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I feel compelled to respond to the July 25 article, "Study looks at use of land." I would encourage the CSRA Regional Development Center to maintain the status quo on the encroachment areas as defined in this article. Please allow me to explain.

Fort Gordon is one of very few military installations that offer the Army Reserve and National Guard, and the Marine Corps Reserve units in South Carolina and Georgia, to practice firing their tanks and artillery in a risk-free environment.

The practice firing of their cannons, howitzers and tanks maximizes their opportunities within every situation; it excels in positioning for the future where these soldiers and Marines will be in harm's way.

Practice firings also provide an excellent real-world, hands-on experience, and it allows unit leaders to continually develop alternative techniques to generate new strategic plans to meet changing opportunities while focusing on future assignments.

Furthermore, the usage of Fort Gordon's firing range helps to develop strong camaraderie among the individual crew members, and this unobstructed training avoids confusing activity that permits these soldiers and Marines to work smarter, not harder, when assigned to combat units.

For those individuals who live near the containment areas and complain about the sounds and smells, they must be reminded that these are the sounds and smells of freedom, and not havoc generated by terrorists.

I urge the CSRA Regional Development Center to issue a hands-off policy in those areas designated as encroachment areas.

God bless our troops, God bless our president and God bless the U.S.A.

David G. Edmiston Sr., Grovetown

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