

## **LAWMAKER SEES \$10 MILLION TO PROTECT HILL**

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House Majority Leader Marty Stephens believes the Utah Legislature will be willing to set aside \$10 million to protect Hill Air Force Base from surrounding development that could threaten its future. "We'll come up with the \$10 million. We'll have universal support," the Farr West Republican said.

Stephens said he doesn't know where the \$10 million will come from, but it won't force lawmakers to shortchange education.

The state needs at least an extra \$50 million to pay off federal retirees who won a tax-refund lawsuit. However, the state's emergency fund contains about \$63 million, and the Legislature has a \$25 million surplus from the 1993 fiscal year.

Steve Rush is head of the encroachment committee of Hill-DDO '95, a group of civic leaders fighting closure of Hill and Defense Depot Ogden. He told Weber and Davis legislators Wednesday the \$10 million is a preliminary number.

However, he said the \$10 million would be an insignificant investment if it saved Hill's annual payroll of more than \$600 million. The lawmakers agreed.

Of five Air Logistics Centers, Rush said the two most likely to be cut are Hill and California's McClellan Air Force Base. The chief criterion for survival is each base's future ability to meet its military objective.

For Hill, that means servicing F-16 jet fighters and the landing gear of all Air Force planes, and training tactical combat pilots.

Rush said one threat to Hill's ability to meet its military objective is development around the base.

Layton's population, for example, has doubled to 45,000 in the past decade and the growth is closing in around Hill.