

BILL ANALYSIS

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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Pentagon could realize significant savings by relocating the United States Africa Command from Germany to Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston.

When AFRICOM was created in 2007, the Department of Defense chose a temporary location in Stuttgart. It intended to select a permanent headquarters in Africa, but set this plan aside due to cost projections, security, and the sensitivities of African nations.

The Department of Defense conducted a study in 2012 that found maintaining AFRICOM headquarters stateside would cost \$60 million to \$70 million less per year, and now those savings would be even greater due to significant increases in Overseas Cost of Living Allowances rates. Although relocation would involve expense, this expense could be recouped within two to six years. Moreover, the relocation would repatriate about 1,400 direct jobs and create as many as 4,300 additional jobs for U.S. residents, and it would have an annual impact on the local economy ranging from \$400 million to \$500 million.

Should the defense department decide to relocate AFRICOM, Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston would be an ideal home for the headquarters. The base features strong joint service military value of active duty, reserve, and guard units from all five U.S. armed services, some of which presently conduct training and operational missions for AFRICOM. It is also equipped to handle large military aircraft, and the city boasts one of the nation's most vibrant ports, which handles 40 percent of all U.S. trade with Africa. Moreover, the community is exceptionally supportive of the military, and the Greater Houston area has strong cultural, educational, medical, and diplomatic ties with Africa.

The Government Accountability Office has concluded that the relocation of AFRICOM to the United States would generate tremendous cost savings and economic benefits, and Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base offers advantages that would enhance the effectiveness of the headquarters.

RESOLVED

That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to direct the Department of Defense to relocate the United States Africa Command to Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston.

That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the secretary of the Department of Defense, to the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.