

KEN SALAZAR
COLORADO

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FINANCE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

WASHINGTON, DC:
702 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5852

COLORADO:
2300 15TH STREET
SUITE 450
DENVER, CO 80202
(303) 455-7600

<http://www.salazar.senate.gov>

December 8, 2008

The Honorable Pete Geren
Secretary of the Army
1600 Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Geren,

Thank you for your actions to date concerning the spate of tragedies involving soldiers at Fort Carson. I understand that a multi-disciplinary task force has been initiated by Major General Graham to look for commonalities between the incidents, and that the Army Surgeon General will send an Epidemiological Consultation Team to Fort Carson. I look forward to your preliminary findings in mid-December.

However, my letter to you dated October 17 asked for a review of service records of all soldiers who have been involved in violent crimes since returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. This review should not be limited to Fort Carson. To understand any patterns linking the actions of a few individual soldiers, the Army should examine similar cases at installations across the country in a thorough, case-by-case, service-wide review.

Regarding a pilot program similar to the one proposed by Section 7 of S.3008, I respectfully disagree with the conclusion that much of that proposal is already provided by current training guidelines. As you know, the Army's current training program, Battlemind, is built around a slide presentation that aims to prepare soldiers for the stress of a combat deployment. The pilot program would complement the Battlemind training by providing soldiers with a variety of tools and methods to deal with that stress. While it is impossible to know which individual soldiers will respond to which types of mental health training, one thing is clear: the current training being performed by the Army can be improved and supplemented.

It is my distinct impression that those military men and women with direct reporting responsibility for our nation's soldiers believe that the Army needs more training to complement those programs already in place. It is my hope that you will personally review this pilot program again and deploy it as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar
United States Senator