

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE SHEPHERDS McCONNELL FUNDING THROUGH SENATE
\$71.5 MILLION FOR B1 WORK OKAYED

(Washington, DC) -- The U.S. Senate today approved funding requested by Kansas Senator Bob Dole to begin major construction work at Wichita's McConnell Air Force Base in preparation for a B1 bomber wing.

The vote was 94 to 1 in favor of the \$71.5 million McConnell funding, which was included in an \$8.6 billion military construction appropriations bill. The House of Representatives had earlier passed its own version of the bill. A House-Senate Conference Committee will soon meet to reconcile the two versions before a final bill can go to the President for his signature.

Kansas Senator Bob Dole said the funds - once considered to be in jeopardy - would be used to construct new or adapt existing facilities at McConnell in anticipation of the arrival of the B1 fleet there in December, 1987.

The work will include construction of facilities for B1 avionics maintenance, communications and operations; weapons storage, maintenance and inspection; and roadway and utility improvements. The construction is expected to generate hundreds of new jobs in the Wichita area, according to Dole.

"Earlier this year, there was concern that McConnell would not be used by the Air Force as the home base for a new B1 bomber wing," said Sen. Dole. "My first job, then, was to get the Dept. of Defense on board with their public support for the B1 mission at McConnell. Once that was accomplished, we needed to persuade members of both the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations committees that McConnell was essential for the B1. Today's action reflects on the success of these efforts."