

Dear Esteemed Members of the Florida Delegation,

I am writing to make you aware that the Army is strongly considering eliminating their Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEOSTRI) that is based in Orlando, together with the other military modeling and simulation commands.

PEO STRI is the largest simulation command in the United States and services the military on a worldwide basis with a particular emphasis on Modeling Simulation & Training (MS&T). Over \$2.7 billion in contract work originates out of Central Florida alone, with the vast majority of that work being performed by Florida businesses. The National Center for Simulation (NCS) has over 300 members, many of whom are small business that will be severely impacted by this decision.

The Modeling and Simulation industry has enjoyed 75 years of collaboration under the nation's longest joint service agreement between the Navy and Army. This collaboration has led to critical developments in combat training centers and early adoptions of new technological innovations such as artificial intelligence. Spurred by this synergy, the Marines and the Air Force simulation policy group joined Team Orlando over 20 years ago. The military simulation organizations, known collectively as Team Orlando, have been the catalyst for that expansion and is currently an over \$7 billion industry, that generates over 30,000 employees with an average salary of over \$100,000. This decision would put this economic driver at risk.

Most recently, the US Space Force established a focus on training and simulation and situated that organization at Patrick Space Force Base - primarily to be close to the Central Florida MS&T industry. The MS&T industry has built a legacy of success and - in the 21st century - it remains the most efficient and least expensive option to provide repetitive, tactical training proficiency. Florida is at the epicenter of this incredible work, which touches every aspect of military preparedness and national security readiness, as well as the Space and Energy sectors. The potential loss of this collaboration will have a detrimental effect across the entire Department of Defense.

PEO STRI acquires and manages the modeling, simulation and instrumentation capabilities to support training programs for the Army's activities around the world and is a crucial component of the industry. We have corroborated information that Army leaders at the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASAALT) are considering reducing the Army from 13 Program Executive Offices (PEO's) to 9, with PEO STRI being eliminated entirely. This will significantly affect the Orlando community and portend the loss of high salaried jobs. If the decision to eliminate PEO STRI stands, it will be difficult for the Army to maintain its core competency in MS&T.

Eliminating PEO STRI will have severe negative consequences that will degrade military confidence and reduce soldier lethality. The Army will be unable to execute numerous key simulation programs including synthetic training environments and cyber simulations. In addition, the collaborative ecosystem between the military and simulation companies in Florida is at risk of being shattered, as the end of PEO STRI could lead other programs to become vulnerable and investment could disappear. NCS's academic partnerships with the University of Central Florida and other institutions which focus on developing the next generation of STEM

workforce are at risk if simulation does not remain a priority. Furthermore, the State of Florida has invested over \$150 million to create 450,000 square feet of office space to accommodate the military (mostly Army). This investment provides the military low-cost office space with no capital investment that cannot be matched at a different location.

Beyond Florida, this decision will negatively impact the Warfighter across all service branches. Simulation offers the ability to rehearse dangerous operations and missions, train our military and workforce, and even to design and test equipment and manufacturing processes in a virtual environment before ever operating in the real environment. This results in enormous savings and efficiencies for our government organizations and businesses alike. Simulation technology affects every soldier, sailor, airman, marine, coast guardsman, and guardian to ensure they are trained and ready to support our national defense and missions throughout the world on behalf of the United States of America.

We strongly urge the reversal of this decision to eliminate PEO STRI, which is critical to the future of MS&T and military preparedness. Time is of the essence, as recommendations are being finalized by May 9th to submit to the Executive Branch.

Best regards,
George

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