



## ROBERT G. CASSILLY

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Harford County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 8, 2023

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### **Harford County Economic Development Director Karen Holt Leads First Meeting as Association of Defense Communities President**

**BEL AIR, Md.,** (June 8, 2023) – Harford County Economic Development Director Karen Holt led her first meeting this week as president of the Association of Defense Communities (ADC).

Elected president in March, Holt presided over the Maryland Defense Forum on June 5 and 6 at the Westin Annapolis. The Maryland Defense Forum is a statewide summit to examine issues important to military communities around the state. The event was co-hosted by the Maryland Department of Commerce.

Holt, as ADC president, leads the national organization that serves as a connection point for communities, states, the military and industry on community-military issues and installation management. ADC has nearly 300 members and represents every major defense community and state in the country.

“It’s an honor to represent such a dynamic group of members committed to the success of our nation’s defense communities and to lead an organization approaching 50 years of education, partnership and resiliency — both inside and outside the gates — to become ‘one community,’” Holt said. “As president, I will emulate the continued mission of ADC in its ability to positively affect military communities big and small across our great nation and serve as the preeminent defense organization supporting all branches of our armed services.”

Holt has spent the past 17 years advocating for Aberdeen Proving Ground at the local and national level, securing \$11 million in federal grants for her region and overseeing the creation of a consortium during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure.

Previously a director and vice president of ADC, Holt has represented defense communities across the country on issues ranging from military recruitment to investments in innovation and education.

“As the county’s director of economic development, Karen’s relationships within the defense community are critical to our relationship with Aberdeen Proving Ground and efforts to bring well-paying jobs to Harford County,” County Executive Bob Cassilly said. “We look forward to the positive impact her new role as president of Association of Defense Communities will have on Harford County.”



*Harford County Economic Development Director Karen Holt speaks at the Maryland Defense Forum June 6 in Annapolis. Holt is president of the Association of Defense Communities, which co-hosted the event with the Maryland Department of Commerce.*

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**For Immediate Release:**

**March 8, 2023**

### **Karen Holt Elected President of the Association of Defense Communities**

**Washington, D.C.** – Karen Holt was elected president of the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) in an ADC member meeting March 6 at the Defense Communities National Summit in Arlington, Virginia.

“It’s an honor to represent such a dynamic group of members committed to the success of our nation’s defense communities and to lead an organization approaching 50 years of education, partnership and resiliency—both inside and outside the gates—to become ‘one community,’” said Holt. “It is my commitment as president to emulate the continued mission of ADC in its ability to positively affect military communities big and small across our great nation and serve as the preeminent defense organization supporting all branches of our armed services.”

Holt is currently director at the Harford County, Maryland Office of Economic Development. She has spent the past 17 years advocating for her local installation, Aberdeen Proving Ground, at the local and national level, overseeing the creation of a consortium during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round and securing \$11 million in federal grants for her region. Previously a director and vice president of ADC, Holt has represented defense communities across the country on issues ranging from military recruitment to investments in innovation and education.

Holt takes over for Bob Ross, who is executive director of the Connecticut Office of Military Affairs.

#### **About the Association of Defense Communities (ADC)**

ADC is the connection point for communities, states, the military and industry on community-military issues and installation management to enhance knowledge and best practices. With nearly 300 communities, states, regions and affiliated industry organizations as members, ADC represents every major defense community and state in the country. Visit [defensecommunities.org](http://defensecommunities.org) to learn more.

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