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**EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES OPEN APPLICATION PERIOD
FOR NEW YORK STATE MILITARY BASE RETENTION GRANT PROGRAM**

Grants will help to strengthen military facilities and their capacity as major contributors to workforce and economy

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced that the State is currently accepting applications for Military Base Retention Grants from not-for-profit organizations or municipalities with a demonstrated history of support for military bases and units in New York. Many bases face the threat of closure due to federal budgetary constraints, modernization initiatives and the ongoing Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) review. These grants will support and improve military facilities in New York State by promoting, enhancing and protecting New York's military bases, which account for more than 10,000 direct jobs with direct wages of \$688 million and a \$1.9 billion economic impact.

"New York State's military bases produce the soldiers that keep our nation safe while generating employment opportunities and economic activity that keeps our local communities strong," said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. "Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, we are using every tool possible to ensure they stay here and grow here, including these grants to promote the benefits of our military installations and protect them from threats of closure."

State military bases account for more than 10,000 direct jobs with direct wages of \$688 million and \$1.9 billion of economic impact. New York State's primary military installations include:

- Niagara Falls Reserve Station
- Fort Drum, Watertown
- Air Force Research Laboratories, Rome
- Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia
- Hancock Field, Air National Guard Base, Syracuse
- Watervliet Arsenal, Albany
- West Point
- Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn

- Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh
- Gabreski Air National Guard Base, Westhampton

The economic benefits created by New York State's military installations continue to be threatened by federal budgetary constraints, modernization initiatives, and future rounds of the BRAC program. In previous BRAC rounds, base closings have imperiled vital missions and devastated communities throughout New York.

In order to protect and promote the State's military bases, Governor Cuomo has directed ESD to administer the New York State Military Base Retention Grant Program. Successful applicants will receive funds of up to \$300,000 from ESD to:

- Communicate the importance of local bases and their missions to elected and government officials;
- Improve existing military facilities in order to enhance their competitiveness in future BRAC rounds;
- Promote additional missions for military units based in New York; and
- Conduct any other efforts to sustain and expand the presence of military bases in New York.

Eligible applicants are not-for-profit organizations or municipalities with a demonstrated history of support for military bases and units in New York. All applicants must adhere to IRS guidelines in the use of grant funds and disclose the names and affiliations of their executive staff and board members, none on whom may be registered lobbyists.

Applications for the grants must be emailed or postmarked by August 23, 2012. For application instructions and awards criteria please visit www.esd.ny.gov/BaseRetention.html.

Applications will be evaluated based on their expected impact and by the applicant's experience as an advocate for military personnel and facilities in New York State. In particular, strong applications will:

- Commit to supporting the Governor's efforts to prevent base closures in NYS and to coordinate all activities with those designated by the Governor to conduct this effort in support of the military in New York;
- Have a track record of experience working with the State of New York in support of a military installation in their region/community;
- Have been endorsed by the applicant's Regional Economic Development Council and can demonstrate how the proposed use of funds is consistent with that Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan;
- Can match State dollars with private or local funds; and
- Propose to coordinate with other organizations working to prevent base closures in New York.

Since taking office Governor Cuomo has shown strong support for New York's military bases. In March, the Governor announced a \$500,000 economic impact study to grow and retain state military bases and keep New York's National Guard strong. The experienced firm Hyjek & Fix (H&F) has been brought in to develop a comprehensive, coordinated statewide strategy using the findings of the study, information gained from visits to each military installation, an updated independent analysis of critical costs factors and military value parameters, and data from the 2005 BRAC process on New York bases. The final strategic plan will promote, enhance and protect New York's military bases.

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York's chief economic development agency (www.esd.ny.gov). The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I Love NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov and www.esd.ny.gov.



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