

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

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THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Opening Remarks

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Dicks, members of the subcommittee; I am honored to appear before you today, representing the nearly 360,000 Citizen Soldiers in the Army National Guard. For 375 years the Army National Guard has been central to how the nation defends itself at home and abroad. Through resolve and readiness, our Citizen Soldiers deliver essential value to our nation and its communities and contribute immeasurably to our national security. Since September 11, 2001, through the end of Fiscal Year 2011, the Army National Guard has completed more than 495,000 Soldier mobilizations in support of domestic operations and overseas missions.

The Army National Guard of 2012 is the best manned, best trained, best equipped and most experienced force in our history. We are an Operational Force and a full partner with the active component. More than 50% of our Soldiers are seasoned combat veterans. That statistic speaks to our overseas credentials. But we have been given a dual mission. Domestically, our Soldiers represent every zip code where they play a vital role and have earned the respect of hometown America.

An Operational Force for Domestic and Overseas Missions

Our nation has endured a decade at war relying upon an all-volunteer force. Despite the challenges this has presented, our young people still want to join the Army National Guard. Our recruitment rate for 2012 is 93.7% of goal (as of January 31, 2012).

Along with this positive trend is an impressive retention rate among those who are already serving. The Army National Guard retention rate stands at 131.2% of goal as of January 31, 2012. Today's Army Guard Soldiers continue the proud tradition of meeting the needs of our local communities and our nation at home and around the world. In 2011 alone, Citizen Soldiers responded to floods, wildfires, tornadoes, and hurricanes as well as providing key security forces along our nation's Southwest Border. Concurrent with these critical missions the Army National Guard continues to deploy overseas in support of peacekeeping, humanitarian disasters and combat operations.

For years the Army National Guard was viewed as a "strategic" reserve. The events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent hostilities in Iraq and Afghanistan challenged all previous troop strength and deployment assumptions.

The Army had to consider – and utilize – our Citizen Soldiers as an Operational Force. Now, when the Department of Defense formulates war plans, the Army National Guard is integral to the overall design and operations tempo (OPTEMPO). We realize this inclusion makes the ARNG responsible for maintaining units trained to the highest standard of readiness. Funding is required to maintain this level of readiness. The result is that for the first time in 2013 the Operational Force is partially funded in the base budget request which supports additional duty days and operation tempo (OPTEMPO) to facilitate rapid deployment of functional and multi-functional units required to deploy on a compressed timeline.

Ready and Reliable Deployments: The Accessibility Advantage

In Fiscal Year 2011, Army National Guard Soldiers were deployed for a total of 58,903 tours in support of a multitude of ongoing missions around the world.

The breakdown, by tour, includes the following: 32,752 tours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom; 24,552 tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn; 877 tours in support of Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo; 45 tours in support of Operation Noble Eagle; 2 tours in support of Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia; and 675 tours as part of Deployment Support Cell (DSC) operations.

The Army National Guard has continuously proven to be a ready and reliable force for both domestic and overseas missions. A determining factor in Army National Guard global deployments has been the change to Title 10, USC Section 12304, which may have a direct impact on increasing the accessibility and rotational possibilities for the Army National Guard. The Army National Guard has developed into a responsive, Operational Force, contributing to “boots-on-the-ground” requirement for deployments. A change in the law (2011 NDAA) has made the Army National Guard more accessible for predictable, operational missions. With the implementation of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle as well as the new law, our leaders now have greater flexibility, predictability and choice in how they deploy forces. Our Soldiers and their Families will now have the same type of predictability with more dwell time between deployments and additional time for training.

Closer to home, the Army National Guard provided more than 907,185 duty-days of support to communities across the nation in 2011. This figure represents our commitment to the nation in response to natural disasters and fulfills our enduring pledge to sustain local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Notably, that number of duty-days nearly doubles that of 2010—and is three times greater than 2009. The Southwest Border Security mission along with an active year of flood, tornado, wildfire, and hurricane response operations accounts for the majority of this increase. However, I want to emphasize that the nearly one million duty-days performed last year clearly exemplifies the unique capability of Army National Guard forces and the dedication of Citizen Soldiers who serve in our ranks.

Equipping an Operational Force for the 21st Century

In 2012 the Army National Guard is better equipped than ever. We understand our readiness level is entirely dependent on our level of resourcing. So the challenge, as always, is to do everything efficiently.

