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STATEMENT OF
ARNOLD L. PUNARO
CHAIRMAN
COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES
ON THE
MARCH 1, 2007, REPORT TO CONGRESS:
Strengthening America's Defenses in the New Security Environment
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
MARCH 23, 2007

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It is a pleasure to appear before the Committee this morning to discuss the March 1 report of the independent Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, titled *Strengthening America's Defense in the New Security Environment*.

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners, whom I'm representing here today, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the Ranking Member, Mr. Hunter, for the support you have given the Commission. You have both been overly generous with your time and support, and we have benefited from your many contributions to our work. We also want to thank you for the use of your Committee rooms for our Commission hearings and for the terrific support we have received from the staff.

The National Guard and Reserves remain a vital part of our nation's defense capabilities, both at home and abroad. Since September 11, 2001, more than 590,000 guardsmen and reservists have been activated for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. They have fought side by side with the active forces, and have performed magnificently. In this same time frame, tens of thousands of reservists have supported contingencies here at home from floods to fires to hurricanes to airport and border protection.

As established by section 513 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, the Commission is chartered to identify and recommend changes in law and policy to ensure that the National Guard and Reserves are organized, trained, equipped, compensated, and supported to best meet the national security requirements of our nation now and in the future. That report is due in January 2008. The report before you this morning is the result of your additional tasking in section 529 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 to study the "advisability and feasibility of implementing" the provisions of the proposed National Defense Enhancement and National Guard Empowerment Act, sponsored by Senators Leahy and Bond and by Representatives Taylor and Davis, and many others.

The analysis in our March 1 report has been informed by 12 days of public hearings, more than 300 interviews with officials and other subject matter experts, and the analysis of documents and other data supplied at the Commission's request. The Commission sought information from a wide range of witnesses and was determined to get as complete an understanding as possible of the pros and cons of each provision of the bill. As part of that process, we asked the congressional sponsors to identify the

individuals who could best represent their position on this legislation. On the basis of their recommendation, we received testimony from three distinguished adjutants general at our December hearing. At our December and January hearings, the Commission also heard from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Preparedness, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

At the outset, I need to say that the Commission did not expect to find the problems affecting the Guard and Reserve to be as serious they are today. As a result of our research, analysis, site visits, and testimony, we came to the conclusion “that the current posture and utilization of the National Guard and Reserves as an ‘operational reserve’ is not sustainable over time. If not corrected with significant changes to law and policy, the reserve component’s ability to serve our nation will diminish.” This lack of sustainability and increasing deterioration in capability is a cause of great concern to the Commission, as I know it is to you.

On a somewhat brighter side, we are optimistic about the consensus that seems to be developing regarding the need to solve these long-standing problems. Congress continues to be in the forefront of needed change, and I find the Department, under Secretary Gates, to be extremely open-minded and receptive to correcting the problems. According to Secretary Gates, he and General Pace intend to work closely with the members of this Committee and the sponsors on any legislation you take up in this area. These are most welcome developments. Most of our recommendations can be implemented by the executive branch without legislation, and I understand Secretary Gates is actively considering those. Only 8 of the 23 require changes to law, and of those 8, key portions can be advanced prior to legislation.

I would like to turn now to our report. In evaluating the legislation, we wanted first to identify the problems that need to be fixed and, second, to develop criteria to use in analyzing potential solutions to those problems. The Commission largely agrees with the proponents of the National Guard Empowerment Act on the nature of the problems.

Our report states some blunt truths about DOD’s and the executive branch’s role in the homeland:

- DOD does not program and budget for its civil support mission;

- There is no process within either the Department of Defense or the Department of Homeland Security to define and validate civil support requirements;
- States and their governors lack involvement and influence in the DOD decision-making process;
- There are not sufficient formal relationships and interagency coordination among the National Guard Bureau, U.S. Northern Command, Joint Forces Command, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Department of Homeland Security, each of which plays a critical role in homeland security and homeland defense; and
- Finally, the National Guard and the governors do not have sufficient clout in the decision-making process.

Fixing those problems, however, requires a broader, more strategic, and systemic interagency and intergovernmental approach than the National Guard Empowerment Act envisions. In formulating our recommendations, we have been guided by principles aimed at improving U.S. national security capabilities in general, not simply those of the National Guard. We viewed the National Guard as part of a total force of military and civilian agencies, federal, state, and local, working in concert to achieve national objectives, not as a military or political entity that can be viewed in isolation.

