



November 15, 2018

The Honorable Governor Pete Ricketts  
State Capitol, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor N.E.  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Mr. Patrick J. O'Donnell  
Clerk of the Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 2018  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Dear Governor Ricketts and Mr. O'Donnell:

Please accept this report pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 55-606.

The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs (Commission) was created in 2016 by LB 754 with an effective date of July 21, 2016. Rita Sanders and Bill Williams were appointed to serve as Commissioners from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional Districts on December 15, 2016. David Bloomfield was appointed to serve as the Commissioner from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District on January 5, 2017. Phil O'Donnell was hired as the first Military Affairs Liaison for the Commission on January 30, 2017. In December 2017, Dave Rippe joined the Commission in his role as the Director of Economic Development. In June 2018, Colonel Brian Pukall assumed command of the 557<sup>th</sup> Weather Wing and joined the Commission. Finally, in October 2018, Mike Navrkal joined the Commission in his role as chair of the State Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 55-601.

In 2018, Nebraska's Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs toured Nebraska National Guard facilities and met twice pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 55-603. On May 23, 2018 the Commission voted to contract with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Business Research to summarize and assess the economic impact of military assets in Nebraska. Recommendations from the 2017 annual report that are still valid serve as the Commission's "recommendations for preserving and sustaining military assets and missions existing in Nebraska" and serve as the Commission's "recommendations for actions which the state can take to encourage expanding such assets and missions" pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 55-606. On October 31, 2018 the Commission voted to amend and submit this report.

Questions may be directed to Phil O'Donnell, Military Affairs Liaison, at (402)-471-4546.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hilgert". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the printed name "John Hilgert".

John Hilgert  
Chair, Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs