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Introduction

Chairman Murtha, Ranking Member Young, Distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of America's Army. We have no greater heroes than America's most precious resource – our Soldiers. These Soldiers, their Families, and wounded warriors backed by our civilian workforce, represent the very best of America's values and ideals. Your continued support of our personnel initiatives provides the tools to ensure the growth, sustainment, and well-being of our All-Volunteer Force. This fighting force of 1.1 million Soldiers is continually tested at home and abroad. Repeatedly our Nation's young men and women step forward and pledge to serve. They recognize the challenges facing our Nation, answer the call, and become part of something larger than themselves. Their dedicated service and sacrifice are deserving of the very best services, programs, equipment, training, benefits, life-style, and leadership available. Our focus this year centers on the growth and sustainment of the force, our ability to meet the national challenges, and the importance of maintaining this strength to meet the demands now and for the future.

Recruiting and Retention (Officer and Enlisted)

Despite the challenges of a protracted conflict in fiscal year 2008, the Army exceeded its enlisted recruiting and retention missions for the first time since fiscal year 2002 and is optimistic it will meet its goals for fiscal year 2009.

The Army's percentage of new enlisted Soldiers considered "high quality" with a Tier 1 education (high school diploma) who score in the top half of the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) increased by 2.1% in 2008. Additionally recruits who scored highly (50-99%) on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) increased 1.6%; and recruits who scored poorly (30% and below) on the AFQT decreased 1.2%.

To achieve overall manpower levels in fiscal year 2009, the Active Army must retain 55,500 Soldiers, the Army Reserve must retain 11,619 Soldiers, and the Army National Guard must retain 34,593 Soldiers. The Army is on track to meet its retention mission for fiscal year 2009. As of February 2009, the Active Army achieved 152% of its year-to-date mission, the Army Reserve achieved 125% of its year-to-date mission, and the Army National Guard achieved 112% of its year-to-date mission.

Retention of combat experienced veterans is imperative to current and future readiness. Our Army has achieved success in this area as well. Currently, 45% of all reenlistments occur in the theater. Recently deployed units or units currently deployed to these areas of operations have reenlistment rates of 140% of their annual goals.

The officer shortage in the Army continues to keep the officer corps out of balance. To assist in this area, the Army initiated the Captains' Retention Incentive Menu in September 2007 with the intent to recruit, retain, and manage critical skills to increase the retention of lieutenants and captains for three years. The program ended in November 2008. The Captains' Retention Incentives Menu included three options: a cash option based on the officer's accessed branch in exchange for a three year non-concurrent active duty service obligation, the Expanded Graduate School Program which funds graduate school, or the year-long Defense Language Institute with both of the latter producing a 3:1 active duty service obligation. The Army spent \$443M in fiscal year 2007 to 2009 on the Captains' Retention Incentives Menu. Captain retention increased in FY 08 to 89.1% over the ten year average of 88%. The Menu guaranteed retention through fiscal year 2011 for over 16,000 of the 23,000 captains who were eligible to participate. The timing of our Captains' Retention Incentives Menu program, concurrent with the dramatic downturn of the economy and job market, helped support our retention goals.

The Officer Accession Pilot Program (OAPP), launched in the 2006 National Defense Authorization (NDAA), introduces three options for officer accessions incentives: Option Alpha, Option Bravo, and Option Charlie. Option Alpha provides a \$5,000 bonus to students who graduate from the Leader Training Course (LTC) and

contract as a 2 year ROTC cadet. The fiscal year 2008 contract rate for graduates from the LTC was 70%. That is a 5% increase from the 65% contract rate average the previous four years. Option Bravo provides an incentive of up to \$250 per month to newly contracted ROTC cadets who successfully complete a course in a language on the Critical Language List. At a cost of \$68,250, the program had 127 participants as of Cadet Command's January quarterly report. It is too early to measure the precise impact of the OAPP programs for fiscal year 2008; however Cadet Command communicates a noticeable increase in interest in the LTC and expects significant increases for fiscal year 2009. Option Charlie authorizes clergy and medical professionals with skills that are critical to the Army between the ages of 43 and 60 appointed as Army Officers with a two-year Military Service Obligation (MSO) as opposed to the normal statutory six-year MSO.

The United States Military Academy and ROTC Pre-Commissioning incentives – Post or Branch of Choice or Graduate Schooling – with 4,500 hundred participants in fiscal years 2006 to 2008, have increased out-year retention by 40% for newly-commissioned, high-performing USMA and ROTC officers.

The single most effective retention incentive for junior officers was the cash bonus. Over 94% of the 15,000 plus officers who took incentives in fiscal year 2008 elected to take the cash bonus. Department of Defense analysis of survey data showed that most officers who intended to separate or were uncertain about staying in took the incentive and committed to further obligated Army service.

