

2024 State Legislative Agenda

Military Family Quality of Life

One of the greatest challenges facing military families in the South Sound are access to housing, childcare and spousal employment. SSMCP is working regionally to remove barriers to these necessities and supports state level action through 1) incentives, 2) increased investment and/or 3) reduction in administrative burdens that drive up costs.



Military/Defense Sector Statewide Economic Impact Analysis



SSMCP is grateful the Legislature has directed the Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations (LCEDIR) to conduct a statewide analysis on the military/defense sector's impact. SSMCP has coordinated two regional economic impact analyses over the last several years and is working closely with the Lieutenant Governor's office to support this statewide study. The report is due to the Legislature in September 2024. SSMCP requests the report be used to inform future regional and statewide policy decisions.

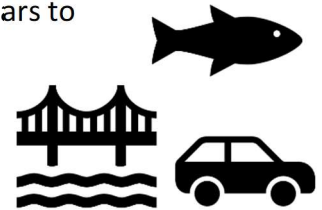
Defense Community Compatibility Account (DCCA)



The 2023-25 Capital Budget invests \$35.8 million in defense community compatibility projects throughout the state. This investment leverages over \$126 million in local and federal funds. SSMCP requests the Legislature prioritize ongoing investment in the grant program that supports civilian communities near military installations. For the Sound Sound, biennial investment is critical to helping resolve encroachment in the McChord Airfield North Clear Zone which has a commitment of up to \$80 million from the federal government but requires a state match.

I-5 Mounts Road to Tumwater & Nisqually River Delta

SSMCP appreciates the Legislature's commitment of \$75 million over the next 6 years to address the challenges along I-5 from Mounts Road to Tumwater and through the Nisqually River Delta. The current design of I-5 restricts critical ecological functions impacting salmon survival, is at a high risk of being overtopped by a major flooding event and has limited capacity to handle the growing South Sound economy and population - a key component to national security since 30% of the JBLM workforce live south of the Nisqually River. Additional state or federal funds are required to finalize engineering work. This includes \$1.5 million for preliminary engineering of part time shoulder use on southbound I-5 between Sleater-Kinney and Henderson Boulevard. This practical solutions approach would improve the transportation outcomes of the initial investment the state has made in the Nisqually River delta.



SSMCP Policy Positions

Maintain Active State Support for Military Affairs in Washington

SSMCP believes in a strong commitment from the State in support of military affairs. This support should include:

- Establishing a state level office to promote and coordinate state-wide activities that enhance the quality of life for military personnel and their families and support Washington's military installations.
- Increasing access to quality affordable childcare for all WA residents, including service members, veterans, and their families.
- Expansion of attainable housing opportunities in the South Sound Region for military members and their dependents.
- Removal of barriers to employment for military spouses, including but not limited to passing credential portability legislation.
- Evaluating alternate transportation routes and options to ensure mission readiness.

Support Military & Civilian Compatible Land Use

SSMCP was founded on and strongly agrees that collaborative partnerships are vital in identifying and resolving existing land use conflicts and preventing potential future land use conflicts. SSMCP supports joint land use strategies that do not usurp local control. Specifically, SSMCP supports:

- Designating military installations as regional centers for the purposes of regional and transportation planning
- Coordination with and investment in military-community organizations such as SSMCP, Forward Fairchild, Kitsap Economic Development Alliance, Greater Spokane, Inc., etc.
- Close monitoring of the Commercial Aviation Work Group tasked with making recommendations to meet the state's growing demand for commercial and passenger aviation services. SSMCP will oppose any recommendation that is incompatible with the operations of a military installation.

Support Investments in:

- Workforce development organizations to maximize military veterans experience and support transitioning service members to enhance the local economy.
- High-quality behavioral health resources that improve access to care, reduce the stigma associated with mental health treatment and encourage seeking help when needed.
- Addressing the at grade rail crossing and the interchange at Exit 120 for the JBLM main gate.

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