

{audio}files/preroll.mp3;files/Shows/2015/People In Politics/PNP 2015 MAY 22 FINAL SHOW 4650.mp3{/audio} This Memorial Day weekend, host Donna Martinez talks about the impact of North Carolina's military bases and veterans with Ilario Pantano, director of the state's Division of Veterans Affairs. They also discuss the political debate over whether the state should elevate military and veterans affairs to a Cabinet level state agency, as

Gov

. Pat

McCrory

has proposed.

Pantano

explains why he and the governor believe the move is one that will enhance efficiency, help veterans, and ensure that the state's #2 industry is given the attention it deserves. Military and defense represents a \$48 billion annual economic impact, behind only agriculture at more than \$70 billion.

Pantano

also discusses the state's new veterans treatment courts, the "veteran as victor" approach he takes in his job, and why some people choose to serve while others don't. That's followed by Martinez's discussion earlier this year with the head of the state's Democratic Party, Patsy Keever

. The two spoke following

Keever's

election to the post. They discuss what it means to be a North Carolina Democrat and the challenges the party faces as it finds itself in the minority following decades of being in the power seat.