The Army National Guard equipment on-hand (EOH) posture is evaluated and published twice a year. This important review process informs senior leaders and policy makers of Army National Guard fill levels for equipment supporting every mission. MTOE authorizations and on-hand inventory are used to determine EOH for both contingency operations and domestic missions. In collaboration with HQDA, the Army National Guard identifies specific equipment on MTOE documents as critical to domestic response missions. This equipment

is identified as Critical Dual Use (CDU). The Department of the Army considers CDU items when prioritizing equipment procurement.

The overall Army National Guard Equipment On Hand (EOH) for MTOE units is currently at 88%, an increase from 85% two years ago. Overall CDU EOH is 92%, an increase from 86% two years ago and a significant increase from 65% during Army National Guard operations supporting the Hurricane Katrina response. From December 2011 through June 2013 the Army National Guard is programmed to receive over 120,000 pieces of equipment from Army procurement funding.

Equipment modernization remains an area of concern. Despite significant progress improving EOH levels, the Army National Guard continues to have critical shortfalls in UH-60 A-A-L modernization, CH-47F, HMMWV Recapitalization, and General Engineering Equipment.

We are working closely with the Army to minimize any shortages with priority going to deploying units. The Army National Guard continues to pursue equipment modernization, greater efficiencies and economies of scale through Department of the Army procurement and National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) funding.

Sustaining the Army National Guard as an Operational Force depends upon having the same equipment as the Active Component, including rotary wing aircraft. The Army National Guard currently has 1277 rotary wing aircraft against an authorized fleet of 1394 aircraft; 85% of Army National Guard aircraft authorizations are filled with the same modern and capable aircraft as the Active

Army fleet. The inventory includes a mix of the most modern capabilities (AH-64D Block II Longbow Apaches, CH-47F Chinooks, UH/HH-60M Black Hawks and UH-72A Lakotas), older but capable airframes (AH-46D Block I Apaches, CH-47D Chinooks, UH-60A/L Black Hawks, and OH-58D Kiowa Warriors) and 98 legacy aircraft (OH-58A/C Kiowas and AH-64A Apaches).

Programmed Army procurements will ensure the Army National Guard fleets are modernized on pace with the other components, except in the case of the Black Hawk fleet. Even in 2020, only 25% of the Army National Guard Black Hawk fleet will be equipped with the new UH/HH-60M. Rotary wing aircraft remain a critical dual-use asset whether mobilizing for the warfight or responding to domestic emergencies.

Domestic Operations (DOMOPS)

In 2011 Citizen Soldiers' support of the Southwest Border mission spanned the 1,933-mile border of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. This critical mission called upon three Army National Guard capabilities. First, observation and reporting of border activities to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The second capability is our analytical expertise which augments Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents. Finally, the command and control of personnel within the Army National Guard of each Southwest Border state ensures cohesive action and coordinated operations.

In February 2012, the Southwest Border mission transitioned from a ground-based force to an air-based force. The Southwest Border transition reduced manpower requirements from 1,200 to no more than 300. The continued

Southwest Border mission for calendar year 2012 will cost \$60M. The current Southwest Border support focuses on criminal analysis and aerial detection and monitoring.

During 2011, the Army National Guard also provided support to law enforcement and special events. The law enforcement support required 60,636 duty-days of assistance and special events required another 2,685 duty-days of assistance.

The Army National Guard actively supported several environmental requests during 2011.

These request included:

Our winter storm response included 24 events in 18 states. The full scope of these actions required 11,152 duty-days of support. Firefighting support required 10,920 duty-days of support. Our flood response during 2011 totaled 201,866 duty-days of support. Hurricane and tropical storms demanded 67,795 duty-days of support. When twisters made their way across our nation in 2011 the Army National Guard responded with 14,775 duty-days of support to devastated communities.

Aviation's Role in Domestic Operations (DOMOPS)

Army National Guard Aviation flew more than 3,000 hours in response to domestic disasters in 2011. Domestic Operations missions included response to hurricanes, wildfires, tornados, and floods; civil search and rescue (SAR) missions; and counterdrug support. Our Hurricane Irene response in August was

a major domestic operation that included 37 aircraft from seven States. These aircraft flew 540 hours in support of SAR, evacuation, commodity distributions and support to local law enforcement agencies.

The National Guard's Value and Unique Capabilities

The Army National Guard, with its unique range of skills, expertise and experience level has structured itself for the future. As an Operational Force, our Citizen Soldiers are the most cost-effective means of calibrating capabilities in response to ever changing demand from conventional and unconventional threats.

