



Specter announces 100 more jobs for depot

By Jim Hook Senior writer
GREENE TOWNSHIP - Sen. Arlen Specter said on Wednesday that a partnership with Raytheon could bring an additional 100 jobs to Letterkenny Army Depot.

Specter made the announcement at a 15-minute press conference after a brief tour of the shop where Letterkenny and BAE Systems assemble mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles.

The work producing Patriot Missiles would be housed in a missile electronics building under construction on the depot. The \$10.8 million Theater Readiness Monitoring Facility is to be completed by October.

Raytheon has a \$70 billion contract for overseas military sales, most of it with the United Arab Emirates, according to Deputy Commander John Gray.

Letterkenny could see \$30 million of work, all of it for labor, Gray said. The contract has yet to be completed, but is promising.

The work would be in addition to the Patriot missile work moving to the new building from Red River Army Depot in Texas, he said. The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission ordered the work relocated from Red River to Letterkenny. About 45 employees from Red River

will be moving to Letterkenny with their jobs. Letterkenny will fill the remaining 70 positions locally through September 2011 when the plant is to be operating.

Specter said Letterkenny has a reputation in Washington, D.C. that should keep it off the next base closure list. Specter also said he can continue to protect Letterkenny with his position on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Specter's visit came on the day that a congressman from the Philadelphia suburbs announced he will challenge Specter in the Democratic Senate primary. Rep. Joe Sestak announced his candidacy by launching a three-week tour through the state's 67 counties.

Specter recently switched his party from Republican to Democrat.

A Keystone Poll by Franklin and Marshall College indicated that Specter has lost favor among both Democrats and Republicans since his switch. Among Democrats, 31% have a favorable view of Pennsylvania's senior senator compared to 42% in February.

Nearly half the Democrats polled said they don't know whom to vote for, and 33% favored Specter and 13% Sestak.

Specter said at Letterkenny that the only poll that matters is on election day.

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