

**Chairman Richard Shelby Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

Hearing to Review the FY2021 Budget Request for the National Guard and Reserve

March 4, 2020

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the Subcommittee will come to order.

I am pleased to welcome our distinguished panel to consider the President's budget requests for the National Guard and Reserve Components in fiscal year 2021.

Today the committee will hear from General Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Charles Luckey, Chief of the Army Reserve; Lieutenant General Richard Scobee, Chief of the Air Force Reserve; Vice Admiral Luke McCollum, Chief of the Navy Reserve, and; Lieutenant General David Bellon, Commander of Marine Corps Forces Reserve.

Thank you for appearing today, and thank you for your service.

Our nation's guard and reserve components contribute important capability and capacity to our nation's total military force.

They participate in joint training exercises, execute missions with partner nations, and deploy around the globe in support of combat operation.

They also provide critical support to our nation during domestic emergencies including floods, winter storms, as well as hurricane and wild fire response operations.

In order for them to continue to be successful, they must be sufficiently manned, trained and equipped – and that requires the timely execution of appropriated funds.

As we consider the request for resources for fiscal year 2021, we look forward to hearing updates on the overall modernization of our forces as the Department of Defense has shifted to prepare, deter, and if necessary, fight a future conflict against a near peer adversary.

We also very much appreciate the men and women that make up our reserve components; understanding that they serve our nation by remaining ready to put their lives on hold.

Whether they are called to mobilize, voluntarily deploy, or transition to full time support – they represent the very best of us.

To that end, we understand that these men and women have been called upon regularly for both disaster response and to attend to our nation's borders and look forward to an update on that work as well.

Now, before I turn to the Vice Chairman I have two items I want to mention.

First, I want to recognize one of today's witnesses – Lieutenant General Luckey.

Sir, I understand that you will soon be retiring after decades of service.

I want to take this opportunity thank you for your many years of hard work and sacrifice.

Your country is grateful, and I wish you well going forward.

I also want to congratulate the Navy Reserve, which celebrated 105 years yesterday; that is quite an accomplishment.

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