We believe that equally important to financial incentives in effective retention is the assurance that Soldiers and their Families will be cared for in a manner commensurate with their service and sacrifice. In the event of a life changing injury or the loss of life, our Soldiers are assured that their Families will receive financial and programmatic benefits commensurate with their service and sacrifice. This support includes full-earned benefits and disability compensation and a streamlined process for accessing them.

The Army's programs have been effective in recruiting and retaining both Officers and Enlisted Soldiers with critical skills. For Enlisted Soldiers, the Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) and Critical Skills Retention Bonus (CSRB) have proven to be effective tools for precision fill of critical skills. The Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 09L program is an interpreter/translator pilot program used to recruit individuals possessing critical language capabilities needed for the Global War on Terrorism. To date, the Army has recruited more than 1,400 Soldiers as military interpreters and translators under the MOS 09L program.

The continued funding of these programs by Congress is absolutely critical to the Army. Without these initiatives to assist in shaping the force, the Army will experience a detrimental shortfall that would take years to overcome.

Civilian Personnel

Civilian personnel are critical to our fighting force and our recruiting and retention efforts must include this segment of our population. More than ever, Army civilians are a critical component of readiness. Army civilians deliver combat support and combat service support at home, abroad, and on the battlefield. Currently, the Army's Civilian Corps is over 313,000 strong. Of those, over 4,000 are serving in harm's way in the U.S. Central Command Area of Operations.

The new Department of Defense Civilian Expeditionary Workforce supports humanitarian, reconstruction and, if necessary, combat-support missions. As a key part of the Army Civilian Corps, the civilian expeditionary workforce will maximize the use of civilian employee volunteers in support positions, freeing up military personnel for operational requirements. These civilian employees will be trained, equipped, and prepared to mobilize and respond urgently to expeditionary requirements in support of humanitarian, reconstruction, and, if necessary, combat-support missions.

To take full advantage of our civilian workforce's potential, the Army is developing a comprehensive civilian competency management system (CMS). The CMS will establish competency-based career paths and guides for use by supervisors

and employees in determining training and developmental needs for career planning. Once fully implemented, CMS will greatly improve the Army's capability to strategically plan civilian development consistent with validated current and future competency requirements.

The Army Civilian University (ACU) was created to improve integration between the civilian and military workforces by establishing a common military and civilian culture. ACU will include integrated and complementary curricula and a more standardized, competency-based approach to civilian functional training, education, and leader development. The ACU will prepare civilians for new demands and fully engage the Army in meeting the objectives of the Department of Defense Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan. The goal is to ensure civilian training develops the skills needed to support the Army at all levels.

The Department of Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) process is currently affecting the civilian workforce. The Army has multiple programs in place to assist the civilians assigned to the bases subject to closing and realignment. One such program offers reassignment to a position at a new location with full Permanent Change of Station costs. We are taking maximum advantage of all internal assignment and transition services available to support employees affected by BRAC.

To protect public interest and maintain core competencies, we ensure that inherently governmental requirements and requirements that are closely associated are performed by government employees. The civilian workforce provides us with an opportunity to save vital resources by bringing relatively expensive contracted services back into the government through the in-sourcing process. The initial results of our efforts are promising, saving an average of \$48K per position in-sourced. To date, we have in-sourced 1383 positions to date.

Stop Loss

The Army's recent use of stop loss is based solely on mission demands. Our intent is to discontinue stop loss on a comprehensive level as soon as operationally

feasible, consistent with Department of Defense policy. The department appreciates Congress providing the flexibility and authority to compensate members who are affected by stop loss, as this pay serves as an interim measure to help mitigate the impact of stop loss on the individual Soldier.

Individual Ready Reserve Mobilization

The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) is a critical element that assists the Army in meeting unit readiness. There are 64,556 Soldiers in the IRR as of 31 December 2008. 12,816 IRR Soldiers received involuntarily mobilization orders since September 11, 2001. 8,953 IRR Soldiers were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan at least once. The Army has a tiered systemic approach to mobilization to ensure we input equity into the IRR mobilization process. The key is to continuously ensure IRR Soldiers understand their obligations, have access to the latest in benefits and support, are provided ample time to adjust their personal affairs prior to mobilization, are trained appropriately, and have the opportunity to request a delay or exemption if warranted.

Based on lessons learned concerning the readiness of this population, the Army remains in contact with IRR Soldiers. Mechanisms begin with an IRR Welcome Letter and Orientation Handbook sent approximately 30 days after entrance to the IRR. Career Managers maintain contact with IRR Soldiers through routine emails and phone calls. Approximately 5 months after entering the IRR a Soldier will be ordered to muster. Soldiers may be required to muster each year they remain in the IRR. Once mobilized, Soldiers in the IRR receive 10 days of Individual Soldier Training upon arriving at the mobilization station. These Soldiers also receive refresher training in their military occupational specialty (MOS) which lasts between two to four weeks depending on their specific skill.