Therefore, our report recommends a comprehensive package of reforms to significantly improve the coordination and the resourcing of the National Guard and Reserve forces that will be called on to protect the homeland. We believe these reforms would have a profound, lasting, and positive effect on the full spectrum of federal, state, and local governments and their agencies and departments that have a role in protecting and promoting U.S. national security. These are not “halfway measures.” In our judgment, they would usher in a sea change in how the agencies of our government prepare for and respond to threats to our homeland.

The report contains 26 findings, 6 broad conclusions, and 23 specific recommendations. In addition, the full details of our views on the specific legislation we were asked to consider are attached at the end of my written statement. Our recommendations fall into six major subject areas: (1) the Defense Department’s role in the homeland, (2) the role of states and their governors, (3) the National Guard Bureau, (4) U.S. Northern Command, (5) reserve policy advice, and (6) reserve component officer promotion.

I want to briefly highlight some of the major recommendations within each area, including our rationale for several recommendations that have been the focal point for debate since our report's release.

The Defense Department's role in the homeland

The legislation's sponsors were clearly and correctly focused on trying to ensure that the Guard is a major player when important resourcing decisions are made, particularly in the area of civil support. The Commission shares the proponents' concern that DOD currently treats domestic response capabilities as just a by-product of its overseas warfighting capabilities. We believe that is a flawed assumption. We became increasingly convinced that a fundamental reason for lack of preparedness was the absence of a requirements determination process for civil support equipment and other homeland needs. As members of this Committee are only too aware, DOD does not program and budget for anything in the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution system – PPBES – process unless there is a clearly defined requirement. Requirements identification is the fundamental first step to getting anything funded. Lieutenant General Blum, the current Chief of the Guard Bureau, has been successful in getting four homeland security capabilities, including a CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package, validated by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and thus placed in the PPBES queue for funding. But this was an exception – achieved, at least in part, by the force of his personality and not through any established process. Beyond Lieutenant General Blum's forays to the JROC, we were unable to identify either a formal requirements generation process for civil support or a government official who believed that he or she had the responsibility to identify those requirements. What is the solution to this problem?

The National Guard Empowerment Act would address these deficiencies by giving the Chief of the National Guard Bureau the responsibility to “identify gaps between federal and state capabilities to prepare for and respond to emergencies.” This would provide the National Guard Bureau a number of new powers to facilitate the filling of those gaps once identified, including the preparation of the budget for National Guard civil support activities and “the authority to acquire equipment, materials, and other supplies.”

In evaluating the merits of the National Guard Empowerment Act provision regarding separate budget and acquisition authority, the Commission examined an arrangement that is often cited as a useful analogy: the Special Operations Command's ability to acquire equipment for special operations mission-specific purposes. We found what we believe are a number of important distinctions. Special

operations equipment is highly specialized for that mission, while much of the civil support equipment consists of general (or dual) use items such as trucks, radios, engineer equipment, and general supplies that can be employed both for wartime needs and for homeland emergency response.

More fundamentally, military operations performed by SOCOM are inherently a DOD activity. Emergency response, on the other hand, is an activity led on the federal level by the Department of Homeland Security. DOD supports DHS under the National Response Plan, and DHS in turn supports state and local governments. By law, the Secretary of Homeland Security today has the role of identifying the gaps between state and federal emergency response capabilities. The primary role assigned to the Secretary of Homeland Security and the inherently interagency and intergovernmental nature of DOD's role in the homeland make it problematic to give the Chief of the National Guard Bureau the authority to identify and budget to fill those gaps.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau is not in the best position to decide, for example, which level of government – local, state, or federal – should have the responsibility to provide a required capability. Military power is only one instrument of government power. There are approximately 2 million state and local first responders in the United States, a number roughly comparable to the size of the U.S. armed forces. The Guard Bureau Chief is not in the best position to decide whether a response capability should be the responsibility of the state police rather than the National Guard, or whether the capability could best be supplied by active duty military forces in the state. The Chief also is not in the best position to determine the precise capability needed in a piece of equipment to fully leverage the use of that equipment in conjunction with other state and local first responders. For example, should the radio purchased for the National Guard be capable of communicating with local firefighters? Nor is the Chief in the best position to decide who among the various agencies and levels of government should be responsible for funding that capability. Should DOD pay for all National Guard radios? Should the state pay some of the cost? Should DHS pay for National Guard equipment used in civil support missions to ensure its compatibility with equipment used by state and local first responders? Giving the job of identifying gaps to the Chief and creating a separate pot of money within the National Guard Bureau would not foster the needed interagency and intergovernmental approach to solving these problems.

