

# Lawmakers approve \$700 million to fight Ebola

October 9 2014, by Andrew Taylor

---

The Republican chairmen of House panels that oversee the Pentagon signed off Thursday on an additional \$700 million to pay for the military mission to help fight Africa's deadly Ebola outbreak.

Thursday's action by Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon and Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers would permit a total of \$750 million in funds leftover for fighting in Afghanistan to be used to provide logistical help for [health care workers](#) in West Africa. The first \$50 million was released last month.

The administration originally requested \$1 billion to send up to 4,000 troops to Africa. In briefings this week, McKeon said Pentagon officials estimate \$750 million would cover a six-month mission that would include airlifting personnel, medical supplies, protective suits and equipment such as tents to house Ebola victims and isolate people exposed to the virus.

But an aide to Sen. James Inhofe, the top Republican on the Senate Armed Services panel, said the lawmaker has not signed off on the money. It takes the OK of the top Republican and Democrat on the House and Senate Armed Services and Appropriations panels to "reprogram" Pentagon funds. Democrats and Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi, the ranking Republican on the Appropriations Committee, have already agreed.

Inhofe is continuing to hold up the funds as he presses the administration

for more details about the operation. Pentagon and administration officials briefed the senator and his staff on Wednesday, according to Inhofe's spokeswoman, Donelle Harder.

The officials were unable to define a transition plan if the funds are spent in six months, as expected, Harder said. In addition, she said the officials were unable to thoroughly answer how troops would be protected from exposure to the disease. Inhofe briefly held up the initial installment of funding last month.

The approval of McKeon and Rogers, however, is a big step forward toward the releasing the money.

"I maintain concerns, particularly regarding the safety and security of our military personnel supporting this mission," McKeon said.

"Releasing these [funds](#) marks the beginning of the committee's oversight of this important mission, not the end."

Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, said he still "has serious concerns about the safety and security of service members who have and will deploy to Liberia. We have no greater obligation than to ensure their well-being while they act on our behalf."

© 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Lawmakers approve \$700 million to fight Ebola (2014, October 9) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-10-lawmakers-million-ebola.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--