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Testimony
before
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Military Personnel Subcommittee

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Good morning and thank you Chairwoman Davis and subcommittee members for your interest in the issue of sexual assault in the military. My name is Captain Daniel Katka, I'm stationed at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and I'm honored to have the opportunity to share my experience as a military Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.

I've been privileged to serve in the Air Force for 20 years. I enlisted in 1988 and received my commission in 2002. I have served as a Squadron Section Commander for large units and as a Military Training Flight Commander for over 1,500 personnel. In those duties I dealt with numerous personnel issues to include sexual assault. Those experiences led to my desire to become directly involved in the care and advocacy of sexual assault survivors. In 2007, I was honored to be chosen as one of Lackland's two full-time Sexual Assault Response Coordinator's or SARC.

Supporting Lackland's sexual assault survivors is my top priority. Air Force SARCs report directly to the installation Vice Wing Commander. Reporting to the vice commander ensures top level support and immediate access when needed. I also work directly with a Sexual Assault Response Team, or SART, comprised of first responders from the chaplaincy, investigators, JAG, and medical communities. The SART meets monthly to review cases and discuss ways to improve response procedures. I recruit, screen, train, and supervise 70 Victim Advocates, or VAs, who are military and DoD civilian volunteers. Air Force Victim Advocates receive 40 hours of training to provide immediate and ongoing survivor support. Victim Advocates and SART members are trained to understand restricted and unrestricted reporting options. The local San Antonio civilian community is involved in supporting Lackland's survivors. The local Rape Crisis Center works with survivors who prefer to receive one-on-one or group counseling off-base. We also have an outstanding partnership with a local civilian hospital for survivors who desire a sexual assault forensic exam. When utilizing the Rape Crisis Center or the local hospital, survivors' restricted reporting option is still protected. The majority of the reports made at Lackland are from trainees, which encompass the Air Force's youngest demographic.

Training is essential to informing Lackland's nearly 50,000 personnel about sexual assault. Lackland is the Air Force's largest training base with the only Air Force basic military training center and numerous technical training schools. Every basic trainee receives a four-hour Sexual Assault awareness class. Airmen are presented an additional two-hour follow-on class during the introductory week of their technical school. To ensure our permanent party personnel receive necessary training, Lackland has over 200 Sexual Assault Prevention and Outreach representatives who conduct briefings and

distribute awareness products. The annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month also presents an opportunity to educate the base. We've had numerous activities to heighten awareness: base walk/runs targeting the younger population; leadership luncheons; "Take Back the Night" vigils; banner campaigns at base entrances; and strategically placed information booths at highly frequented locations such as the Base Exchange. The experiences I've had at Lackland prepared me for the SARC mission abroad as well.

One of the most rewarding opportunities I had was to deploy as SARC in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. Most Air Force SARCs are DoD civilians, but to ensure contingency and deployment capability, 30 are military members. In the AOR, it is vital to have a robust sexual assault training and awareness program to ensure all know, regardless of military branch, that the SARC is there to support them. With strong base leadership support, I provided SAPR information at weekly in-processing briefings, reinvigorated monthly case review meetings, trained new SART members, and started new awareness campaigns using base organizations such as the Airman's Group, First Sergeants Associations, and Desert Chiefs Group. I also supported Al Udeid's geographically separated unit, Eskan Village in Saudi Arabia.

It is a profound privilege for me to be here today. I am passionate about supporting survivors and educating military members about this horrendous crime. Forums like this help ensure this issue remains in the forefront and protects our most important military resource—our People. Thank you very much for this opportunity.