The Commission is particularly concerned about the potential pitfalls of separate acquisition authority. Equipment procured for the Guard must be available to meet Army and Air Force wartime requirements, as well as to fulfill civil support needs. Separate acquisition authority could result in a disconnect between these two missions and cause the loss of economies of scale in the purchasing of

National Guard equipment. The Commission believes that it is better to meet civil support needs by including what is required for that mission in the two services' budgets and by dramatically changing the requirements definition process and the Guard's clout within the existing decision process.

We also recommend an interagency, intergovernmental approach that includes a role for all the major players. As the official tasked with coordinating national preparedness and response, the Secretary of Homeland Security has the primary federal responsibility for supporting state and local authorities in their efforts to respond to disasters, whether natural or man-made, and for identifying gaps between federal and state capabilities; the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, should generate civil support requirements. The Secretary of Defense should, in turn, be responsible, first, for validating those requirements and, second, for incorporating validated requirements into the Department's planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process. Civil support should no longer be an afterthought. Validated civil support requirements – and the critical word here is “requirements” – should be a specifically identified responsibility for which DOD and the Guard's two parent services, the Army and Air Force, would explicitly program and budget. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau should play a role in this process as directed by the Secretary of Defense. And the commander of U.S. Northern Command – as a combatant commander – should be an advocate for civil support programs across the entire PPBES process, a responsibility that every other combatant commander undertakes for DOD resourcing of capabilities required within the commander's area of responsibility. The Guard Bureau, DHS, and NORTHCOM should exchange key personnel and work all these issues in a highly coordinated process. In military terms, each should get “inside the wire” of the other's CP (command post).

The role of states and their governors

The Commission focused on a critical player: the nation's governors. As both the duly elected chief executive and the commander in chief of National Guard forces within each state, governors are an important component of the issues the Commission has been tasked to address, particularly as related to the National Guard Empowerment Act. We have actively sought their input through a variety of venues, including one-on-one meetings, witness testimony, correspondence, and a meeting with the National Governors Association. The governors' unhappiness with DOD on a variety of fronts has been palpable. We have included a number of recommendations designed specifically to address the concerns they have raised and related problems that we have identified.

I have previously discussed the sea change that the Commission recommends with respect to DOD's role in funding for civil support – from initial requirement definition to specifically assigned responsibility for advocacy through the programming and budgeting process. Unfortunately, although DOD says that support to civil authorities is a major U.S. Northern Command mission, it has not prioritized accordingly. Consequently, the Department has shown little interest in what the governors think or what they need in order to execute their responsibilities for emergency response. To remedy this, the Commission recommends the establishment of a bipartisan, 10-member Council of Governors to advise the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the White House Homeland Security Council on National Guard and civil support matters. Such a channel of communication is long overdue.

In addition, in reviewing the various postmortems of lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, the Commission was troubled by the lack of coordination between Title 32 and Title 10 forces – whether active duty or reserve component. As a result, we recommend expanding the circumstances under which governors can direct all federal military assets operating in their states. While this may raise some concerns from an inside-the-Beltway DOD-centric perspective, the American public doesn't care whether the first responder to domestic emergency or natural disaster is in Title 10 or Title 32 status. All the public cares about is that the government responds in such emergency situations as quickly and efficiently as possible – with the closest and most capable resources available.

