

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Sue Walitsky 202-224-4524
September 27, 2008

CARDIN, MIKULSKI SEND BILL TO PRESIDENT WITH NEARLY \$600 MILLION FOR DC METRO DEFENSE PROJECTS

Includes \$1.4 billion for Maryland projects

WASHINGTON, DC – **Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) today announced the fiscal year 2009 Military Construction/Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense spending bills include over \$1.4 billion in defense and military-related spending in Maryland, including nearly \$600 million in the D.C. Metro area. Both bills passed the Senate today as part of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act. That legislation now heads to the President to be signed into law.

The Military Construction/Veterans Affairs spending bill provides nearly \$1.4 billion for construction projects at Maryland's military facilities, including \$865 million in Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) projects. The bill also includes \$87.9 billion funding for critical Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs, including \$41 billion in discretionary funding to improve the quality of facilities and care offered by the Veteran's Health Administration, which is \$3.5 billion more than the President's budget request. This includes \$375 million that will allow the VA to enroll thousands of Priority 8 veterans previously not eligible for benefits. The bill also provides \$94 million above the President's budget request to hire at least 1100 additional claims processors to address the backlog of compensation, pension, and disability claims. It also rejects the President's proposal to cut assistance for homeless veterans.

"I am proud that this bill contains the resources necessary to provide Maryland's installations and communities with the resources needed to implement the BRAC recommendations, care for our veterans, and improve the quality of life for military families," said **Senator Cardin**. "This legislation is critical to our country's current and future military mission."

"I told Maryland's military leaders I would fight for this funding. My promises made are promises kept," said **Senator Mikulski**. "A stronger America begins at home. That's why I fight every year to make sure our military has the tools it needs to keep us safe. I will keep up my work to make sure Maryland communities have the resources in the federal checkbook to implement BRAC recommendations and sustain our military installations."

The Military Construction/Veterans Affairs spending bill provides a total \$572.6 million for D.C. metro area military facilities, including \$266.6 million for BRAC-related military construction projects and \$306 million for military construction projects not related to BRAC.

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda received:

- \$201 million in BRAC funding to continue construction of the new facility.
- \$11.2 million in BRAC funding for community support facilities.

Andrews Air Force Base (AFB) received:

- \$77.6 million to relocate 1,700 non-BRAC military personnel to administrative facilities.
- \$53 million in BRAC funding to relocate 804 military personnel from leased facilities in the National Capitol Region to an administrative facility.
- \$1.4 million in BRAC funding for construction of an additional vehicle lane to ease traffic congestion at Pearl Harbor Gate.

Other Military Construction Projects:

- \$209 million to continue construction at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) at Fort Detrick.
- \$12.4 million to continue construction at the National Maritime Intelligence Center in Suitland.
- \$7 million for a research development technology and engineering support facility at Carderock Naval Surface Warfare Center.

The Department of Defense (DOD) spending bill provides equipment and funding for the operations of the United States military. This includes tens of thousands of uniformed and civilian employees in Maryland involved in many different activities such as weapons research and development, intelligence gathering and analysis, and military medical care.

“We have no greater obligation as elected officials than our duty to take care of our troops and their families who have sacrificed on our behalf,” said **Senator Cardin**. “I am pleased that this bill sets the right priorities for providing critical equipment and training, strengthening military health care for our troops and their families, and giving our military families the support services and living conditions they deserve.”

“We need to do everything we can to support our troops with the equipment they need on the battlefield, the benefits and services they deserve when they return home, and support for their families on the home front. We know how critical these funds are for our troops to fulfill their mission and return home safely,” said **Senator Mikulski**. “I will keep fighting to put money in the federal checkbook for our troops.”

The \$26.2 million for Washington area defense projects includes:

- \$4 million for Naval ship hydrodynamic facilities at the Carderock Naval Surface Warfare Center to replace and improve ship testing facilities.
- \$3.5 million for the University System of Maryland (USM) Proof of Concept Alliance for Defense Technologies. The Proof of Concept alliance will fund university-based research to assess new technology and its potential contributions to the Army's science and technology strategy.
- \$3 million for the Marine Corps Shotgun Modernization Program, which will modernize and enhance the capability of the Marine Corps Shotgun. This will provide Marines with a more capable weapon needed to execute a wider variety of missions they face around the world.
- \$3 million for Fibrin Adhesive Stat (FAST) Dressing, which will greatly improve treatment for burns and wounds on the battlefield.
- \$2.4 million for a Virtual Perimeter Monitoring System, which will monitor the perimeters of military stations to prevent unauthorized access and reduce the risk of terrorist attacks.
- \$2.4 million to equip the warfighter with state-of-the-art communications capability. This communications technology will be developed by Thales Communications in Clarksburg.
- \$2 million for a Center for Automated Language and Cultural Analysis for Global Security. The Center, which will be housed under the University of Maryland's Center for Advanced Computer Studies, will explore technological approaches to breaking the language and cultural barriers the U.S. military encounters every day overseas.
- \$2 million for Freeze-Dried Blood Technology Clinical Research. Funding will support research to develop and deploy freeze-dried blood to treat wounded soldiers on the battlefield and civilians injured in accidents or natural disasters.
- \$1.6 million for research on transforming solid waste products into fuel. This will evaluate commercially-available technologies and best practices for converting solid waste to renewable diesel fuel. This exploration will support the Department of Defense's goal of obtaining 25 percent of its fuel from renewable sources by 2025. The work will be performed by Covanta Energy in Montgomery County.
- \$1.5 million for Biodefense Technology Transfer Initiative. This initiative will benefit national security by attracting new technologies for military use.
- \$800,000 for Antibody Based Therapeutic Treatments Against Smallpox. Funding will support the development of a Smallpox treatment for military personnel and civilians.

###

