

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DEFENSE OFFICIAL TESTIMONY SUPPORTS MCCONNELL B-1 MISSION  
Statement Reiterates Pentagon Letter to Dole

WASHINGTON -- In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, a top-level Pentagon official said that funds for the B-1 mission at Wichita's McConnell Air Force Base should be restored. The statement reiterated official Pentagon support of the mission, which was spelled-out last week in a letter to Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas.

In testimony about the Defense Department's base realignment program, Dr. Larry Korb, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics, referred to the Armed Services Committee's decision to delete funds for construction projects at particular installations, including McConnell.

"If money for B-1 facilities at McConnell Air Force Base is not restored, we will have planes coming off the production line, but no place to fly them from. Such cuts illustrate why base closures make less sense in the absence of new legislation," said Dr. Korb.

Senator Dole concurred with Dr. Korb's testimony.

"It is good to hear this public statement that DOD strongly supports the B-1 mission at McConnell Air Force Base," said Dole. "McConnell is a vital component to our national security and will be even more important when the B-1's begin arriving. Now that we have the Pentagon firmly supporting McConnell's funding, it is my hope that the Committee will restore the \$71.5 million which will allow for new construction in anticipation of the B-1 mission."

Last week, in response to Senator Dole's concern about the Pentagon's position on the future of McConnell, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Taft told Dole in a letter that the Pentagon believed "these funds were cut because McConnell AFB was on a list provided by the Department to Senator Goldwater in response to his request for examples of bases that could be closed and yield savings to the Department in future years. In forwarding that list to Senator Goldwater, the Secretary emphasized that he did not support the closing of McConnell, or any of the other bases on the list, because the Department could not afford the near-term costs of such closure. That remains our position."