Rep. Jeff Fortenberry on Thursday landed a coveted seat on the House Appropriations Committee.

That assignment positions the Republican congressman not only to help shape conservative fiscal policy, but also to protect funding for key interests in his district and the state, including continuing construction of the new U.S. Strategic Command headquarters complex at Offutt Air Force Base.

Offutt was moved into the Lincoln congressman's 1st District by the 2011 Legislature in redistricting following the 2010 federal census.

Fortenberry will become the first Nebraskan to serve on the Appropriations Committee since Rep. Virginia Smith left the House 22 years ago.

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