

2/21/2007 Brownback, Others Ask Army to Support Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth

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Letter sent to Secretary of the Army asks for funds for Kansas bases

From the Office of Senator Sam Brownback

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Sam Brownback (R-KS) and Pat Roberts (R-KS) and Congressmen Todd Tiahrt (R-KS) and Jerry Moran (R-KS) yesterday sent a letter to Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey requesting support and funding for projects at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth, both in Kansas.

"Both Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth provide invaluable services to the men and women serving in the military," said Brownback. "We owe it to our soldiers to adequately fund projects at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth. Cutting BRAC funding from these bases is unacceptable."

The Fiscal Year 2007 Continuing Resolution does not include funds necessary to execute key Base Realignment and Closure projects at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth. BRAC funds are necessary for the Combat Aviation Brigade Complex, runway improvements, the new division headquarters facility and the sustainment brigade headquarters, the Battle Command Training Center, a health and dental clinic and child development center, completion of a corrections facility, among other projects.

"Kansas won significant increases in personnel and missions as a result of BRAC, and now the troops and their families are coming to work on the missions and much of the key funding is at risk; that's just not right," Roberts said. "We cannot ask our soldiers who have just returned from deployment to sacrifice even more for our nation by not giving them the facilities and support they need."

"Kansas has the pro-military populace, supporting communities, and un-encroached training environment and airspace that are appealing to the military," said Tiaht. "However, due to the decisions of Democrats in Congress, Kansas stands to lose out on much needed military construction. I will continue to work with the Army to ensure these BRAC funding cuts do not hurt our military heroes in Kansas."

"Our state had tremendous success as a result of BRAC," said Moran said. "We need to be certain that the funding is available to meet the needs of our soldiers and their mission. It is imperative that projects at Forts Riley and Leavenworth remain on schedule."

Following is the full text of the letter sent to Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey:

"We opposed the Fiscal Year 2007 Continuing Resolution in part because it did not include funds necessary to execute crucial Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) projects at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth. We write to ask for your support in prioritizing those projects with the limited funds that the Continuing Resolution included."

"As you know, Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth are gaining new missions as a result of the most recent BRAC process. Fort Riley is once again the home of the headquarters of the First Infantry Division and will house a new brigade. BRAC funds are necessary for the Combat Aviation Brigade Complex, runway improvements, the new division headquarters facility and the sustainment brigade headquarters, the Battle Command Training Center, a health and dental clinic and child development center. Fort Leavenworth is a crucial component of the joint military justice infrastructure, and BRAC funding is required for the Joint Regional Corrections Facility.

"We are aware that many Army priorities will compete for the limited funds made available under the Continuing Resolution. However, we also know that the impact of lost BRAC funds for Forts Riley and Leavenworth are severe. For example, First Division soldiers deployed out of Fort Riley will not have adequate housing when they return. And, it is not clear where prisoners from across the Armed Forces will be housed if the Fort Leavenworth corrections facility is not completed.

"We are committed to full BRAC funding, and we will continue to insist that the balance of BRAC funding be included in the FY07 supplemental. As you decide how to spend the resources included in the Continuing Resolution, we ask that you recognize the vital nature of the missions at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth and keep their critical BRAC projects on schedule.

"We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Army can execute its assigned missions and to provide the men and women of the Army with the resources they deserve."