

# COVID-19 IMPACTS ON THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

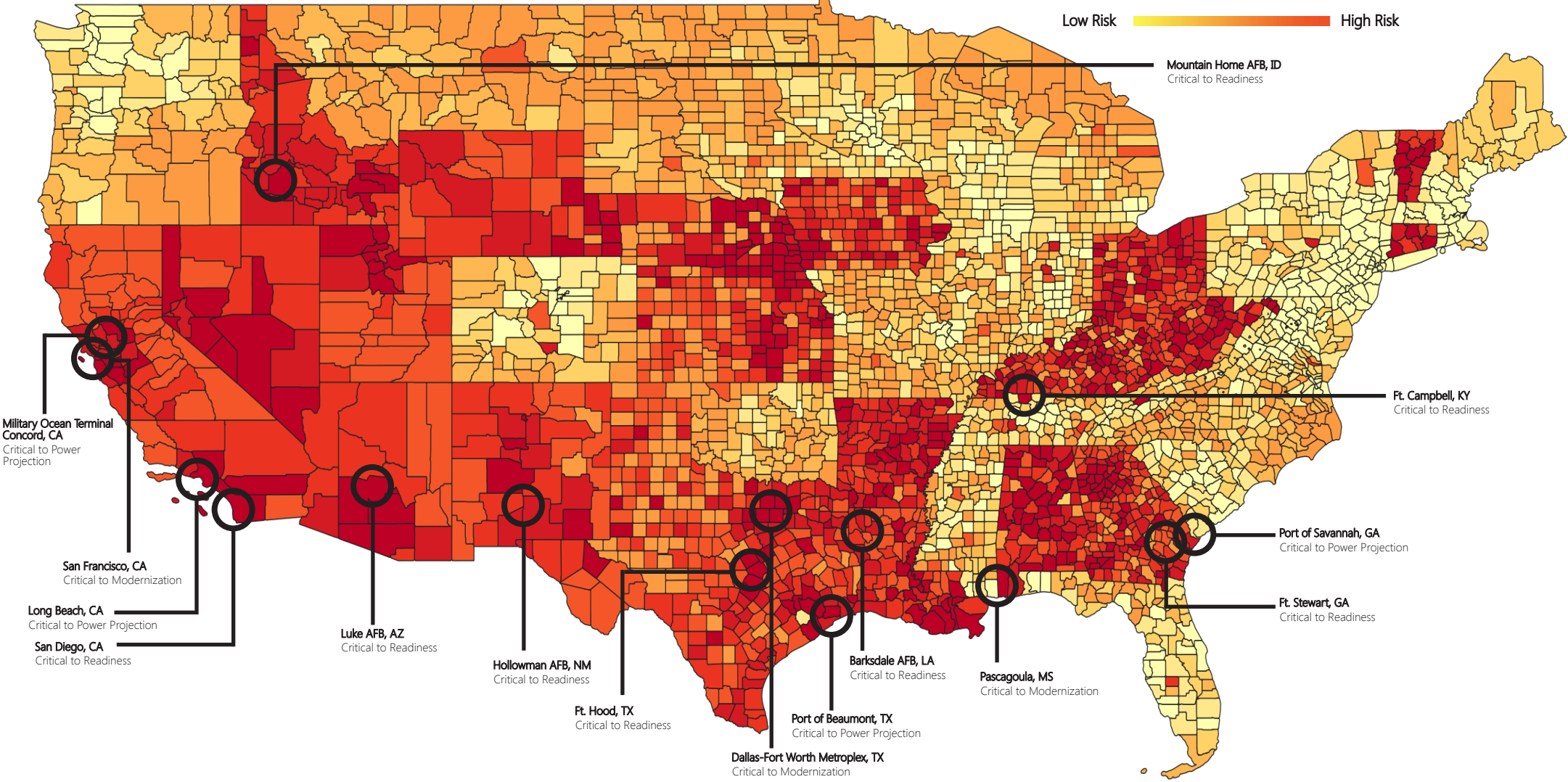
The rapidly spreading impact of COVID-19 has potentially dire consequences for the Department of Defense’s ability to protect the national interest. Govini analysis illustrates how the unprecedented effect of this pandemic is directly undermining the Department’s ability to execute its 2018 *National Defense Strategy*. In particular, COVID-19 has negative repercussions for the readiness of the Armed Forces, their ability to project power globally, and the pace of their modernization for future challenges.

Govini analysis identifies the spread of COVID-19 into areas where medical infrastructure is poorly positioned to withstand its effects due to lack of preparation or capacity (i.e., those with few hospital beds and COVID-19 tests per capita). It then maps these areas onto the location of companies in the Defense Industrial Base that are developing products and services for the Department of Defense. There is a real possibility that the Department will be unable to conduct its priority missions because of a sudden cessation of work by personnel at key companies.

The Armed Forces’ ability to deter, and if necessary defeat, great power aggression requires bases prepared to support: massive personnel training and equipping, tracking and managing the rapid influx of materiel, uninterrupted communication across vast distances, facilities protected against incursions both physical or electronic, and coordinating deployment through the country’s major ports. The Department depends on commercial companies—that today are at risk of a COVID-19 work stoppage—to provide all of these activities.

The Department is cognizant of these risks and is making an effort to ensure the continued operations of defense contractors that provide critical infrastructure. However, the complexity of the Department’s supplier base coupled with the accelerating reach of COVID-19 may lead to key nodes being cut off before their significance is fully appreciated. Govini’s analysis can spot these key nodes and enable the Department to stay one step ahead of the infection.

## HIGH RISK PLACE OF PERFORMANCE LOCATIONS



## READINESS

Contractors provide vital support to base operations at every major military installation in the United States, helping to maintain U.S. military readiness. Every service has important bases located in areas with high COVID-19 risk that are vulnerable to disruption.

- **San Diego, CA** serves as the home port to numerous warships, including three aircraft carriers, as well as the headquarters for 3rd Fleet and 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.
- **Ft. Hood, TX; Ft. Campbell, KY; and Ft. Stewart, GA** are home to U.S. Army combat units like III Corps and the 1st Cavalry, 101st Airborne, and 3rd Infantry Divisions.
- **Holloman (New Mexico), Luke (Arizona), Mountain Home (Idaho), and Barksdale (Louisiana)** Air Force Bases are home to F-22s, F-35s, F-15Es, F-16s, and B-52s.

## POWER PROJECTION

The Department depends heavily on ports and shipping operated by contractors to project power rapidly overseas in times of crisis and conflict. Several primary sea ports of embarkation (SPOE) are located in areas with high COVID-19 risk.

- The **Port of Long Beach** is a primary SPOE for military equipment and supplies that are critical for responding to Chinese or North Korean aggression in the Western Pacific.
- **Military Ocean Terminal Concord**, located on San Francisco Bay, is the only ammunition handling port on the west coast.
- The **Port of Beaumont** and the **Port of Savannah** are major SPOEs for rapidly moving heavy armored vehicles to Europe in response to Russian aggression against NATO.

## MODERNIZATION

Building a more lethal force through modernization is essential to maintaining U.S. military advantage vis-a-vis a rapidly rising China. However, several defense innovation and manufacturing hubs are located in areas with high COVID-19 risk.

- The headquarters of major defense contractors, such as Lockheed-Martin Aeronautics, are located in the **Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex**, as is the final assembly facility for the F-35.
- The **San Francisco Bay Area** is a major hub for innovation in emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, that are increasingly critical to warfare.
- **Pascagoula, MS** is home to a major Huntington Ingalls shipyard that builds destroyers and amphibious ships for the U.S. Navy and large cutters for the U.S. Coast Guard.