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Regional Defense Support Initiatives Committee Launches MilitaryFriendlyNWF.com

Fort Walton Beach, FLA (July 26, 2022) – The Defense Support Initiatives (DSI) Committee, a standing committee of One Okaloosa Economic Development Council (EDC), announced today the launch of <http://www.MilitaryFriendlyNWF.com> – a new website designed to showcase efforts to promote and advocate for the national security value of area military installations and their contributions to the economic vitality of Okaloosa, Walton, and Santa Rosa Counties.

Almost 90,000 jobs and \$10.8 Billion in economic impact flow from the four military installations in the three counties. That's more than half for the entire Northwest Florida five-county region; which provides the largest economic impact value of all eight Florida regions.

"The elite military teams that are stationed at our tri-county military installations ensure our national security," stated Bob Marinar, DSI Chairman. "Comprised of former military commanders and other subject matter experts, our DSI members work diligently to ensure these teams receive the resources and support they need to get the job done."

One Okaloosa EDC originated the Defense Support Initiatives Committee (DSI) in 1996 to provide a unified voice dedicated to preserving the Eglin Test and Training Complex (ETTC) and the installations' contributions to the area's economy and National defense. The ETTC land range (724 sq. miles) overlays significant portions of Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Counties. As such, in preparation for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, the DSI membership was expanded to include Santa Rosa and Walton Counties in recognition of Eglin's land footprint and the economic implications of the ETTC to the tri-county area.

The new website serves as a resource portal featuring studies and data on regional military missions, their economic impacts, information on potential threats to regional military operations, as well as initiatives undertaken to preserve regional military readiness and missions.

"Northwest Florida residents understand that the military has a significant economic impact on our communities but still may not realize just how enormous that impact is," said Kay Rasmussen, DSI Manager. "Changes in national priorities can and do affect regional installations. We know the bases and personnel in our communities are vital to military readiness, and we're here to advocate for them."

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About DSI:

One Okaloosa EDC originated the Defense Support Initiatives Committee (DSI) in 1996 to provide a forum dedicated to preserving the Eglin Test and Training Complex and its installations' contributions to National Defense. The mission of the DSI is to preserve and promote the local military installations, ranges and missions and their military value consistent with the tri-county communities' economic goals, and national security.

About One Okaloosa EDC:

Founded in 1989, the One Okaloosa EDC (One Okaloosa) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit, public-private partnership serving Okaloosa County, Florida and its nine municipalities (Cinco Bayou, Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Laurel Hill, Mary Esther, Niceville, Shalimar and Valparaiso). As the community's lead economic development organization, One Okaloosa is committed to fostering economic diversification through comprehensive strategies and initiatives. In addition to its public partners, One Okaloosa enjoys broad support from more than 100 leading private sector businesses representing a wide range of industry sectors. More information may be found at

www.oneokaloosa.org.