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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 108

Offered March 6, 2026

Commending Naval Air Station Oceana.

Patron—DeSteph

WHEREAS, combining unmatched operational capability with strong community support, Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach is the ideal home base for future squadrons of F-35C Lightning II stealth strike fighters, the United States Navy's carrier-capable variant of the F-35; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2029, the United States Navy is planning to transition seven squadrons of F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornet multirole fighters into squadrons of F-35C Lightning II stealth strike fighters; and

WHEREAS, home basing the F-35C fleet at Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana would not only strengthen national defense readiness but also sustain thousands of local jobs and contribute significantly to the regional economy; Virginia Beach also offers an exceptional quality of life for sailors and their families, including excellent schools, diverse housing options, and vibrant community resources; and

WHEREAS, NAS Oceana is the United States Navy's East Coast Master Jet Base, making it uniquely suited to host next-generation carrier-based aircraft, such as the F-35C, and concentrating advanced tactical aviation assets at NAS Oceana supports readiness, efficiency, and alignment with established operational structures; and

WHEREAS, located within the Hampton Roads Region, which is already home to the world's largest naval base, major shipyards, and key logistical and command assets, NAS Oceana ensures swift coordination with other national assets, and its strategic location enhances the United States Navy's ability to project power quickly across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe, the Mediterranean, and global hotspots; and

WHEREAS, the addition of the F-35C fleet would complement these existing assets and improve integration with carrier strike groups, ensuring seamless deployment cycles and readiness; the installation is already built and optimized for high-tempo jet operations, with runways, hangars, simulators, and maintenance capabilities that meet or exceed requirements for fifth-generation aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the Hampton Roads Region has decades of experience supporting tactical aviation, minimizing transition risk and avoiding costly new construction elsewhere; NAS Oceana's pairing with Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Fentress provides unmatched field carrier landing practice capacity, ensuring that pilots can achieve and maintain carrier-qualification readiness on a secure, uncongested, military controlled field throughout deployment cycles; and

WHEREAS, establishing NAS Oceana as the home base for the F-35C fleet would align with the air station's long-term mission, support the United States Navy's modernization strategy, and strengthen the ability of the United States to maintain maritime dominance well into the future; and

WHEREAS, NAS Oceana represents the most strategic, sustainable, and community-supported choice as the home base for the F-35C fleet; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach hereby be commended for its wide range of operational and support capabilities, all of which would be an asset to future squadrons of F-35C Lightning II stealth strike fighters; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Naval Air Station Oceana as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for its ongoing contributions to national defense.

INTRODUCED

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