The National Guard has the only Department of Defense network that reaches all 54 states and territories. GuardNet is a nation-wide information systems and mission command network that spans ten time zones, fifty-four States, three Territories, and the District of Columbia, serving the Adjutants General of the States and the national capital region. GuardNet is the functional channel of communications for the NGB and is the mission command capability for the Adjutants General of the several States for non-federalized units in generating force and defense support for civil authorities. Guardnet reaches all of the Army National Guard readiness centers in all of the States and Territories and is a model of IT efficiency and services.

The Army National Guard possesses the largest military intelligence force structure of any of the reserve components of any of the services. This force includes all of the intelligence disciplines and more than 3,000 linguists and

cultural experts, provides the nation with a robust, agile, and cost-effective responsive capability.

Army National Guard Installations – The Foundation of Readiness

The Army National Guard transformed from a strategic reserve to an Operational Force during a decade of deployments. This significant organizational shift has changed facility requirements. The Army National Guard has facilities in more than 3,000 communities; however, providing quality facilities across 54 States and Territories is an on-going challenge. Currently, more than 46% of our readiness centers are over 50 years old. Many fail to meet the needs of a 21st century Operational Force and the standards for modern buildings to include energy efficiency. Facilities are critical to readiness and support unit administration, training, equipment maintenance, and storage. They serve as platforms for mobilization during times of war and as command centers and often as shelters during domestic emergencies.

This wide array of use makes MILCON and SRM funding a critical issue directly impacting unit readiness and morale, continuity of operations and interagency partnership, community awareness, and family and employer involvement.

Innovative Programs Leverage Our Range of Civilian Skills

Our state mission, combined with grass-roots community based support of today's Army National Guard, position us to play a significant role in global

Security Cooperation (SC). We are partner to creating an enduring stability presence in scores of countries. Army National Guard Soldiers possess a wide variety of civilian, professional, and education experiences that are helpful when the soldiers are engaged in security cooperation activities..

In 2011, the Army National Guard provided approximately 18,575 Soldiers to support 69 military exercises in 104 partner countries. The Army National Guard global presence for Security Cooperation expanded in the 1980s through Overseas Duty Training opportunities

Army National Guard Security Cooperation programs are unique because of Guard Soldiers' ability to forge these enduring relationships with key individuals over long periods of time. In some cases, the crucial bonds with foreign countries have been cultivated and maintained for more than two decades.

Army National Guard partnership capacity-building activities serve to deepen and strengthen a foreign country or region's positive perception of the United States as a valued partner, which can serve to *prevent* future conflicts; one of our key objectives in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).

In 2011, 4,200 Army National Guard Soldiers participated in the State Partnership Program that included 63 partnerships and 2 bilateral agreements with 63 partner countries. This program promotes Security Cooperation activities such as emergency management, disaster response, border and port security, medical, and peacekeeping operations.

Citizen Soldiers exercise soft power. Each possesses a range of valuable professional skills and expertise acquired as civilians. Within the ranks of the Army National Guard are 5,798 first responders (firefighters, law enforcement, emergency medical technicians, analysts), 3,655 medical professionals, 778 legal professionals, 2,655 engineers, 1,119 agricultural specialists, 5,186 educators, 2,296 mechanics, 511 plumbers, and 34,309 students (in a wide array of disciplines). That explains why Guardsmen are frequently called upon to conduct soft power across the range of conflict. A prime example is the innovative Agribusiness Development Teams (ADTs) in Afghanistan.

Agribusiness Development Teams provide training and advice aimed at supplementing current Afghan farming practices by introducing advanced techniques and new, profitable crops. These teams are making significant contributions to Afghanistan's economy and achieving sustainable, yearly growth of the nation's economic output.

One of our most relevant National Guard missions is to impart knowledge and transplant economic recovery to the Afghan people. The Agribusiness Development Team combines 58 Soldiers and Airmen with backgrounds and expertise in various sectors of the agribusiness field. ADTs ensure that improvements are sustainable with local assets and within the context of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) abilities. The ADTs conduct stability operations by building agricultural capacity, establishing a safe and secure environment, enhancing the rule of law, sustaining economic development, developing sustained governance, and fostering social well being.

Nine ADTs are deployed to Regional Command East and Regional Command South in Afghanistan. Deployed teams hail from Texas, Missouri, Kentucky, Kansas, Indiana, Oklahoma, Nevada, Iowa, and Arkansas. To date 28 teams operated in 15 provinces and contributed to over 578 agriculture projects generating more than \$31 million in economic impacts for the people of Afghanistan. ADT Soldiers bring their military capabilities and their civilian skills and education to work directly with the farmers of Afghanistan. These Citizen Soldiers leverage the assets and expertise of land-grant universities and cooperative services within their home states.

