



K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:

Proud of our National Guard

This weekend I had the pleasure of being on hand to help dedicate the new National Guard Armory and Student Recreation center at Pittsburg State University.

This is the first National Guard Armory to be located on a campus in Kansas. After a good deal of planning and work by the National Guard, Pittsburg State University and the community, we were able to pass legislation and funding for the new venture in 2005. We broke ground in 2006 and this weekend we saw the completed facility full of students and ready for our Guard members.

Just a few days before this dedication, I was in Salina to participate in the deployment of the 287th Sustainment Brigade to Iraq. From communities throughout Kansas – Wichita, Olathe, Iola, Hays - members of this unit have stepped forward to serve.

The members of the 287th Sustainment Brigade, along with the 500 guardsmen and women currently deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, serve our state and nation with honor. For four years, we've been so fortunate to have Major General Tod Bunting as the leader of our Kansas National Guard.

Under his command, the Guard has responded here at home to tornadoes, ice storms and floods; guardsmen and airmen have served across the country to help fight wildfires in California, to secure communities in Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Gustav and to provide for the people of Texas after Hurricane Ike.

Recently, Major General Bunting was elected as the new chairman of the National Guard Association of the United States. This is a great opportunity for him to share his expertise, insight and leadership with his colleagues across the country.

This has been an important week for the Kansas National Guard, just as every week the Guard is incredibly important to us. Not a day goes by when I don't reflect on how proud I am of our citizen soldiers and how glad I am to know that they always have – and always will – answer the call of duty.

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