Well-Being

To maintain a high standard of living, the Army is caring for Soldiers and their Families through several initiatives. These initiatives include the Army Soldier Family Action Plan and the transferability of portions of GI Bill benefits to family members.

The Soldier Family Action Plan (SFAP) is the roadmap by which the Army fulfills its commitment to Soldiers and Families. It reaffirms the Army's commitment to Families and builds on recent investments in people, programs and infrastructure. The SFAP details approximately 112 tasks, along with supporting actions and milestones, to improve support to Soldiers and their Families. The Army leadership made a down payment by transferring \$100 Million into existing Family Programs in fiscal year 2007. These funds are being used to hire family readiness group assistants, expand availability of child care and reduce cost, provide additional respite care for Families with special needs, and enhance morale and recreation programs across the Army. Funding supports four major programs - Army Community Service, Child Care Services, Youth Services, and Soldier and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Services.

U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program

Taking care of wounded warriors is an important part of the Army's mission. The Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2) is the official U.S. Army program established after 9/11 that assists and advocates for severely wounded, injured, and ill Soldiers and their Families, wherever they are located, for as long as it takes. AW2 provides individualized support to this unique population of Soldiers, who were injured or became ill during their service in the Global War on Terrorism. AW2 is a key component of the Army's commitment, the Army Family Covenant, to wounded warriors and their Families. All wounded, injured and ill Soldiers—who are expected to require six months of rehabilitative care and the need for complex medical management—are assigned to a Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) to focus on healing before returning to duty or transitioning to Veteran status. Those who meet AW2 eligibility are simultaneously assigned to the AW2 and receive a local AW2 Advocate to personally assist them long term. Wounded Soldiers are eligible for a wide array of benefits in order to help them recover physically, prepare financially and build their skills for a rewarding career. Today, 120 AW2 advocates located in communities across America at major military installations, military treatment facilities and VA facilities provide personalized support to over 4,000 Soldiers and their Families.

Army Equal Opportunity (EO) Policy

The Army's Equal Opportunity (EO) policy directs and sustains a command effort to maximize human potential and ensure fair treatment for all persons based solely on merit, fitness and capability in support of Army Readiness and National Security. The Army leads the Nation in Equal Opportunity using education, training, cultural awareness and prevention of discrimination. Commanders at all levels are responsible for sustaining positive equal opportunity climates within their organizations.

The Army is currently transforming EO policy through an infusion of equal opportunity techniques, tactics and procedures into the full spectrum of Army Operations, Institutions and Training base, thus enhancing the foundation of the Army's overall Human Relations program. The Army is currently upgrading the Equal Opportunity Reporting System (EORS). The EORS tracks complaint data and trends to give senior leaders critical information about the EO climate in their organizations and across the Army and it will soon provide a variety of automated reports,. The Army is preparing to implement the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) as its official command climate survey for the Army.

Sexual Assault

The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff remain personally involved in reinforcing to all Soldiers and leaders the importance of preventing sexual assault. Under their guidance and leadership, the Army launched a new comprehensive sexual assault prevention campaign in 2008. The campaign centers on leaders establishing a positive command climate where sexual assault is clearly not acceptable. The campaign further encourages Soldiers to personally execute peer-to-peer intervention and to not tolerate behavior that, left unchecked, may lead to sexual assault.

The cornerstone of the Army's prevention campaign is the "I. A.M. Strong" program where the letters *I*, *A*, and *M* stand for Intervene – Act – Motivate. The "I. A.M. Strong" program features Soldiers as influential role models and provides peer-to-peer

messages outlining the Army's intent for all its members to personally take action in the effort to protect our communities. Leaders are already embracing "I. A.M. Strong" initiatives and motivating Soldiers to proactively engage and prevent sexual assault. The "I. A.M. Strong" campaign will extend through 2013 and will include assessments tools to measure its success, including what we expect to be decreases in incidents of sexual assault.

Another key initiative is a comprehensive effort to increase the ability of our Criminal Investigation Command and Judge Advocate General Corps to investigate and prosecute sexual assault cases. This initiative includes additional investigators and prosecutors at our busiest jurisdictions, resulting in a capability similar to civilian Special Victim Units.

The Army continues to emphasize victim services and response capabilities. We continue to fully resource an Army-wide victim advocacy program led by Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and supported by a cadre of professional Installation Victim Advocates who interact directly with victims of sexual assault and other response activities, such as medical, legal, law enforcement, and chaplains.

In addition to the "I. A.M. Strong" campaign, we are continuing to assess, refine, and improve our Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Program (SHARP) under the leadership of The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1.

