

**WRITTEN STATEMENT BY**

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**BEFORE THE**

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SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## **INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Durbin, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is a pleasure to be here today with my fellow Reserve Component Leaders.

I assumed duties as the Chief of the National Guard Bureau over two years ago. It has been my honor each and every day to represent nearly 450,000 Soldiers and Airmen serving in the National Guard. They are the finest National Guard force in our nation's history.

For 18 years, the joint force focused on executing counterinsurgency operations and fighting violent extremists. Counterinsurgency operations will remain a core competency. However, the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) refocuses the Department of Defense (DoD) for long-term competition with China and Russia. The NDS portrays China and Russia as our dominant focus, while Iran, North Korea, and non-state actors remain national security threats.

Your National Guard's three core missions of fighting America's wars, protecting the homeland, and building enduring partnerships directly support the NDS's three lines of effort: building a more lethal force; strengthening alliances and attracting new partners; and reforming the DoD for greater performance and affordability.

The National Guard has transformed itself since the first Gulf War. It is now an operational force and no longer a strategic reserve. It is imperative the National Guard remains an operational force, as part of our Army and Air Force, that helps protect and secure our interests at home and abroad.

**BUILDING A MORE LETHAL FORCE FOR THE WARFIGHT AND HOMELAND:**

*Warfight:*

First, fighting America's wars is the primary mission of the National Guard. The National Guard is focused on readiness as the NDS demands more lethality from our military. We are the principal combat reserve of the Army and Air Force making up 20 percent of the entire joint force providing strategic depth in support of combatant commands. There is only one standard of readiness in fighting America's wars. This readiness requires the National Guard to be deployable, sustainable, and interoperable with our active components. Enhancing full-time support and replacing and upgrading dilapidated facilities are vital in that regard. The National Guard also requires parity in equipping its force through concurrent and balanced modernization and recapitalization so that it can deliver the lethality required to the joint force.

On any given day, the National Guard averages 30,000 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized on duty in every region of the world. When mobilized and deployed, the Guard is interchangeable with its active components. We provide the joint force highly trained and experienced Soldiers and Airmen to meet mission requirements

anywhere. Our Citizen Soldiers and Airmen are present wherever you see the Army and the Air Force.

“Thirty-nine days a year” is no longer the standard for much of the National Guard. Today’s force expects to be deployed. Predictable and rotational mobilizations, where our service members can utilize their training, will help keep the force relevant, ready, and integrated with our active components.

The President directed the stand up of a Space Force this past year to protect and develop our vital interests in space. DoD space-based assets and capabilities protect our critical infrastructure, our economy, and our democracy. The National Guard continues to contribute critical capabilities in space, and we stand ready to support any future Space Force.

*Homeland:*

The NDS underscores the fact our homeland is no longer a sanctuary and new technologies and weapons can reach the heart of America with little or no warning. The 2019 Missile Defense Review clearly articulates the need to pursue advanced missile defense concepts and technologies to protect the homeland. The National Guard, with its Missile Defenders at Fort Greely, Alaska, Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, remains critical to our nation’s missile defense and stands ready to evolve in recognition of advancing threats.

The National Guard’s unique dual State and Federal roles and robust presence in 2,600 communities in our states, territories, and the District of

Columbia give our forces the widest presence of any military force in America and the ability to quickly respond to contingencies. Our skills and experience from the warfight are used to assist first responders and play an important part in a unified response under Federal or State command during domestic emergencies. We will remain, in most cases, the first military force to assist first responders in the States, territories, and the District of Columbia.

In addition to approximately 30,000 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized around the world, on average, we have approximately 10,000 Guard Soldiers and Airmen conducting operations in the United States on a typical day. We provide capability and capacity to United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command. Fifteen of the sixteen alert sites safeguarding our skies within the United States are operated by the Air National Guard (ANG). The National Guard Counterdrug Program assists law enforcement with the detection, interdiction, disruption and curtailment of illicit drug trafficking. Approximately 55 percent of DoD's chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) response enterprise, capable of responding to a host of CBRN threats, reside in the National Guard. National Guard cyber units protect DoD's critical networks from malicious cyberattacks and provide an important cyber resource to Governors. Our Ground-based Midcourse Defense units in Alaska, Colorado, and California protect our nation from ballistic missiles.

