



**The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce response to a request
by Brigadier General (ret.) Christopher M. Faux,
Executive Director Joint Base Cape Cod,
Assistant Adjutant General – Military Division
for business support of a proposed firing range at Joint Base Cape Cod**

**As adopted by the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
June 4, 2021**

The Cape Cod Chamber has a long-standing track record of working with state and federal agencies on economic development projects and major regional infrastructure that impacts the region. We participated in the Community Working Group in 1997 to review the future uses at Joint Base Cape Cod, we participated in a decade-long effort to redesign and improve the state and federally owned transportation system (vehicular, rail and bike/pedestrian) in the Cape Cod Canal Area, and we have produced landmark legislation to address massive wastewater infrastructure needs as required by the Federal 208 Water Quality Plan. In all cases, a process of high community engagement was made available to our Chamber, and we stepped up to participate as productive citizen-partners in problem-solving dialogue.

In the case of the proposed projects at Joint Base Cape Cod, including the installation of a new firing range enabled by the destruction of 170.5 acres of trees, we have had virtually no outreach other than what we deem as the bare minimum of the federal process. On our part, the Cape Cod Chamber has appointed a representative (Chief of Staff Adams) to the MC3 (citizens advisory council), which met recently and was told the proposed firing range project was not in their purview for comment or decision-making. Even with a history of participation on the Community Working Group by our CEO, Wendy Northcross, there was no specific outreach to our organization to inform or request input or feedback, until a disturbing email was received this week from General Faux, threatening economic harm if a statement of support is not made by businesses on Cape Cod.

If the goal is to elicit a response from the Chamber in support of a project at this stage in the process, then we share these further comments.

The lack of outreach for public comment on this project greatly differs from that of other major projects where specific tactics of community awareness were deployed. If General Faux is truly seeking community input at a broad level, he needs to engage the wider community in an effort beyond the bare minimum, not issue a threat which is deemed punitive to local businesses.

General Faux's threat, issued in writing, is a recommendation the Adjutant General command soldiers at Joint Base Cape Cod to remain contained to the base or to travel off Cape to purchase goods and services. This statement is not only shocking, but extremely insensitive given the last 15 months of pandemic-induced closures and restrictions on local business. It is startling to see such a bold threat posed while requesting a statement of support for project that appears to have little community support.



For over a generation, Cape Cod has endured a great many impacts from base-sited activities related to water quality, noise and land use access. Now, to promote the wholesale removal of 170.5 acres of carbon-sequestering trees underestimates the level of community commitment to resilient adaptation in the face of climate related impacts and find ways to quickly recover in the face of large and damaging weather events.

Our recommendation is that leadership at Joint Base Cape Cod recognize the lack of effective public engagement and absence of public trust in their own self-assessment of this project and seek a third-party review of the impacts of range projects. An open, public and science-based discussion, free of recriminations and threats on the people who live and work here, will help repair their relationship with the community. Our organization would stand ready to participate in a fully open dialogue.