

**STATEMENT BY**

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**BEFORE THE**

**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL**

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**ON**

**RESERVE COMPONENTS AS AN OPERATIONAL FORCE**

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NOT FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION  
UNTIL RELEASED BY  
THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

## **Opening Remarks**

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Davis, distinguished members of the subcommittee; I am honored to appear before you today, representing 465,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen in the Army and Air National Guard, an organization that is historically part of the foundation of our great democracy.

America's National Guard remains ready, reliable, and accessible. As members of an operational force, regularly used by the President and State Governors, the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard contribute daily to our nation's overseas and domestic security objectives.

## **National Guard Overview**

The National Guard is at a crossroads. In these difficult financial times, we are part of national debate on the most cost-effective way to run the nation, the federal government, and the Department of Defense. One of the main issues concerning our military forces involves determining the appropriate mix of active duty and reserve forces. To that end, we need to ascertain the correct balance of utilization rates – somewhere between the current National Guard operations tempo and what is sustainable over the long term.

On average, 63,000 National Guard members are either deployed or mobilized at any given time for federal missions and about 5,800 are activated for domestic missions. I believe that this utilization rate of National Guard personnel is appropriate and that we can sustain this level of activation providing the deployments are programmed as far in advance as reasonably possible.

The National Guard has effectively used its appropriated funds over the past year, and we as an organization, intend to continue being good stewards of

the taxpayers' dollars entrusted to us in FY12. As we embark upon this new fiscal year, we plan to make the National Guard stronger, more capable, and more ready.

The National Guard Bureau's Army, Air, and Joint Directorates each work with the Adjutants General of the 50 States, three territories, and the District of Columbia to execute the strategies set forth by National and State leaders. This synergistic effort is at the heart of our success. The National Guard fosters and nurtures a deep-rooted connection to the more than 3,300 communities across our country that allows the men and women of the National Guard to be an accessible, strong, and capable asset – one that is *always ready, always there*.

The Army National Guard and Air National Guard are full partners with their respective services in providing combat resources and enabling units for the overseas fight. However, the National Guard also makes ground and air forces available to the Governors when needed. The National Guard Bureau team works closely with the Army and Air staffs to:

- Maintain endstrength at or above 358,200 for the Army National Guard (ARNG) and 106,700 for the Air National Guard (ANG), with a primary focus on caring for the Guard members and their Families
- Modernize and re-capitalize the ARNG and ANG equipment. This means equip the ARNG to no less than 80 percent of its equipment requirements, ensuring that the ARNG always has the level of equipment needed to meet domestic operational requirements regardless of a unit's status
- Ensure the ANG is equipped concurrently and in balance with the Total Air Force
- Stabilize the force to build readiness and train forces to the ARFORGEN level of proficiency and to support the Air Expeditionary Force

Since the National Guard Bureau's official designation as a joint activity of the Department of Defense (DoD), we have been forging ahead to develop our dual-mission capabilities, both domestic and overseas. We have focused on developing strategic relationships within DoD and other federal agencies to implement efficient and effective response capabilities. The goal is to ensure the American people have ready access to the essential capabilities of homeland response. To support our domestic response priorities, the National Guard Bureau is:

- Enhancing Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high-yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enterprise response capability at the State level
- Establishing a Homeland Response Force (HRF) in each FEMA region
- Documenting the State Joint Force Headquarters requirements to further improve command and control capacity during the response

The tremendous value that the National Guard provides can be effectively described through our four broad mission areas – our core competencies:

- Overseas defense mission
- Support to global engagements
- Domestic response mission
- Soldier, Airman, and Family support programs

### **Overseas Defense Mission**

Overseas, the National Guard will continue its full engagement in current operations. As of September 30, 2010, the National Guard have mobilized nearly 650,000 Soldiers and Airmen in support of Overseas Contingency Operations since the attacks of September 11, 2001. In many cases, these men and women

have mobilized for combat multiple times. Most Americans know that the Army and Air National Guard provide many of the forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, but few are aware that the vast majority of the forces in Bosnia, Kosovo, the Sinai, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba are National Guard members. These missions are critical to our National security and garner significant international support in keeping peace across the globe.