Here is how the Commission envisions this working. All military forces necessary to respond to a particular contingency in a state – whether active duty, Guard, or reserves – would be incorporated into the plans, training, and exercises for that response. As part of that planning, state and federal officials would work out under what conditions federal forces could be directed by state officials. When a crisis occurs, the governor could request that responding federal forces be placed under the operational control of the leading Guard officer, pursuant to those plans and protocols. The state's joint force headquarters with a federally certified commander would be the likely command and control element. This could be done through something as simple as a phone call, or formally, through a letter to the President. The Commission envisions this request being made just as a governor might request that the President declare that a major disaster exists in the state, opening the way for federal disaster assistance. The President would evaluate the request, with the assistance of the Defense Department, in much the same way that the Federal Emergency Management Agency advises the President on requests for disaster assistance. If the President agreed that this step was necessary, the President would place

responding federal forces under the control of the governor. The President would retain formal command of those federal forces; they would remain under the administrative control of their respective services and be subject to *posse comitatus* and other restrictions. They would still be part of the federal military. The only difference would be that they would be subject to the direction and control of the governor acting through his or her designated military commander. There could also be pre-planned and pre-trained scenarios where this could be “automatic.” We all know how vital “unity of command” and “unity of effort” are for successful emergency response operations. This provision will help make it a reality.

This change would raise a number of issues – such as what particular roles these forces should fill and who would pay for their service – many of which will be particular to specific states. As a result, the Commission strongly believes that the Department of Defense and the states should enter *in advance* into agreements specifying when, where, how, and under which circumstances federal forces could be placed under the control of the governor. At any time, the President could remove those forces from the governor’s control. But we anticipate that control will be withdrawn from the governor in accordance with preexisting agreements as soon as the federal forces were no longer needed in the response. In the small percentage of events in which the President determined it necessary to federalize the military involved in the response effort, the transition to federal control of the Guard and Title 10 military forces the President chose to federalize would be easier, because they already would be functioning as one team.

The National Guard Bureau

I’d like now to turn to the focal point of the National Guard Empowerment Act – the organization and structure of the National Guard Bureau and the duties and responsibilities of its Chief. The Commission recommends making the National Guard Bureau a joint activity of DOD, rather than having it remain a joint bureau of the Army and Air Force. While the term “joint activity” is not well defined, we believe it makes sense to apply the term to the National Guard Bureau given the other changes we also recommend. We recommend making the Chief a senior advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and, through the Chairman, to the Secretary of Defense on matters related to the National Guard when not in active federal service. This concept was supported by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in his January testimony before our Commission. The Commission recommends expanding the Guard Bureau’s charter to include responsibility for facilitation and coordination with

federal agencies like DHS, the states, U.S. Northern Command, and Joint Forces Command on the use of nonfederalized National Guard forces for domestic contingency operations, support to civil authorities, and other homeland activities. To foster unity of effort in responding to homeland-related contingencies, the Commission recommends that the National Guard Bureau exchange personnel with DHS, NORTHCOM, and JFCOM to assist in operational planning.

And we recommend, based on our examination of the current and proposed additional duties and responsibilities required, that the position of Chief of the National Guard Bureau warrants a fourth star.

To wade through the morass of conflicting views on this issue, we commissioned a study by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress to examine the primary duties and responsibilities of the major four-star billets and to assess how the job of the Chief of National Guard Bureau compares to the scope and responsibilities of the typical three-star billet. The Federal Research Division developed a systematic, comparative overview of the functions and scope of four-star billets and also consulted a list of 16 key factors to determine the level of responsibility associated with a particular general or flag officer billet included in a 2004 Government Accountability Office study. Both of these studies are appended to the end of my testimony. The Federal Research Division found that four-star billets differ significantly as to whether or not they entail command authority over combatant forces, that “such authority is not the *sine qua non* of four-star rank,” and that a large proportion of four-star positions do not entail any such authority. The Research Division suggested a better point of comparison would be the individual service four-star major commands that are “functional commands, providing support services, such as training and materiel development,” to the military services to facilitate their provision of combat-ready forces to joint warfighting organizations. In his January testimony, General Pace recommended that the decision should be based on the duties of the office; that is, in fact, the criterion the Commission used – informed by the Federal Research Division and GAO analyses.

The Commission found that the responsibilities of the Chief, particularly since 9/11, are substantially greater than those delineated in the NGB charter, that they include not just functions internal to the Department of Defense but also primary liaison responsibility between DOD and the governors and adjutants general of the 54 states and territories. Our recommendations in the March 1 report would further expand the Chief’s portfolio. Given that analysis, the Commission felt the position of Chief of the National Guard Bureau warranted four-star rank, should Congress require those duties to be performed. We also recommended that the position be reevaluated periodically to ensure that the required duties remain commensurate with the grade of O-10.

