

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE VETERANS, MILITARY AND HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Myers at 1:30 p.m. on February 3, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Clay Aurand- excused

Representative Pat George- excused

Committee staff present:

Art Griggs, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Scott Wells, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Chris Courtwright, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Barbara Lewerenz, Committee Assistant

Conferee appearing before the committee:

Major General Tod Bunting, Adjutant General, Kansas Director , Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Others attending:

See attached list.

Moved by Representative Goyle, seconded by Representative Goico for approval of minutes of the House Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security, held January 29, 2009, as amended to include Representative Garcia as present at the Committee Meeting and to delete "like Junction City for example" from page 2, first paragraph, second sentence. Motion Carried.

Chairman Myers introduced Major General Tod Bunting, Adjutant General, Kansas Director, Homeland Security and Emergency Management (Attachment 1).

Major General Bunting said there were three federal disaster declarations in Kansas in 2008 resulting in over \$400 million.. These included ice storms in north central and northeastern Kansas and tornadoes in Chapman and Manhattan. Support was also sent to Iowa to assist with flood damage and Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas to assist with hurricane damage.

The Kansas Guard has service men and women serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Djibouti and the U.S. Mexico Border protecting our national interests. Kansas Guardsman, SPC Ronald Schmidt, lost his life in Iraq in 2008.

Preparation for natural and manmade disasters is being expanded to include business and industry. The Eisenhower Center for Homeland Security Studies in Topeka is now open. It serves as a facility for business and government to better collaborate in planning efforts. The Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center in Salina is a new venue for military, first responders and business to train together. In 2009, Crisis City near Salina will open. It is a 160 acre mock disaster area where responders will be able to conduct real-world training with various disaster scenarios.

Major General Bunting stated his appreciation for the support of elected officials, local, state and federal partners and the families of those serving our country.

Questions and answers followed.

The new budget allows around \$5 million from the state (slightly less than last year). Federal funds are also received that result in an impact of over \$300 million. The largest portion is for salaries and maintenance. Guard Members are working with the military and civilian population in Armenia. training on emergency response and assisting civil authorities. With the help of Kansas State University, the newest mission is an agriculture development team helping to teach the Armenian farmers how to make a sustainable living. Typically in a disaster, the city manager, sheriff or county commissioner is in charge. Discussion was held regarding the issues military personnel returning from combat face when assistance is needed for medical treatment and employment.

Major General Bunting was invited to address the Committee later in the session to further discuss areas from

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Veterans, Military And Homeland Security Committee at 1:30 p.m. on February 3, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

a policy standpoint that could be improved. It was also announced that in September, 2008, Major General Bunting was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Guard Association.

Chairman Myers announced the next meeting is February 5. The Committee will hold hearings and work **HB 2085** - An act relating to the veterans claims assistance program; service grant eligibility requirements and **HB 2086** - An act relating to composition of the veterans claims assistance advisory board.

Committee members and staff were invited to participate in a refueling training mission at Forbes Field later in the session. Chairman Myers thanked Vice Chairman Goico for this suggestion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.