

1 COMMITTEE: Environment  
2 POLICY: Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative  
3 TYPE OF POLICY: Existing  
4

5 The Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI)  
6 enables DOD to work with partners to protect valuable habitat and avoid land use conflicts in  
7 the vicinity of priority installations. Maintaining availability, accessibility and capability for  
8 realistic training, live fire testing and other operations is crucial to ensuring a trained and  
9 ready force to support the DOD mission to fight and win the nation's wars.

10

11 The United States originally established military installations in rural areas far from population  
12 centers. As the nation's population has grown, urban sprawl now abuts many installations.  
13 Noise, dust, and smoke from weapons, vehicles, and aircraft prompt citizen complaints about  
14 military training forcing a conflict between meeting mission requirements and being good  
15 neighbors. Noise and light pollution concerns, the presence of cultural and historic resources,  
16 or endangered species can result in training restrictions affecting military readiness. This is  
17 referred to by DOD as encroachment.

18

19 REPI is an innovative tool that both protects the mission and achieves conservation  
20 objectives by proactively addressing encroachment that can cause costly workarounds and  
21 compromise training and testing. REPI uses the authority at Title 10, Section 2684a of the  
22 United States Code to enter into the agreements with non-Federal governments and private  
23 organizations to share funds towards these common objectives. REPI is overseen by the  
24 Office of the Secretary of Defense and implemented through Service programs.

25

26 Through REPI, the Services reach out to state and local governments, and non-governmental  
27 organizations to identify mutual conservation objectives and cost-share conservation  
28 easements from willing landowners to protect habitat or prevent development of key open  
29 areas. The easements typically permit the landowner to maintain ownership and continue  
30 current uses as a farm, forest or ranch and do not add military land for training or testing.

31

32 REPI provide significant and long term benefits to the people and the landscape in  
33 communities surrounding military installations. It enhances military readiness; protects high  
34 value habitat; strengthens military/community relations; and provides the opportunity for  
35 partnerships among key stakeholders, such as state and local governments and the military.  
36 NCSL supports REPI and believes there is a limited window of opportunity for REPI  
37 partnerships to protect land and habitat in support of military training and testing. In addition,  
38 the increasing numbers of willing sellers in the existing real estate market present significant  
39 near-term opportunities to leverage REPI funding with state and local partners. Recent  
40 studies have documented the success of the program and also the need for \$150M in annual  
41 funding over a 10-12 year period to proactively address the partnership opportunities and  
42 leverage non-federal dollars to maximize accessibility, availability and capability of current  
43 military lands for training and testing.

44

45 NCSL applauds the United States Congress for recognizing the critical need to protect DoD  
46 bases and the limited window of opportunity to do so, and for continuing its strong bipartisan  
47 support for REPI.

48