

Questions for the Office of Military Affairs Executive Director

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Executive Director of the Office of Military Affairs ([CGS § 32-58b](#))

The Executive Director oversees the Office of Military Affairs (OMA), which is within the Department of Community Development for administrative purposes only. The office (1) promotes and coordinates statewide activities that enhance the quality of life of military personnel and their families and (2) works to expand the military and homeland security presence within the state. Among other things, the Executive Director (1) coordinates state and local efforts to prevent the closing or downsizing of Connecticut military facilities (e.g., the U.S. Naval Submarine Base-New London), (2) maximizes the state's role in the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) process, and (3) serves as an advocate for service members and their families to other state agencies.

Questions

1. Please describe the mission of OMA as you see it. How will you ensure that the office fulfills this mission? Do you believe the office has the adequate resources, in terms of personnel and budget, to meet its statutory obligations?
2. What do you consider to be the greatest challenge for OMA? How can the legislature assist you in addressing this challenge?
3. OMA's 2017 annual [report](#) identifies key defense issues facing the nation and Connecticut as including (1) the rising tensions between North Korea and the United States; (2)

continued U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria; (3) a more assertive China on the world stage; and (4) uncertainty at home over defense budgets and spending. How has Connecticut's defense industrial base been affected by these dynamics?

4. According to OMA's 2017 annual [report](#), both the FY 2018 Defense Funding Bill and the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act were "very favorable" to Connecticut's industrial base, citing an authorization to build up to 13 Virginia-class attack submarines over the next five years. How will this authorization affect the state's current industrial base capacity? What action can Connecticut take to ensure that sufficient industrial base capacity is achieved and sustained? How does Connecticut's defense industrial base compare to other top defense contracting states?
5. In 2016, Pratt & Whitney [announced](#) plans to hire 25,000 new personnel worldwide over the next decade to replace an anticipated 18,000 retirees and support a ramp-up in military and commercial jet engines. Approximately one-third of these new personnel are expected to be hired in Connecticut. Does the state have the qualified workforce (e.g., engineering and manufacturing) to fill these types of jobs? If not, how can the state develop and maintain such a workforce? What challenges do you anticipate with such an endeavor?
6. BRAC has twice targeted the Naval Submarine Base New London for closure. Do you expect it to be targeted for closure again? What steps has OMA taken to enhance the base's military value in advance of future BRAC meetings? Are there strategies other states have taken to protect their military facilities from closure?
7. What initiatives have OMA implemented to enhance the quality of life of military personnel and their families? What role does OMA play during armed forces members' transition from deployment to civilian life? How does OMA work with the state Department of Veterans' Affairs during this transition?

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