

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2012-059

Opposing Further Cuts to Discretionary Spending, of the Troops at Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint National Guard Base or that further Impact Core Local Government Programs (“Sequestration”)

WHEREAS, last year President Obama and congressional leaders reached an agreement to raise the debt ceiling by \$2.1 trillion and reduce spending by the same amount; and,

WHEREAS, this agreement was enacted by Congress and signed into law (PL 112-25) by President Obama in August, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, PL 112-25 instituted annual caps on non-Defense discretionary spending that are designed to reduce the deficit by \$935 billion over the next ten years; and,

WHEREAS, the \$935 billion in cuts to non-Defense discretionary spending have already significantly impacted core local government programs such as CDBG, HOME, infrastructure grants and local law enforcement assistance; and,

WHEREAS, PL 112-25 also created a 12-member congressional Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (the “Super Committee”) that was tasked with reviewing the entire federal budget and finding an additional \$1.5 trillion in spending reductions over the next ten years by November 23, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, the Super Committee deadlocked; and,

WHEREAS, in the event of a Super Committee deadlock, PL 112-95 called for an additional \$1.2 trillion in cuts to discretionary spending to be spread over the next nine years beginning in FY 2013, and split evenly between Defense (\$600 billion) and non-Defense (\$600 billion) discretionary spending; and,

WHEREAS, the additional \$1.2 trillion cut is called “sequestration” and is scheduled to be implemented in January, 2013; and,

WHEREAS, Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint National Guard Base add \$7.1 billion per year to the Central Midlands economy and play an important role in our nation’s defense; and,

WHEREAS, the federal government has invested billions of dollars in recent years to upgrade the infrastructure of these critical bases; and,

WHEREAS, the State of South Carolina, the City of Columbia and other Central Midlands local governments have been strong supporters of Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint National Guard Base and of the troops stationed at these bases; and,

WHEREAS, the spending levels imposed by sequestration would lead to non-Defense discretionary spending levels that would cripple or eliminate core local government programs; and,

WHEREAS, the spending levels imposed by sequestration would severely impact the Defense Department budget, would lead to declined investment in Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint National Guard Base and could lead to another round of bases closures and realignments; and,

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WHEREAS, discretionary spending (Defense and non-Defense) makes up less than one-third of the federal budget; and,

WHEREAS, total discretionary spending (Defense and non-Defense) was less than the budget deficit in FY 2011 and will probably be less than the budget deficit in FY 2012, meaning that the deficit cannot be eliminated solely through discretionary spending cuts; and,

WHEREAS, budget experts and economists are calling the combination of expiring tax provisions and sequestration a "fiscal cliff" that needs to be urgently addressed; and,

WHEREAS, most non-partisan budget experts and economists agree that eliminating the budget deficit will require a balanced approach that includes reforms to the mandatory spending programs that make up the bulk of the budget, increased revenue and reasonable discretionary spending caps; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia this 26th day of June, 2012 that the City of Columbia opposes sequestration; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Columbia opposes further cuts to discretionary spending that hurt the mission of or the troops at Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint National Guard Base or that further impact core local government programs; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Columbia calls upon President Obama and Congress to avoid sequestration and craft a balanced approach to deficit elimination that shares the burden evenly, does not disproportionately harm national defense, safety net programs, or our nation's cities.

Requested by:

Mayor Benjamin

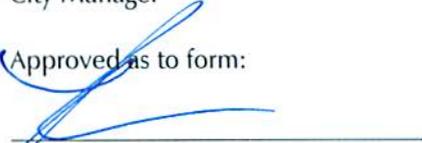


MAYOR

Approved by:


City Manager

Approved as to form:


City Attorney

ATTEST:


City Clerk

Introduced: 6/26/2012
Final Reading: 6/26/2012