Support of Soldiers and Their Families

The Army National Guard continues to make suicide prevention a top priority. Mitigating high risk behaviors and reducing suicidal urges ensures a ready and resilient force. Increased resilience and risk reduction leadership awareness, training, and intervention programs continue to enhance coping skills in our Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians. Due to limited Comprehensive Soldier Fitness training seat allocations, and to better support the needs of Guard Soldiers and Families, the Army National Guard established a Master Resilience Trainer Course (MRT-C) in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin in July 2011. By doing so, the number of Army National Guard Master Resilience Trainers are expected to exceed 1,000 by the in early FY12. The Army National Guard also trained 334 Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) program trainers in FY11.

An additional 150 ASIST trainers are being trained in FY12. These trainers will train approximately 35,000 gatekeepers in advanced intervention skills.

The Army National Guard recently teamed with the Office of the Secretary of Defense of Reserve Affairs, as well as the Air National Guard, to launch a highly successful peer support line, Vets4Warriors. The peer support line is designed to serve all Army National Guard and Reserve Component members nationwide. As the foundation of each Soldier's support network, Army National Guard families and employers are being trained to assist in identifying high risk individuals. States have capitalized on community-based resources and solutions to provide services outside of military installations.

The Army National Guard has been, and remains, deeply concerned with the employment status of our Soldiers. They are our most important asset and their well-being is essential for the Army National Guard as an operational force. Furthermore, the Army National Guard's employment challenges extend beyond returning mobilized Soldiers and we continue to work diligently to find solutions to assist our geographically dispersed population.

New legislation was recently enacted to assist unemployed veterans. The Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011, to Hire Our Heroes, mandates the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) for all Soldiers separating from a Title 10 active duty tour of more than 180 days. The Army National Guard is working closely with the Department of the Army and OSD to implement the transition mandates set forth in the legislation. The Army National Guard seeks to utilize these expanded transition services as a platform to enhance and increase

participation in the myriad of employment assistance programs currently managed by the Army National Guard.

The Army National Guard Directorate offers several national programs to assist the states with their local employment programs. The Job Connection Education Program (JCEP) is a high-touch employment approach assisting our Soldiers and their Family members in researching, obtaining, and retaining civilian employment.

The Job Connection Education Program, a pilot program in Texas, provides support services such as job skills training, workshops, and job search assistance which expose Soldiers and Family members to jobs offered by over 480 established business partners. To date, over 720 Soldiers and Family members have connected to employment opportunities, earning an average hourly wage of \$16.57.

The Guard Apprentice Program Initiative (GAPI), in partnership with the Department of Labor and the Department of Veterans' Affairs, continues to build relationships with employers and colleges to facilitate civilian apprenticeship and employment opportunities for the Army National Guard and other Reserve Components. As a pilot state, Maryland has six Army National Guard Soldiers hired in the Independent Electrical Contractors Chesapeake (IECC) Apprenticeship Program. The IECC has progressive wages starting at \$18.00 per hour with medical benefits. By the end of the five year program commitment, participants will earn \$23.00 per hour with benefits along with receiving a national certification as journeymen electricians. Drive the Guard (DTG) is a collaborative

effort with the Commercial Driver Training Foundation, Inc. which links Army National Guard Soldiers with training and certification programs in their communities. Once completed, the Soldier has the potential to begin a career in the truck driving industry. Applicants seeking their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) are assisted through our DTG program. Upon completion, the Soldier can begin a career in the trucking industry, with a salary varying between \$35,000 and \$45,000 annually. This is above the national starting salary of most college graduates with a bachelor degree.

Closing Remarks

As the nation enters an era of budgetary pressure, the Army National Guard has already structured itself for success in the future. We are an Operational Force; highly trained, experienced and professional. We represent a scalable Army component that is far less expensive to engage and deploy than a full-time force. We are flexible and adaptable so we are ready to meet the wide array of 21st century security challenges.

With committed Citizen Soldiers, our state and national leaders have the advantage of complete access to our forces and facilities. When employed judiciously, the Army National Guard presents cost-effective value to American communities where Guardsmen live, work and serve. This makes the Army National Guard not only trained, equipped and ready defenders of our freedoms, but also good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

We stand ready, as always, to take on any mission. After all, America's Minutemen have been successfully completing missions for 375 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I welcome your questions.