



State of Tennessee

*Secretary of State Tre Hargett
State Comptroller Justin P. Wilson
State Treasurer David H. Lillard, Jr.*

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TENNESSEE CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS' STAFFS MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL AND VETERANS

A group of Tennessee military personnel stationed in Iraq will be able to spend more time talking with their families and friends, thanks to contributions made by employees who work for the state's three constitutional officers.

Employees of state Treasurer David H. Lillard Jr., Secretary of State Tre Hargett and Comptroller Justin P. Wilson donated 360 AT&T pre-paid phone cards with a total of 39,000 minutes of calling time. Those cards will be sent to soldiers in the 230th Air Cavalry Squadron, which is based in Smyrna and includes soldiers from Smyrna, Jackson and Louisville, Tennessee.

In addition to supplying phone cards to active military, employees from the three constitutional offices participated in helping veterans here in the Nashville area. The staff in the constitutional offices raised \$2,053 for Operation Stand Down Nashville, Inc., an organization that provides training and support for veterans, with a special emphasis on veterans who are homeless.

"This is just a way for us to show our appreciation for the brave men and women who are serving or have served in our military," said Lillard, who organized the phone card drive and the donation to Operation Stand Down Nashville. "I want to thank AT&T for their assistance in securing the phone cards. And I want to thank all of the employees from all three offices who gave so generously to show their appreciation to our veterans and active military personnel."

"Staying in touch with family and friends is always important – and it is particularly important for our military personnel and their families," Hargett said. "We hope these phone cards will lift the spirits of our military personnel and make the tough work they are doing in Iraq a little easier to manage."

“Operation Stand Down Nashville plays an important role in helping veterans, particularly those who are down on their luck, to find housing, jobs and other necessary services,” Wilson said. “I am so proud of our employees for supporting this worthwhile organization.”

Department of Treasury Facilities Coordinator Johnny Veach, who served seven tours of duty overseas during his military career, understands how useful phone cards can be to soldiers who are a long way from home.

“These soldiers never know when they may be near a phone,” Veach said. “So it is important for them to be prepared with phone cards when the opportunity to call home arises.”

Operation Stand Down Nashville Deputy Executive Director Mary Ross expressed appreciation for the donation.

“We cannot say ‘thank you’ enough to all who donated to Operation Stand Down Nashville,” Ross said. “The generosity and compassion shown in this donation will go a long way in assisting homeless veterans return to the life they defended. ‘Homeless’ and ‘veteran’ are words that should never be used in the same sentence.”

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Photo caption information (pictured left to right): Secretary of State Tre Hargett; Operation Stand Down Nashville Veteran Service Coordinator Steve Samra; Operation Stand Down Nashville Deputy Executive Director Mary Ross; Treasurer David H. Lillard Jr. and Comptroller Justin P. Wilson

