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## Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Formally Launches New Jersey Military Installation Growth and Development Task Force

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*Move Signifies Next Critical Step in Ensuring the Sustainability and Growth of the State's Military Bases*

**Trenton, NJ**— Furthering the Christie Administration's ongoing commitment to New Jersey's military community and their families, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today announced the official launch of the New Jersey Military Installation Growth and Development Task Force. Created through Executive Orders Nos. 134 and 154, the Task Force will undertake the critical responsibility of forging a blueprint for the long-term growth and viability of the state's military bases and U.S. Coast Guard installations.

"It is hard to overstate the importance of this issue to New Jersey's future prosperity and overall quality of life," said Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno. "Enhancing the strength and sustainability of our military installations is not only a matter of protecting tens of thousands of jobs and billions in economic activity, but preserving a tremendous source of statewide pride as well. When the work of the Task Force is complete, I am confident that it will offer a plan that will make New Jersey's military bases even stronger engines of economic growth and better positioned to meet the unique needs of a 21st century United States military."

New Jersey's military bases are essential components of the State's future quality of life. Analysis by Rutgers University for the New Jersey Council on Armed Forces and Veterans' Affairs found that – taken together – these bases generate employment for more than 73,000 people and support \$9.6 billion in total economic activity. In fact, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst is the State's second largest employer, supporting more than 40,000 military and civilian employees and contributing more than \$7 billion annually to the State's economy alone. In addition, the Joint Base supports more than 65,000 off-base jobs.

"Throughout New Jersey's history, its military bases have served with distinction - home and abroad. These bases safeguard our nation and provided thousands of employment opportunities to individuals and businesses who are proud to call the Garden State their home," said Brigadier General Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General for the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "The Task Force will preserve and enhance the State's military installations to promote statewide jobs and corporate growth."

The Task Force will seek to:

**Organize A Broad-Based Coalition Supportive Of New Jersey's Military Bases.** By fostering a unified voice and vision among elected officials at the local, state, federal level, as well as industry leaders, veterans and concerned citizens, New Jersey will most effectively promote the tremendous work being done at the state's military installations.

**Assist In The Economic Fortification Of The State's Military Bases.** By channeling the considerable resources of the New Jersey Partnership for Action, the state will be better equipped to promote New Jersey's strategic advantages to retain and attract missions to New Jersey's military bases.

**Ensure Alignment of Base Missions With Department of Defense Priorities.** By assisting New Jersey's military installations in their efforts to conform to Department of Defense goals and long-term strategic planning.

In the coming months, the Task Force will visit New Jersey's military institutions and meet with many businesses impacted by the state's bases. The purpose of these visits will not only be to spread the word on its ongoing work, but to emphasize the important role each one plays to the state's overall economy and future workforce.

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Chaired by Lt. Governor Guadagno, the Task Force is comprised of experienced members from across the military, government and the private sector, including: Brig. Gen. Michael Cunniff, Michele Brown, Chief Executive Officer of the Economic Development Authority, and Tracye McDaniel, President and CEO of Choose New Jersey. The Lt. Governor today also announced that former Congressman Jim Saxton and Paul Boudreau were appointed to the Task Force.

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