We also carefully considered the proponents' arguments for making the Chief of the National Guard Bureau a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Our unanimous conclusion was that he should not be made a member. The Commission found most compelling the argument that the proposal to put the Chief of the National Guard Bureau on the JCS would effectively make the National Guard a separate service. This runs completely counter to the thrust of Goldwater-Nichols to foster jointness among all services and components. Those of us, like the Chairman and Congressman Hunter, who were here in 1986 and were instrumental in the passage of Goldwater-Nichols recognized that enacting the legislation was only a first step toward the enhanced military effectiveness that the legislation envisioned. It took almost a decade before some of the services stopped trying to repeal major portions of the legislation. Now, 20 years later, the joint vision of Goldwater-Nichols is a reality. We must be extremely vigilant that we not take a major step backward. In his testimony, General Pace put it very succinctly:

We spent 20-plus years, first kicking and dragging our feet and then embracing jointness, as directed by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, all to get one Army, one Navy, one Air Force, one Marine Corps, one Joint Force. If you make this individual a member of the Joint Chiefs, you create two Armies and two Air Forces. You're going absolutely 100 percent counter to the thrust of Goldwater-Nichols and you will do major damage to the synergy that we've gotten. Even though we had to be dragged and pulled in that direction, we are there and we should not take a step back. So I would recommend, in the strongest terms I know how, do not do that.

The Commission found General Pace's arguments persuasive. In addition, we believe that we have identified an alternative framework, which I outlined earlier in my testimony, to more effectively deal with the very legitimate civil support resourcing issues that the National Guard Empowerment Act sought to correct. The Commission instead recommends modifications to the position and authority of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau; increased exchange of personnel among the Department of Homeland Security, Northern Command, Joint Forces Command, and the National Guard Bureau; an increased voice for the governors; and assignment to the Secretaries of Homeland Security and Defense of the responsibility for developing and validating requirements for civil support.

U.S. Northern Command

The response to Hurricane Katrina exposed the fissures and gaps between those federal entities with the responsibility to plan for, coordinate, and respond to a disaster of this magnitude. There is no question that the National Guard Bureau did a magnificent job in coordinating the movement of 70

percent of the military forces that responded to Katrina. As a part of our research, the Commission scrutinized the role of U.S. Northern Command and the lessons learned from the Hurricane Katrina experience. There were clear disconnects between Northern Command's control of Title 10 active and reserve forces and the National Guard Bureau's coordination of National Guard forces. NORTHCOM is the unified command with primary responsibility for both homeland defense and civil support missions. However, it sees its primary mission as homeland defense, the protection of U.S. against external threats – and **not** civil support. The Commission made a number of recommendations that relate to changing Northern Command's role and makeup.

To be ready for a catastrophe in the United States, the Commission believes that DOD must elevate the importance of civil support and incorporate that importance into all defense strategy and planning documents. Doing so will give Northern Command and the National Guard Bureau the ability to plan for and prioritize civil support appropriately alongside homeland defense and other missions. The National Guard and other reserve components bring a number of advantages to disaster response beyond, in most instances, providing the bulk of forces. Guardsmen are experienced in working with first responders and are knowledgeable about local conditions. Unfortunately, despite this critical expertise, the National Guard plays only a limited role at Northern Command today. Just 5 percent of NORTHCOM's billets are filled by guardsmen – with another 3 percent filled by other reservists. By contrast, the Commission recommends that a majority of U.S. Northern Command's billets, including those of its service components, should be filled by leaders and staff with reserve qualifications and credentials.

The National Guard Empowerment Act would require that the deputy commander at NORTHCOM be filled by a qualified National Guard officer. The Commission instead recommends that either the four-star commander position or the three-star deputy commander slot should be filled by a National Guard or Reserve officer at all times. We concur with the testimony of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace at our January hearing that there are currently serving Reserve and Guard general officers who are qualified for the position of four-star commander of U.S. Northern Command. We think it is time for them to be given one or both of these command billets and believe that DOD should have the flexibility to pick the "best qualified" at the time and not be limited only to the deputy slot.

