



Congressman Bud Cramer

May 2005
E-Newsletter

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Earlier this month, the Department of Defense announced its recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. For many months, the people of North Alabama have worked hard to emphasize the vital role Redstone plays in our nation's defense. These efforts were successful and the DoD BRAC report was very favorable to Redstone. However, we must remember that this is just the beginning of the BRAC process and we still have a great deal of work to do during the upcoming months. For my part, I will continue to fight in Congress to assist and to work for additional roles and missions for Redstone. As always, for the most up-to-date information on the BRAC process and other pieces of legislation, please visit my website, <http://www.cramer.house.gov>.

Bud Cramer

Washington Update

At a news conference on Capitol Hill this month, Representative Cramer announced the introduction of legislation overhauling the nation's sex offender laws. The Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act increases and tightens supervision of sex offenders and provides enhanced and uniform notification standards for tracking predators. "As a father and grandfather, I cannot imagine what it would be like to have my daughter or any one of my grandchildren taken away from me," said Cramer. "The legislation will help close gaps in the current law to make sure our children are protected from these predators."



Pictured above, Representative Cramer speaking to the Chambers of Commerce from Decatur-Morgan County and Huntsville-Madison County in the U.S. Capitol during his annual Washington update. Cramer hosts this event annually.

Appropriations Update:

Approved by the House of Representatives:

Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs – Cramer, a member of this Appropriations Subcommittee, announced that this bill provides a total of \$121.8 billion to fund medical care for veterans, defense health programs, military construction, and military housing.

Energy and Water – Cramer secured in this legislation \$300,000 for flood control and trash removal projects in Huntsville.

Homeland Security – This bill provides \$30.8 billion for operations and activities of the Department of Homeland Security, including \$3.6 billion for first responders.

Interior – This bill provides \$26.1 billion for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and numerous other entities and agencies.

Approved by the full Appropriations Committee:

Agriculture – Cramer included in this legislation \$599,000 for Precision Agriculture at the Tennessee Valley Research Center in Belle Mina. The Appropriations Committee also restored funding for Resource Conservation and Development. The Committee provided \$51.36 million for this program.

Approved by Cramer's Appropriations Subcommittee:

Science, State, Justice, and Commerce – Cramer, a member of this Appropriations Subcommittee, announced that the Subcommittee provided \$16.5 billion for NASA and its programs. This amount is a funding increase of \$15 million over the President's request and \$275 million above the current year's enacted funding.



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Washington Update Continued

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Bud Cramer on the BRAC
Recommendations for North Alabama.

This month, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Authorization Bill. This bill authorizes \$441.6 billion for the Department of Defense and its programs. The amount is an increase of \$21 billion over current year authorized levels. Included in this legislation is \$7.9 billion for the missile defense programs, which is \$100 million more than the Administration's request. Additionally, this year the Defense Authorization bill provides a 3.1% pay increase for military personnel and increases the maximum amount of hardship duty pay to \$750 per month. The bill also increases the death gratuity payments to \$100,000 and extends the amount of time dependents of deceased servicemembers can stay in housing or receive housing allowances.

Also this month, Representative Cramer was a featured speaker at the 2005 Summit for the Permanent Death Tax Repeal sponsored by the Family Business Estate Tax Coalition. Cramer, co-founder of the End-the-Death-Tax Congressional Caucus, has been an advocate of permanently repealing the death tax since he first came to Congress in 1991. Cramer told the Coalition about his work to permanently repeal the Estate or Death Tax. He said, "I am from a family of small business owners and know first-hand the tireless efforts that small businesses must invest to succeed in the highly competitive marketplace. I know that permanent relief from the death tax is critically important for North Alabama's family-owned small business and farms."

District Update

Pictured on the right, Representative Cramer announcing to the North Alabama community the Department of Defense's recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The DoD recommended a realignment of almost 3000 jobs to Redstone, relocating the U.S. Army Materiel Command, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, and a significant part of the Missile Defense Agency. "I am pleased the Department of Defense understands the unique skills that exist at Redstone and intends to build on our capabilities," said Cramer. "I congratulate Redstone and the entire community for their hard work in getting us ready for BRAC."



Photo courtesy of Huntsville Times

Representative Cramer also presented \$1 million this month to Northwest Shoals Community College for the development of its Center for Business and Industry. Since 2004, Cramer has secured a total of \$2.2 million for the development of this center. Once completed, this center will include a teleconferencing center, industrial maintenance and research labs, an auditorium, a lecture hall, and multiple classrooms. Cramer said, "We need to make sure that new and existing industries in our community have a good workforce that they can draw upon. Through continuous workforce improvement, this center will become an integral part of the economic development of Northwest Alabama."

Representative Cramer also met with employees at International Diesel of Alabama this month. International Diesel began operations in North Alabama in 1999 with its first engine coming off the line in 2002. International is a Tier 1 supplier of V-6 and V-8 diesel engines for medium duty trucks and school buses. Additionally, it is the sole supplier of V-8 engines for Ford F series trucks and Econoline vans. The North Alabama plant employs 370 workers in its 700,000 square foot facility.