

ASSEMBLY MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 108

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 4, 2024

The Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably Assembly Resolution No. 108.

This Assembly resolution urges the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to establish an inpatient hospital facility at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. The citizens of this nation and State are indebted to the sacrifice and heroism of all who have bravely served in the Armed Forces of the United States. In return for their sacrifices, this country has made a commitment to meeting the health care needs of veterans.

As of 2023, 338,012 veterans live in New Jersey, with 119,200 of them residing in the southern counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, and Salem. Currently, there is no federal Department of Veterans Affairs inpatient hospital facility in southern New Jersey, making it necessary for veterans needing inpatient care to travel long distances to northern New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware. The East Orange Veterans Medical Center is the largest health care facility serving veterans from southern New Jersey, which is over two hours away from some veterans. In New Jersey, the average resident lives approximately 12 minutes away from the closest hospital, therefore, requiring veterans to travel multiple hours for medical care is unjust.

Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst is an ideal location for an inpatient hospital facility for veterans from southern New Jersey as it shortens the travel distance for these veterans. Additionally, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst provides a variety of other services to veterans, therefore, making trips to the base efficient and convenient for veterans and their families.

It is fitting and appropriate for the State to take steps to ensure that our nation's promise of health care access is kept to the veterans of southern New Jersey.