



## **KEEPING ARIZONA SAFE, STRONG AND PROSPEROUS**

### **Providing for our Protectors**

With military installations located throughout the state and 585,000 veterans calling Arizona home, the military's role in the Arizona economy cannot and should not be ignored.

In 2005, the Governor created the Arizona Military Affairs Commission. The MAC, legislators and community leaders diligently worked to protect Arizona bases and their missions. We were overwhelmingly successful and all our major military installations made it through the federal BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process.

This year, Governor Janet Napolitano is focusing on the individuals who dedicated their lives to protect all of us. Nearly every one of the 585,000 military veterans in Arizona is entitled to federal benefits, but the process is complicated and slow.

To help veterans navigate the federal paperwork, the state provides Veterans Benefits Counselors. Individuals who work with a counselor will receive substantially more than those who don't. Unfortunately, Arizona only has 19 counselors for veterans benefits statewide.

Governor Napolitano's budget proposes tripling the number of veterans benefits counselors this fiscal year. It also provides the funding necessary to create a new veteran's cemetery in Northern Arizona and to build a veteran's home in Southern Arizona. The veteran's cemetery and veteran's home were previously proposed to the Legislature in 2005, but sadly, were not funded.

"Our vets have earned every benefit they are entitled to," Governor Napolitano said in her 2006 State of the State address. "And we must give them every bit of help they need."