

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SESSION 2011
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2012-6
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 932**

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE USO OF NORTH CAROLINA FOR PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO OUR MILITARY TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Whereas, the United Service Organizations (USO) was established in 1941 to provide civilian support for military personnel during World War II; and

Whereas, the first USO facility opened in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in 1941 and was soon followed by other facilities, including one in Jacksonville; and

Whereas, the Jacksonville facility has operated for over 70 years and is the longest continuously operating USO facility in the world; and

Whereas, the Jacksonville USO facility has benefited from the support of many concerned citizens, including Judge Harvey Boney, who supported the facility soon after it opened until his death in 2012; the late William Sheehan, who worked with the facility from 1956 to 1982; and retired Marine Sergeant Major Matthew Hardiman, who served as director of the facility from 1976 to 2000 and was known as "Mr. USO of Jacksonville"; and

Whereas, the USO of North Carolina provides essential services to the many men and women in the military based in our State, which is home to 11% of the U.S. military's active duty forces, seven major military installations, and the fourth largest demographic of active and reserve duty components in the country; and

Whereas, in 2011, the USO of North Carolina served over 407,000 troops in five centers, including three travel-based centers at Charlotte Douglas International Airport, Raleigh-Durham International Airport, and Fayetteville Regional Airport, two installation base centers in Fort Bragg and in Jacksonville/Camp Lejuene, and a mobile unit and information desk at Coastal Carolina Regional Airport in New Bern; and

Whereas, in 2011, an average of 9,000 people each month visited the travel-based centers, which are staffed by volunteers and provide comfortable settings, Internet and phone access, refreshments, play areas for children, and other entertainment options for military personnel and their families; and

Whereas, in 2011, the travel-based centers through their "Honors Support Team" performed over 140 plane-side dignified returns and aided nearly 1,300 family members of fallen service members over the course of that year; and

Whereas, the two installation-based centers serve an average of 50,000 troops and their families, providing assistance with Rack Packs, care packages, deployments, and homecomings and serving as recreation centers; and

Whereas, the USO of North Carolina helps family members stay connected with deployed service members with their "Smiles Over Miles" program, which allows family members in North Carolina to make videos at the centers and send them to deployed loved ones, and "United Through Reading," which gives service members the opportunity to read a story on video before they are deployed and then have it delivered to their children while they are away; and

Whereas, the USO of North Carolina sponsors other programs, including wounded warrior and family support, surprise birthday cakes for military personnel, seasonal and special programs for the children of deployed service members, holiday meals, and a food pantry for members in need; and

Whereas, the USO of North Carolina is constantly adapting to meet the needs of today's service members and their families, such as providing reading and study skills seminars for parents and children and establishing college campus satellite locations on or near USO



facilities to provide resource information and peer-to-peer contacts for military members and their families attending college in our State; and

Whereas, with multiple deployments, financial challenges, mental health issues, nuclear family disruptions, adjustments to injuries, and transitions to civilian life, it is more important than ever that our military personnel receive the benefits and services provided by the USO of North Carolina; and

Whereas, the USO of North Carolina and its more than 700 volunteers should be commended for the outstanding support the organization provides to our service men and women and their families; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly wishes to extend its appreciation to the USO of North Carolina for providing programs and services to our military troops and their families.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly honors the memory of Judge Harvey Boney, who worked and supported the Jacksonville USO since 1940 until his recent death, and William Sheehan, who worked with the Jacksonville USO from 1956 to 1982. The General Assembly also would like to honor retired Marine Sergeant Major Matthew Hardiman, who was Director of the Jacksonville USO for nearly 20 years, serving from 1976 to 2000.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the USO of North Carolina.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 21st day of June, 2012.

s/ Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

s/ Thom Tillis
Speaker of the House of Representatives