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Attachments:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Legion offers support to families of Fort Hood victims

WASHINGTON (November 6, 2009) -- The leader of The American Legion says his organization is reaching out to victims of the tragedy at Fort Hood, Tex., where the rampage of a lone gunman - an Army officer - reportedly killed 13 people and wounded 30.

“As the nation’s largest veterans’ service organization, and the one with the greatest number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, we have the resources to assist the newest generation of warriors.”

“We invite those who have been touched by this horrific experience to make use of the Legion’s services to military families and active-duty servicemembers,” said Clarence Hill, national commander of The American Legion.

“We are also initiating outreach through our local Legion posts to families and individuals at Fort Hood who have been affected by this event.”

American Legion posts are part of a nationwide *Family Support Network* that provides hands-on assistance and emotional support to servicemembers and their families.

At the national level, The American Legion offers aid through its *Temporary Financial Assistance* program to distressed military families with minor children suffering monetary difficulties.

“Financial assistance can be a great comfort in times of turmoil,” Hill said. “It can help with temporary daycare costs, travel expenses for family members and other burdens so that families can concentrate on caring for loved ones - healing wounds both physical and emotional.”

Another Legion program that helps our troops is *Operation Comfort Warriors*. It provides clothing, personal and recreational items to wounded servicemembers during their recovery. “Up until now most, but not all, of those we have aided have been servicemembers who have suffered injuries in our theaters of war,” Hill said, “but those who were hurt in this tragedy at Fort Hood should, and will, receive our help as well.”

Hill won’t speculate on the motive for the Fort Hood shootings. “We will reserve comment until the Army’s investigation is complete,” he said. “Once all the facts are assembled and analyzed, The American Legion will lend its aid and advocacy to the Army, the Department of Defense and lawmakers to help prevent tragedies such as this.”

Those touched by the Fort Hood event seeking assistance from The American Legion are invited to call 1-800-504-4098 or email familysupport@legion.org <<mailto:familysupport@legion.org>>.

About The American Legion

With a current membership of 2.5-million wartime veterans, The American Legion is the nation’s largest veterans organization. It was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

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