Reserve policy advice

Another area where we believe significant reform is necessary is the Reserve Forces Policy Board. The board predates the passage of Goldwater-Nichols as well as the creation of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The RFPB's authorizing statute has not been modified to reflect these changes. As presently constituted, the 24-member RFPB includes a civilian chairman appointed by the Secretary of Defense, the service assistant secretaries for manpower and reserve affairs, and flag and general officers from each of the active and reserve components. The RFPB has a 10-member staff – including one two-star general officer and five colonels – that serve the board. The annual personnel and recurring operating cost of the RFPB is \$1.6 million, although this does not include the infrastructure, facility, or other operating expenses.

Under current statute, the board, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, is the principal policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense on matters relating to the reserve components. A consequence of the board's reporting through the ASD-RA, then reporting through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, is that both the assistant secretary and the under secretary can control and filter advice provided by the board to the Secretary. In addition, another statute established the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and provided that its principal duty is the overall supervision of reserve component affairs of the Department of Defense. In theory, this mandate is not inconsistent with the primary responsibility of the RFPB. In practice, however, there is uncertainty about where primary responsibility really lies for making recommendations to the Secretary of Defense involving reserve component policy issues.

Another concern is that with the exception of the civilian chairman, every member of the RFPB is a sitting political appointee in the Department of Defense or a serving military officer. When all who sit on it are DOD insiders – and, therefore, players in the day-to-day turf battles and internal decision-making system – a board is less likely to fully consider new ideas, incorporate private-sector best practices, and critically examine present policies. This problem is inherent to the structure of the institution and independent of the personalities and governing styles of the individuals who occupy the offices of ASD-RA and USD P& R.

The Commission is convinced that the board as presently configured is not functioning effectively. The Commission recommends reconstituting the Reserve Forces Policy Board, altering its fundamental purpose, and changing how it fits into the Pentagon bureaucracy. As Lieutenant General

Blum testified in January, the board's influence within DOD has been minimized. The Commission concludes that the RFPB could better evaluate issues and better advise the Secretary of Defense on policy if it were modeled after independent advisory organizations such as the Defense Business Board, Defense Science Board, and Defense Policy Board – which are composed of individuals from outside the Department of Defense.

Reserve component officer promotion

One of the tasks you gave the Commission in the original authorizing statute was to assess traditional career paths for reserve component members. Pursuant to section 3 of the National Guard Empowerment Act, we addressed one element of broader career path concerns: specifically, the need to make reserve component general and flag officers more competitive for promotion to three- and four-star positions of importance and responsibility, as prescribed by section 601 of Title 10.

Reserve component general and flag officer issues must be addressed at the junior and mid-grade levels by increasing access both to joint professional military education and to joint duty experience. The Commission will closely monitor DOD's implementation plan for your recent statutory changes to Goldwater-Nichols. These changes reflect the altered character of many joint duty positions in today's joint task force/contingency operations environment. We will recommend any needed further changes in our January 2008 final report. We will also closely scrutinize what actions the Secretary of Defense may take, based on the Commission's recommendations, to enhance opportunity for all reserve component officers to achieve education, training, and promotion opportunities.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today to present the results of the Commission's work on the provisions of the National Guard Empowerment Act. We have conducted our work on these proposals with due diligence. We believe that the recommendations we make in our report, if implemented, would have profound, lasting, and positive effect on U.S. national security. We know that you will give them thoughtful consideration. We know that Congress will take our input, together with its own proposals; will reach out to the sponsors and to DOD, DHS, the governors, and their adjutants general; and will probably come up with even better solutions to the problems we have identified. We welcome them, as we are all focused on fixing the problems, not on whose solution gets implemented.

Our work is not done. In our remaining months we will take up the many issues covered in our original charter, exploring changes to how the Guard and Reserves are organized, trained, equipped, compensated, and supported. We welcome your continuing input and continued support in those efforts. The Commission will submit its final report no later than January 31, 2008.

Thank you again. I stand ready for your questions.

Attachments:

- *Strengthening America's Defenses in the New Security Environment*, Appendix I, Commission recommendations regarding the proposals of the 2007 National Defense Authorization Act and the National Defense Enhancement and National Guard Empowerment Act.
- *On Raising the Rank of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau*, A Report Prepared by the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, February 2007.
- *Military Personnel: General and Flag Officer Requirements Are Based on DOD's 2003 Report to Congress*, "Appendix I: Sixteen Factors Used to Validate General and Flag Officer Requirements," Government Accountability Office, GAO-04-488, April 2004.