fighter wing in the nation with the following attributes:

2
3 Razorback Range, where pilots practice, approximately five minutes off
4 the ramp at Ebbing Air National Guard base, providing maximum flying
5 time for training; and

6
7 A bridged Hog and Shirley Military Operating Area above the Ozark and
8 Ouachita National Forests that provides air space comparable in size to
9 the Nellis ranges for joint exercises with other United States Air
10 Force and ground assets free of encroachment and environmental issues;
11 and

12
13 WHEREAS, the economic impact of the 188th Fighter Wing on the Fort Smith
14 community is in excess of \$150 million annually; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Greater Fort Smith Region is consistently in the top five
17 metropolitan statistical areas with low costs of doing business; and

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19 WHEREAS, the 188th Fighter Wing is the lowest-cost fighter wing in the
20 United States Air Force with unsurpassed airspace and training facilities,

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22 NOW, THEREFORE,

23 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
24 STATE OF ARKANSAS THAT:

25 (1) The United States Department of Defense, the United States
26 Department of the Air Force, and the National Guard Bureau exercise sound
27 judgment on behalf of our nation's defense and maintain fighters on the ramp
28 at the 188th Fighter Wing and continue to utilize the wing's unique range,
29 airspace, joint forces capabilities, and cost-effectiveness attributes;

30 (2) The United States Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, and
31 his staff be hereby formally invited to visit the City of Fort Smith and the
32 188th Fighter Wing before the unit's deployment this spring; and

33 (3) Upon its adoption, a copy of this resolution be delivered to
34 the United States Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, the United States
35 Department of Defense, the United States Department of the Air Force, and the
36 National Guard Bureau.