### **Support to Global Engagements**

Global engagement is another National Guard core competency. Since the end of the Cold War the National Guard, through its State Partnership Program (SPP), has established enduring and mutually beneficial relationships between American States and more than 60 foreign nations. Working with the Department of State, military commands, and other agencies, the State Partnership Program is an integral component of the Defense Department's global security cooperation strategy, the geographic Combatant Commanders' theater engagement programs, and the U.S. Ambassadors' Mission Strategic Resource Plans. These partnerships work to advance regional security, stability, and prosperity. By fostering relationships with other countries, we develop more understanding and familiarity with each other, thereby creating a foundation of trust, appreciation, and burgeoning global security.

Furthermore, as the demand for Overseas Contingency Operations forces declines, there is opportunity to preserve operational National Guard capability by expanding the experience gained through the SPP. Using contingency forces in its one year of rotational availability permits it to prepare for five years with

personnel costs that are a small fraction of the active component. National Guard units that are used for these purposes can offer the Combatant Commander the predictability and stability inherent in the operational RC, which in turn provides the benefit of continuity in sourcing and building long-term relationships.

The National Guard is ideally suited for providing support to Combatant Commanders. Soldiers with valuable civilian skills and expertise from professional, technical, and managerial fields in the private sector make up the National Guard. Moreover, retaining specific skill sets within particular units is possible because National Guard Soldiers characteristically spend their entire career in the same unit. Skill sets not only apply to those that are civilian acquired, but also military investments made in language training and cultural awareness. The National Guard's proven track record in recruiting and retaining prior service personnel preserves the training expense already invested while on active duty.

The Afghanistan Agribusiness Development Program is a unique engagement program of the National Guard. The Agribusiness Development Teams provide training and advice to Afghan agricultural universities, provincial ministries, and local farmers, leading to increased stability and improved opportunities for Afghanistan's reemerging agribusiness realm. Thanks to the National Guard, Afghanistan reports declines in poppy production and increases in harvests of apples, grapes, pomegranates, cherries, almonds, wheat, corn, alfalfa, and saffron.

## **Domestic Response Mission**

Domestically, the National Guard is ready to respond on a moment's notice to any emergency, manmade or natural. The National Guard will have 10 Homeland Response Force units that are either dedicated to or dual-hatted for this critical homeland mission. These units will complement and enhance the existing civil-support structure in National Guard units across the nation.

## **Soldiers, Airmen, and Family Support Programs**

The National Guard seeks to provide exemplary support to our Soldiers, Airmen, and their Families. Programs, such as the Army's Warrior Transition Units (WTUs) and Community-Based Warrior Transition Units (CBWTUs), focus on caring for wounded warriors from across the Army. The Army National Guard supports the Army's WTUs and CBWTUs at all levels of the organization from squad leader to battalion commander.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program provides information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach to Soldiers, spouses, employers, and youth throughout the different stages of mobilization: pre-alert, alert, pre-deployment, deployment, post-deployment, and reintegration.

Our Citizen-Soldiers, who in their civilian lives are in positions of influence across the spectrum of business, education, and government, make up the backbone of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (NGYCP). This award-winning, community-based program leads, trains, and mentors high school dropouts to become productive citizens in America's future. ChalleNGe has 32 sites in 28 States and Puerto Rico, offering a five-month "military style"

residential phase and a one-year post-residential mentoring phase for unemployed youth ages 16-18. ChalleNGe saves States approximately \$175 million annually in juvenile corrections costs, while keeping youths off federal assistance.

### **A Great Value For America**

Investment in the National Guard is a great value for America. These brief examples display only a fraction of what we currently accomplish and I am confident that we can provide more in the years to come.

We must sustain the National Guard as a ready and accessible force. We must find a sustainable balance between operational utilization and overuse of these dedicated Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen. The National Guard currently provides 35-40 percent of the Army and Air Force operational force for less than 7 percent of the base defense budget – precisely the type of efficiency the Department of Defense is seeking. With the proper disbursement of scarce defense dollars, the National Guard is an investment with a very high return.

Today and in the future, the National Guard will continue to simultaneously defend the nation's interests overseas, support the homeland, and serve as an indispensable, cost-effective military option for the United States. For 375 years, our National Guard has proven itself a great value for America. With a deliberate decision to support the Reserve Component as an operational force, and the discovery of the critical balance between funding and use, the National Guard will be successful in FY12, and emerge as an even greater value in the future.



## **Closing Remarks**

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today, I look forward to your questions.