Suicide Prevention Program

The loss of any Soldier is a tragedy, particularly when it could have been prevented. Over the past several years, suicides among Soldiers have increased. Army leaders are greatly concerned with the significant increase in the number of suicide cases. The Army leadership has prioritized efforts and resources toward suicide prevention awareness, suicide intervention actions, and post-intervention grief and bereavement support.

General Pete Chiarelli, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA), was recently assigned overall responsibility for the Army Suicide Prevention Program. On February 10, 2009, the Army ordered a “Stand Down” and a three-phase program focused on suicide prevention. During this program, Commanders and first line supervisors engage their Soldiers and Civilians to understand the individual suicide risk factors and warning signs and how to take action to intervene. The centerpiece of Phase I is an interactive video called “Beyond the Front.” Between February 15 and March 15, 2009, all Army personnel – Soldiers and Civilians – will watch the video in small groups and make decisions on how to react to the video’s vignettes. Phase I also features the ACE (Ask, Care, Escort) intervention card, used to explain how to help a “buddy” who may be exhibiting warning signs of suicidal behavior. Phase II, a chain teaching phase occurring between March 15 and July 15, 2009, again utilizes a video and vignettes based on various phases of the deployment cycle. This phase focuses on improving recognition of warning signs and how to intervene. Phase III, sustainment, will continue indefinitely through annual training requirements.

These efforts build on the Army Suicide Prevention Program (ASPP) General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) established last year and chaired by Army G-1, Chief of Chaplains and the Surgeon General. This multi-disciplinary forum also includes Army researchers, behavioral health professionals, legal professionals, law enforcement professionals and chaplains. GOSC prevention strategies include raising awareness and building intervention skills, improving access to comprehensive care, and reducing stigma associated with behavioral health care and improving life skills.

The Army Chaplain Corps and the Army Medical Command are working together to develop and implement programs that address the stigma associated with seeking help and hiring additional behavioral health providers to improve access to care.

The Army recently entered into an agreement with the National Institute of Mental Health for a five year longitudinal study of suicide. The Army will serve as the largest

living lab to assess factors affecting suicide, training efforts for reduction of suicide and other associated mitigation efforts.

The Army continues to meet regularly with external agencies such as the Departments of Veterans and Health and Human Services (including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) in a collaborative effort to exchange information and strategies designed to reduce suicide.

Army Substance Abuse Program

The well-being of our Army is affected by alcohol and drug abuse and the Army is committed to its elimination from our ranks. The Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) is a command program emphasizing readiness and personal responsibility. The ASAP uses prevention, education, deterrence, detection, and rehabilitation when necessary to reduce and eliminate alcohol and drug abuse.

A team is currently deployed to US Army Forces, US Central Command to determine methods to deliver substance abuse services in theater. To support our Commanders, we are developing portable prevention education packages for deployed Soldiers, Soldiers at home, and reserve components.

Retirement Services

Retired Army Soldiers are a unique group of American heroes who have dedicated a lifetime of selfless-service and sacrifices toward preserving the very freedoms that have made this the greatest country in the world. No one is better equipped to tell the Army story than those who have lived it. As such, the Army continues to rely on their positive influence worldwide on military installations and within their communities.

Many of these retired Soldiers have joined the ranks as civil servants and continue to make our Army strong by sharing their wisdom and knowledge. Others

volunteer their time providing much needed care to our wounded warriors and their Families.

Setting Conditions for the Future: Developing Force Structure

Providing Forces to combatant commanders to meet current and future challenges will continue to be priority number one. The agile Army Human Capital Strategy (AHCS) addresses these challenges by creating a road map to restore balance to the Force by fiscal year 2011 and by continuing to develop force structure through 2024. The objective of the AHCS is to secure and sustain the All-Volunteer Total Army, resourced through efficient and cost-conscious practices. The AHCS strategy is based on principles that assure a higher quality, more diverse and ready Total Army enabled by effective HR systems and agile policies and programs.

Congressional Assistance

Recruiting, retention and providing for the well-being of the best Army in the world requires a significant commitment by the American people. The Army is grateful for the continued support of Congress for competitive military benefits and compensation along with incentives and bonuses for Soldiers and their Families and for the civilian workforce. These are critical in helping the Army be the employer of choice.

The Army also thanks Congress for the new legislation, section 618 from the 2009 NDAA, which gave the Army the ability to consolidate special pay, incentive pay and bonus authorities, ensuring the Army has the necessary flexibility to direct programs at specific needs.

Conclusion

We need to maintain the current level of investment to ensure a robust and high-quality Force. The well-being and balance of our Force is absolutely dependent upon your tremendous support. The Army is growing and transforming in a period of

prolonged war. We will do so with young men and women of the highest caliber whose willingness to serve, even in a time of protracted conflict, is a credit to this great Nation.