

TESTIMONY OF
MAJOR GENERAL ALAN S. DOHRMANN
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD
BEFORE THE
HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
04 MARCH 2021
SENATE BILL 2114

Chairman Kasper, members of the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee, I am Al Dohrmann, the Adjutant General for the North Dakota National Guard. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 2114. This bill amends Section 37-07.3-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, which established a trust fund for the expansion of National Guard training facilities and the construction of an armory.

This section became law 1985 and provided the authority and funding to procure additional training lands at Camp Grafton, and to provide a state match for a new armory at Fraine Barracks. From July 1, 1985 through June 30, 1989, the trust fund was solely for this purpose. Thereafter, the funds were available for other "training area acquisitions and facility development" projects. The principle and interest from this trust fund were exhausted by 1989. There have been no new appropriations and the accounting line went dormant.

Today, our National Guard finds itself in a similar situation. We need to expand our facilities at Camp Grafton to meet our training requirements and future training facility projects will require state matching funds. In regard to the expansion of Camp Grafton, the 66th Legislative Assembly agreed with us and provided in SB 2016:

Section 6. Camp Grafton Expansion – Legislative Intent. It is the intent of the sixty-sixth legislative assembly that:

1. The adjutant general purchase options during the period beginning with the effective date of this Act and ending June 30, 2021, for the purchase or long-term lease of land for the camp Grafton expansion, including the purchase of no more than one thousand six hundred acres and the long-term lease of the remainder, not to exceed six thousand acres in total.
2. If the adjutant general secures options to purchase or lease all necessary land for the camp Grafton expansion, the sixty-seventh legislative assembly [will] provide funding and authority for the purchase or long-term lease of land for the camp Grafton expansion during the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending on June 30, 2023.
3. The adjutant general [shall] not use eminent domain for the expansion of camp Grafton.

While SB 2114 does not provide any funding, we will work through the appropriations process to secure the funds required to meet the intent of this bill, and the legislative intent of the 66th Assembly.

Once a land acquisition solution is identified, the authority in this bill will allow for the expenditure of any funds provided by the 67th Legislative Assembly for the purpose of Camp Grafton expansion. The Governor's base budget called for \$2.6 million for this purpose; however, the House failed to include this amount in HB 1016 – Adjutant General's appropriation Bill. We will attempt to restore this funding on the Senate-side. We also requested carry-over authority for the remainder of the \$600,000 provided by the 66th Assembly for the purpose of securing purchase and lease options. This was included in HB 1016.

Further, after June 30, 2023, Trust Fund dollars could be used for the 25% cost share for the construction of new National Guard training facilities. While our new Fargo Reserve Center, which will be completed in 2021, and the new Dickinson Armory, which will begin construction in 2022, are 100%, federally funded, future military construction projects will require a 25% state cost share. Renewing the authority in Chapter 32-07.3 will ensure funds are available for these future requirements.

We ask for your support on SB 2114 to provide the authority we need to ensure our service members have the training facility they need to accomplish their mission.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter, I am pleased to stand for any questions.