

House Bill 470

By: Representatives Blackmon of the 146th, Belton of the 112th, Smyre of the 135th, Coomer of the 14th, Williams of the 168th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
2 Department of Economic Development, so as to create a program for making grants to
3 certain organizations supporting military communities; to provide for legislative findings;
4 to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

7 The General Assembly finds that Georgia's military installations represent the single largest
8 economic development investment in the state. These installations provide thousands of
9 jobs, both directly and indirectly, to several Georgia host communities. Further, the General
10 Assembly finds that it is in the best interest of these communities and this state to protect and
11 invest in these facilities. In addition, the General Assembly finds that investment into these
12 communities to further the relationship between the military communities and the military
13 installations, as well as any purpose that further integrates such communities and
14 installations, shall be considered a public benefit to this state.

15 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 2.**

16 Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department
17 of Economic Development, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

18 style="text-align:center">"ARTICLE 10

19 50-7-120.

20 As used in this article, the term:

21 (1) 'Community entity' means any nonprofit organization that works to protect, promote,
22 and enhance the military value of the military installations within its region of the state.

23 (2) 'Department' means the Department of Economic Development.

24 (3) 'Federal review' means any review of a military installation by a federal entity for the
 25 purpose of determining the viability of such military installation, including, but not
 26 limited to, any review directly or indirectly related to the Defense Base Closure and
 27 Realignment Commission.

28 (4) 'Governor's Defense Initiative' means the program operated by the department tasked
 29 with the mission of reviewing the economic development opportunities at and around
 30 military installations and military communities.

31 (5) 'Grant goal' means any project, event, or activity that promotes a military installation,
 32 including, but not limited to:

33 (A) The promotion of recruitment, expansion, or retention of jobs at such military
 34 installation or within the military community in which it is located;

35 (B) Preparation for any federal review; or

36 (C) Enhanced support for employees of the Department of Defense, veterans, and their
 37 dependents.

38 (6) 'Military community' means any municipality or county that has within its
 39 jurisdiction a military facility or any municipality or county that after reasonable review
 40 the department determines is economically impacted by the presence of such nearby
 41 military facility.

42 (7) 'Military installation' means a facility owned and operated by United States Army,
 43 Air Force, Navy, Marines, or Coast Guard that shelters military equipment and personnel
 44 and facilitates training and operations for such organizations.

45 50-7-121.

46 (a) Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, the department shall administer a
 47 grant program for the purposes of providing assistance to military communities. The
 48 amount of any grant awarded pursuant to this Code section shall be determined by the
 49 department on a case-by-case basis consistent with criteria developed by the department
 50 and which shall include, but not be limited to, a consideration of the grant goal being
 51 proposed and the extent to which it:

52 (1) Furthers the relationship between the military community and military installation;

53 (2) Furthers the military installation's economic development investment into the military
 54 community; or

55 (3) Assists in efforts to defend the viability of a military installation from a federal
 56 review.

57 (b) The department shall further develop a set of criteria that ensures the credibility of any
 58 community entity submitting a grant application and the viability of the grant goal,
 59 including, but not limited to:

- 60 (1) The length of time the community entity has been active;
61 (2) The types of activities and projects in which the community entity has been engaged;
62 and
63 (3) The current and historical status of the relationship the community entity has with the
64 military installation located in its jurisdiction or region.
65 (c) The department shall submit any pending grant award to the Governor's Defense
66 Initiative for final review; provided, however, that the requirements of this subsection shall
67 not be applicable if the Georgia Defense Initiative ceases to exist.
68 (d) The department shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement the
69 purposes of this article.
70 (e) The department shall be authorized to charge and collect such fees necessary for costs
71 associated with the processing of applications submitted pursuant to this Code section.

72 50-7-122.

73 A community entity may submit an application to the department for a grant to assist in the
74 pursuance of a grant goal. Such application shall be consistent with the requirements
75 established by the department and shall clearly communicate how such grant goal
76 contributes to the economic viability of a military installation in a military community."

77 **SECTION 3.**

78 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.