

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2011**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 932
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H932-PCS11373-LG-41**

Sponsors:

Referred to:

May 26, 2011

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

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

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

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

10 Whereas, the Jacksonville USO facility has benefited from the support of many
11 concerned citizens, including Judge Harvey Boney, who supported the facility soon after it
12 opened until his death in 2012; the late William Sheehan, who worked with the facility from
13 1956 to 1982; and retired Marine Sergeant Major Matthew Hardiman, who served as director of
14 the facility from 1976 to 2000 and was known as "Mr. USO of Jacksonville"; and

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

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

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

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

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

34 Whereas, the USO of North Carolina helps family members stay connected with
35 deployed service members with their "Smiles Over Miles" program, which allows family



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1 members in North Carolina to make videos at the centers and send them to deployed loved
2 ones, and "United Through Reading," which gives service members the opportunity to read a
3 story on video before they are deployed and then have it delivered to their children while they
4 are away; and

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

9 Whereas, the USO of North Carolina is constantly adapting to meet the needs of
10 today's service members and their families, such as providing reading and study skills seminars
11 for parents and children and establishing college campus satellite locations on or near USO
12 facilities to provide resource information and peer-to-peer contacts for military members and
13 their families attending college in our State; and

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

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

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

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

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

29 **SECTION 2.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
30 resolution to the USO of North Carolina.

31 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.