



UNITED STATES SENATOR · SOUTH DAKOTA

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N E W S R E L E A S E



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Daschle, Johnson Say EROS Receives Funds to Protect Jobs

Congress Approves New Funds to Continue Satellite Operations

Monday, July 26, 2004

Washington, DC –Senators Tom Daschle (D-SD) and Tim Johnson (D-SD) applauded Congressional approval of the Department of Interior's request to reprogram funds that will allow the EROS Data Center in Sioux Falls to meet budget shortfalls and continue satellite operations.

Last spring, Senators Daschle and Johnson wrote to Interior Secretary Gale Norton and requested that she reprogram existing funds to preserve jobs and satellite operations at EROS. Norton agreed to the reprogramming request, and, in May, Congress approved interim funding for this request through June and asked for additional information regarding the EROS funding issue. The Interior Department responded to these questions, and late last week the House and Senate Appropriations Committees approved the remaining \$3.23 million to maintain operations for the rest of the current fiscal year, which ends September 30.

Malfunctions with the Landsat 7 satellite degraded the quality of images processed and distributed by EROS. The sale of this data from Landsat 7 generates revenue to fund operations at EROS, but sales have decreased since the malfunction, which prompted the request for additional funding. Without additional resources, the budget shortfall would result in job losses and other detrimental cutbacks at EROS.

"The men and women at EROS provide an invaluable service to the country, and this funding will ensure that this important work continues," Senator Daschle said. "We are fortunate that South Dakota is home to the only center in the U.S. that processes Landsat data, and we will work to ensure EROS gets the funding necessary to maintain its satellite operations."

"South Dakota is proud of the cutting-edge work being done at EROS," said Johnson. "We are committed to keeping those jobs right where they are."

Daschle and Johnson have requested additional funds for EROS to address anticipated budget shortfalls in fiscal year 2005.

The EROS Data Center stores, analyzes, and distributes data from Landsat satellites and employs approximately 600 South Dakotans. Scientists, colleges, government agencies, private companies, and the public rely on data from EROS for a wide range of scientific studies and analysis. EROS data has also been used by the United States military, most recently to support American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.



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