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06172005

For Immediate Release  
June 16, 2005

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### BRAC Commissioners to visit Ft. Hood

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representative John R. Carter (TX-31) learned late yesterday that Base Realignment and Closing Commissioners (BRAC) James T. Hill and Sue E. Turner will be visiting Fort Hood this coming Wednesday, June 22.

“This is a major step toward protecting Ft. Hood and overturning the DoD’s recommendations that would negatively impact this top notch military installation,” said Carter. “The Commissioners will get to see firsthand Ft. Hood’s true training capability, ample training areas and state-of-the-art facilities.”

Recently, Carter formally requested the Commissioners to visit Fort Hood and worked with Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison in solidifying the visit. Carter said, “I want to thank Senator Hutchison for working with me to protect Fort Hood in making sure that it remains the largest premier military installation in the world.”

During the visit, the Commissioners will meet with Fort Hood Command and discuss the BRAC recommendations made by the Department of Defense last month. This visit precedes the regional BRAC hearing in San Antonio on July 11<sup>th</sup>. Carter will continue to work in preparation for the hearing with Senator Hutchison, the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance and the local community.

Many believe the BRAC recommendations to cut forces and capability stem from faulty facts and crucial misinformation. After BRAC was announced, DoD officials acknowledged the recommendations came from 2003 numbers. Ft. Hood will return to 40,863 military personnel in 2011, after reaching a peak 49,400 in 2006. It was also confirmed that the Army left out 37,600 available acres for training at Fort Hood when considering the BRAC recommendations.

In the event the recommendations made by DoD are accepted, DoD officials have assured Carter

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TO: \*Bell-Ft Hood-Jim WittmFROM: Hamel, Gretchen

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that Ft. Hood will remain a premier military installation and no other will have five brigade combat teams, a three star UEx, a two star UEx, along with additional support units.

For more information about the upcoming visit or hearing, please contact Gretchen Hamel at (202) 225-3864.

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# Fort Hood to receive BRAC visit

From staff reports

At the request of Texas lawmakers, two members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are scheduled to visit Fort Hood on Wednesday.

U.S. Rep. John Carter, R-Round Rock, and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, made the request in late May after recommendations announced May 13 by the Pentagon would reduce Fort Hood's numbers by nearly 9,000 troops.

"This is a major step toward protecting Fort Hood and overturning the Department of Defense's recommendations that would negatively impact

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Carter

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this top-notch military installation," Carter said in a news release Thursday. "The commissioners will get to see firsthand Fort Hood's true training capability, ample training areas and state-of-the-art facilities."

During the visit, the commissioners, James Hill and Sue Turner, are to meet with members of the Fort Hood command team and discuss the realignment recommendations made by the Defense Department last month. The visit precedes the regional commission hearing set for July 11 in San Antonio.

Bill Parry, the executive director for the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance, said the area's Fort Hood advocacy group will not be involved in the visit. However, he noted the alliance would be willing to participate if asked by post leaders.

"We'll follow Fort Hood's lead on this one," Parry said. "This is for Fort Hood. ... The community gets the opportunity to talk to the commission on July 11."

In his statement Thursday, Carter said he will continue to work in preparation for the hearing with Hutchison, the Heart of Texas Defense Alliance and the post's surrounding communities.

Parry said the alliance also is working with Fort Hood's cities to organize a strong community show of support when the commissioners convene their hearing in San Antonio, similar to that seen Wednesday in Alaska.

More than 3,000 people turned out Thursday for the commission's first regional hearing to protest a proposed realignment of Eielson Air Force Base they fear would cost the community thousands of jobs that could not be replaced.

When it is time for Fort Hood, Parry said, "We would like to get some good community turnout in San Antonio."

The goal, Parry said, is to coordinate with the city managers for group transportation for about 1,000 people to be in San Antonio when the hearing convenes at 8:30 a.m.

"We're getting some favorable feedback," he said.

Critical to the fight is the Pentagon's use of 2003 as the base year.

Area officials note that in 2003, training had been prohibited on 37,000 acres of land at Fort Hood. The land was reopened in March.

Also, while it first appeared Fort Hood was breaking even under the Pentagon's plan, with a gain and loss of about 9,000 troops by 2011, using 2003 troop strengths actually erases gains made last year under Army transformation, which sent an additional 5,000 troops to Fort Hood for the 4th Infantry Division's new maneuver and aviation brigades. Under the May 13 realignment proposal, the post also is set to lose a division headquarters, possibly the 4th Infantry.

During a June 1 visit, Hutchison was critical of the military plan.

If Fort Hood's numbers are reduced, "the efficiency of the base and the community will be underutilized," Hutchison said during a news conference.

In the event the recommendations made by the Pentagon are accepted, Carter said Defense Department officials have assured him that Fort Hood will remain a premier military installation, housing five brigade combat teams — more than any other installation.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to accept or revise the military's recommendations.