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## **Governor Kaine Designates May as Military Appreciation Month**

**RICHMOND** – Governor Timothy M. Kaine announced today that he has proclaimed the month of May as “Military Appreciation Month” in Virginia, and encourages all citizens of the Commonwealth to join in recognizing the contributions and sacrifices made by Virginia-based military personnel and their families.

Virginia is home to more than 200,000 active military and civilian defense personnel, and more than 2,610 Virginia Army National Guard members have been mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. An additional 430 airmen of the Virginia Air National Guard mobilized in support of Air Expeditionary Force operations in Southwest Asia. In addition, more than 750,000 Virginia residents are veterans of military service.

“We value the service and sacrifices being made by Virginians on a daily basis in all parts of the world to protect America’s freedoms,” said Governor Kaine. “Virginia has a proud history of military service, and we are honored to pay tribute to military personnel who call Virginia home. Through their dedicated efforts and the support of their families, these proud men and women have earned our respect, admiration, and appreciation.”

With more than 30 active military installations based in the Commonwealth, Virginia communities benefit daily from the skills, talents, and contributions of both active and retired military personnel. In return, Virginia continually seeks ways to enhance the quality of life for Virginia military personnel and their families.

For instance, a second round of grant funding is currently underway to address the federal 2005 Base Realignment and Closure actions, which presented both challenges and opportunities to Virginia. The Virginia National Defense Industrial Authority is engaged in strategic planning to find opportunities and solutions for Virginia-based military installations. Working hand-in-hand with base commanders and community leaders, Virginia is bringing a respected pool of talent to advocate on behalf of military personnel, their families, and the communities in which they reside.

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