



Congressman Tim Bishop

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BISHOP ANNOUNCES \$990K FOR GABRESKI

House Also Seeks to Delay BRAC Process by Two Years

Washington, DC—Congressman Tim Bishop today announced \$990,000 to construct a Pararescue Facility at the Gabreski Air National Guard Base. Bishop was able to include the funds in the Fiscal Year 2005 Department of Defense Authorization Bill, which passed the House today by a vote of 391 to 34. Gabreski is home to the New York Air National Guard 106th Air Rescue Wing.

“This facility will help the 106th to save lives,” Bishop said. “Additionally, this funding is part of my continued effort to improve Gabreski, and make the strongest possible case why we need to keep this vital base in service.”

The new facility will enable the 106th to better perform pre-mission planning and training so that missions could be successfully executed without endangering crewmembers during challenging high-risk missions. It would ensure that rescue vehicles, clothing, and equipment are stored in a safe environment and are mission capable. It would also provide secure and classified space for arms and ammunition, classified equipment and high cost equipment including parachutes, climbing gear, and scuba diving equipment.

“This new Pararescue Facility is essential for the 106th Rescue Wing’s ability to remain fully engaged in the global war on terrorism,” Col. Michael Canders, Commander of the 106th said.

The House also voted today to delay the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process by two years. Under the current BRAC timetable the Department of Defense is scheduled to look at bases throughout the nation in 2005, determining which to close and which to assign a new mission. Bishop supported today’s effort to delay that process by two years until 2007. Bishop believes that delaying the process will give Gabreski more time to build support and demonstrate its unquestionable value. He has been joined in this effort by Congressman Steve Israel, the only Long Island member of the House Armed Services Committee.

“The 106th has a long history of courage and bravery,” Israel said. “From the dramatic rescue attempt of the ‘Perfect Storm’ to the more recent rescue in Iraq, their heroic mission is not one that we want to lose. Congressman Bishop and I are dedicated to ensuring that the important role of the 106th is understood by those in the Department of Defense and Congress.”

“Gabreski is vital both to our national security as well as Long Island’s economy,” Bishop said. “I am working with Congressman Israel and other leaders to demonstrate its value.”

Although these funds passed the House today, they still must be approved by the Senate, and included in the Military Construction Appropriations Bill.

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