



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Says Senate Budget Will Include Funds to Fend Off Base Closures

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 11, 2012

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Griffo Fights For Rome Lab, Griffiss

Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-C-IP, Rome) today called for New York State to take strong, aggressive action to protect Rome Lab and other Upstate New York defense installations from possible cuts in the upcoming Base Realignment and Closure process by the Department of Defense. Noting that according to the Air Force Research Lab's 2010 economic impact report that Rome Lab has an annual economic impact of about \$248 million, Griffo said that he has asked that \$5 million be included in the Senate version of the 2012-2013 budget to protect the lab, as well as other defense sites around the state, is a wise investment. The Senate is scheduled to adopt its version of the budget in the coming week and Griffo expects the \$5 million to be included.

"Although I believe the facts support our case that Rome Lab should not be target for closure or downsizing, I know from experience that the critical factor in success is our ability to communicate our case to key decision-makers and to pull together a strong coalition of effort to support the continued presences of the lab in our region, and to use this process to increase the size and scope of the lab.," Griffo said, noting that key Upstate installations that deserve support also include Fort Drum in Watertown, the Air Reserve Station in Niagara

Falls and Rome-area assets that include the Eastern Air Defense Sector and Defense Finance Accounting Service.

“The effort to protect and enhance Rome Lab is, very simply, a fight that the State of New York needs to win because the Lab is such a linchpin in the economy of Rome, Oneida County, and the entire Central New York and Mohawk Valley corridors,” Griffo said, noting that Rome Lab is the hub of the regional cybersecurity sector, which is growing good-paying jobs through small businesses affiliated with the lab.

Griffo said funding is necessary to ensure that the region’s effort is pro-active. “The three tenets of my approach are to be positive, to promote growth based on existing success, and to keep the people and all of our officials informed,” he said. “Not only are Rome Lab and other facilities very important to our local economy, they are important to the federal government and are best left to grow and increase their efficiency. Rome Lab should be preserved and enhanced to better protect the people of this nation. Breaking up operations that perform well would be disastrous for our region and for the efficiency of the Department of Defense. That’s the story we need to tell, and one that takes time, effort and resources to tell properly.”

Griffo also noted that he is calling for \$320,000 in base redevelopment funding to be included in the coming budget. “Griffiss Park is making history with its growth and development, but the transition from its days as an Air Force base to a high-growth center of growing employers requires continued support and investment. These monies will be well spent to ensure that Griffiss keeps up its momentum by developing infrastructure needed to set the stage for growth.”