

THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

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EDITORIAL

Responding to the new Fort Knox

ISSUE: Frequent changes at Fort Knox**OUR VIEW:** Adjusting to today's opportunities

As a reflection of change in the U.S. Army and the national economy, Fort Knox has seen a variety of changes over the last seven years.

The impact of base realignment brought the Accessions Command and the Human Resource Command to replace the Armor School as the centerpiece of the post.

As the Army continues to evolve and look for ways to improve its fiscal responsibility, the Accessions Command was disbanded.

Later came word that the Duke Brigade, formally known as the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division or 3/1, would be part of a major post-war downsizing. Although it arrived just a short time ago as part of BRAC, by year's end, it will be gone.

As everyone in the business world knows, when the economy dictates a change in the way business is done, consolidation of services is the first place to go to save money. And sometimes, consolidation results in the improvement of the product or services.

This month, announcements from the Department of Army indicate more arrivals at the local post.

With the announcement that the Recruiting and Retention School will relocate from Fort Jackson, S.C., on Oct. 1, it is clear the Army is dedicated to finding alternatives that work efficiently.

The reason this makes so much sense is the U.S. Army Recruiting Command is and has been located at Fort Knox. This move will allow those in charge of recruiting and retention to have a more direct impact on implementation of the programs and the development of the people.

In addition to efficiency improvement within the Recruitment and Retention School, taxpayers will save a projected \$14 million annually and about \$138 million over a 10-year period. We applaud the U.S. Army administration for taking advantage of the opportunity to save such a substantial amount.

This move will bring an estimated 100 jobs to Fort Knox and with the loss of the 3/1, any changes that bring more jobs to the community are appreciated and economically needed. The

This editorial represents a consensus of The News-Enterprise editorial board.

TODAY'S QUOTE

"Equality, rightly understood as our founding fathers understood it, leads to liberty and to the emancipation of creative differences; wrongly understood, as it has been so tragically in our time, it leads first to conformity and then to despotism."

— Barry Goldwater, U.S. senator (1909-1988)

NO IRANIAN NUKE!!...
ASSAD OUT OF SYRIA!!...
CRIMEA STAYS WITH UKRAINE!!!

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THE MOUSE THAT ROARED

OUR READERS WRITE

Sees great value in local sales tax

Our system of government is rooted in the principles of representation and accountability. As a nation, we abhor endless taxation as much as our Founding Fathers detested lifetime monarchs and dictators. Kentuckians also recognize that the most responsible form of government starts not in Frankfort or Washington, D.C., but in our own communities. The local option sales tax embodies these ideals in the most fundamental ways.

The proposed local option would allow communities to enact a 1 percent sales tax for meaningful projects. Examples may include a new park, library or similar project. Voters would decide the merits of the project at the ballot. If voters reject the proposal, there's no project and no tax. If voters approve the local option, the tax would go into effect but only as long as it takes to complete the project.

As a fiscal conservative, I want to stress that last point: unlike other taxes the local option is temporary and has a sunset provision.

Moreover, funding generated by a local option will be maintained discreetly and not included in a general revenue fund.

The greatest advantage of the local option is that it puts the community in control of its own future and potential growth. While we elect lawmakers to represent us at the state and federal levels, we also must acknowledge that some decisions are best made locally.

The option would empower voters to determine what is best for our communities. In fact, it fosters the fundamental right of self-determination so important to most citizens. That's why 37 other states allow voters to decide the merits of projects when they step into the ballot box.

It is also why the Hardin County Chamber of Commerce endorsed the local option campaign; a decision supported by numerous business and community leaders, including myself.

Legislators in Frankfort will soon decide whether to allow Kentuckians to vote on a constitutional amendment providing this local option. This is an extraordinary opportunity for law-

makers to endorse the principles so crucial to our system of government. Call your legislators at 1-800-372-7181. Let them know how important this is.

Mo Morris
Elizabethtown

Appreciate efforts to deliver games

I want to thank Gary Franklin and Steve Ballard for bringing Elizabethtown High School basketball games to us on the Kentucky Sports Broadcasting Network.

Due to not being able to attend the games because of health issues, my wife, Betty and I were able to watch and enjoy the games that were broadcast on the Kentucky Sports Network at home on our iPad. This was a great gift to Betty and me. We were able to get a feel for the atmosphere of the game as Gary and Steve do an outstanding job of analyzing the games and make them exciting to watch.

So thanks again, Gary and Steve. We are very appreciative and I know others are too.

Ray Vencill
Elizabethtown

Overhaul justice for juveniles

As a conservative who puts family first, I am encouraged to see that states are reforming their juvenile justice systems to produce better results for victims, offenders and taxpayers. Let's hope Kentucky is next.

For more than a year, a bipartisan task force took a hard look at the commonwealth's system for handling young offenders, from those who commit serious crimes to youth who skip school or run away from home.

The task force released its exhaustive findings and recommendations in December, leading to legislation now awaiting action in the General Assembly.

Some troubling facts leap off the pages of the task force report. Let's start with the system's high price tag and spending patterns.

Kentucky's Department of Juvenile Justice spends about \$102 million a year to do its job, with half of that sum used to place youth in residential facilities. Here's where the math gets crazy: Housing just one offender in a secure facility costs more than \$87,000 per year. That's enough to finance a four-year education at any Kentucky state university, with money to spare.

Another finding worthy



DAVID KEENE

of concern is that the majority of youth sent to secure facilities are not dangerous offenders, but those convicted of misdemeanors or violating the rules of their community supervision. There should be consequences for such behavior, of course. But research shows an out of home placement is often not the best answer for these juveniles, and might actually make some lower level offenders more likely to commit new crimes.

I've never shied away from tough penalties that hold lawbreakers accountable for their actions. But I also know that our criminal justice system is one arena where unintended consequences can jeopardize families.

That's why I'm proud to be part of the Right on Crime campaign, a growing movement supporting criminal justice alternatives that improve public safety, cut costs, prioritize victims and help more offenders return to productive, law-abiding

lives, while holding them accountable for their crimes.

Three years ago, I was one of the first to sign Right on Crime's statement of principles. Now I am more convinced than ever that government's old criminal justice approaches must be overhauled and replaced with options that are fiscally prudent and reflect the most up-to-date research about what works.

This effort is especially critical when it comes to juveniles. A growing number of states are reshaping their systems to better serve taxpayers, victims, and young citizens who veer into a life of crime. A strong example is Georgia, which passed comprehensive juvenile justice reforms last year that will save \$85 million in tax dollars over five years.

Thanks to the hard work of its task force, Kentucky has the chance to join the movement. Kentucky can become a model for the country and an example of a winning formula we all can endorse — less crime, less government spending, and better outcomes for our most troubled kids.

David Keene is a former president of the National Rifle Association, a former chairman of the American Conservative Union and a Right on Crime signatory.

OPINION PAGES

The Opinion pages are intended to provide a forum for the discussion of issues that affect the area. Editorials are the opinions of The News-Enterprise's editorial board and appear in the two left-hand columns of this page. Other articles reflect the views of their authors.

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