Last year, the National Guard supported responses to natural disasters such as Hurricanes Florence and Michael, and the wildland fires in California by

providing a myriad of services and aid to those devastated in these regions. The National Guard was there every step of the way.

Whether executing DoD support to the Department of Homeland Security's Southwest border security mission or providing support for State responses to catastrophic disasters, the National Guard meets its homeland requirements while also meeting its wartime missions in support of combatant commands.

### **STRENGTHEN ALLIANCES AND ATTRACT NEW PARTNERS:**

Alliances and partnerships provide an enduring, asymmetric strategic advantage over our competitors. Working with allies maintains the favorable balance of power that deters aggression and promotes stability and economic growth.

The DoD uses multiple tools to strengthen partnerships and alliances that include security assistance, security cooperation, military-to-military leader and staff engagement, and regional cooperation. The National Guard aligns with the joint force through these activities and adds a unique contribution through the State Partnership Program (SPP).

#### *Partnerships:*

Eighty-three countries currently participate in the SPP with more partnerships expected in 2019. The SPP is a high leverage, low-cost program with partnerships in every region of the world. It expands America's competitive space

through exchanges that extend beyond the military realm. Roughly one-third of the nations in the world are partnered with one of our 50 states, our territories, and the District of Columbia. These relationships, built on trust, the exchange of ideas, and mutual respect, served as the basis for approximately 80 co-deployments and turned many security consumers into security providers.

The SPP is a scalable and tailored approach to security cooperation. The National Guard consults and coordinates with combatant commanders, U.S. Embassies and their Country Teams, and host nations to understand the full range of issues they face. SPP events are led by respective state adjutants general who seek engagements on a broad array of interests that are beneficial to both nations. Over 950 SPP events were conducted in FY18 across all Geographic Combatant Commands. In some of these regions, the SPP is the primary tool utilized by host nations for security cooperation. Given the benefits of this program, consistent funding is critical to sustain the groundwork and momentum that have been built over the 25 years since it began.

The National Guard's emphasis on partnerships did not begin with the SPP. Our history as a state-controlled organization naturally led to partnerships with state and local agencies and their officials. Governors leverage our presence throughout the nation through multiagency integrated playbooks used for planning and responding to crises. They call the National Guard to augment their state and local emergency response to leverage military capabilities and skills gained from the warfight such as manpower, training, leadership, organization, logistics, and communications. We instinctively take a collaborative and

multiagency approach to all emergencies based on our years of working with Governors and local community partners. We remain the States' sole military force to respond to domestic incidents.

The National Guard is a community-based force where our members are an integral part of their local communities. Whether partnering with local chapters of Youth ChalleNGe where more than 170,000 at-risk teenagers have graduated since its inception in 1993, or assisting local responders after a heavy snowstorm, the National Guard reinforces the connection between the American people and their military.

#### **REFORM THE DOD FOR GREATER PERFORMANCE AND AFFORDABILITY:**

Business reform is mandated by the NDS. The National Guard helps DoD achieve greater performance and affordability by optimizing the inherent cost-savings of the National Guard and posturing our forces for predictable operational requirements. This directly supports the joint force in meeting global demands and preserves readiness in the active components.

Reforming for greater performance also includes properly organizing the National Guard to achieve mission objectives. The National Guard Bureau (NGB) is a DoD joint activity with statutes and policies codifying the roles and functions of our organization. Along with the Office of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, the NGB is comprised of the Army National Guard Directorate, the Air National Guard Directorate, and the NGB Joint Staff. The NGB operates as one entity



supporting the 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia to man, train, and equip National Guard forces to execute DoD missions worldwide. We strive to ensure unity of effort within our organization and efficiently use the resources entrusted to the National Guard. The NGB must continue its march towards reform and efficiencies.

### **CNGB'S THREE PRIORITIES:**

I have laid out three priorities to accomplish the objectives of the NDS and our three core missions of warfight, homeland, and partnerships - provide ready forces to the President and our Governors, take care of and develop our people, and promote an innovative culture.

#### *Priority #1 Readiness:*

The National Guard contributes to readiness recovery for the joint force by providing additional capacity through rotational forces. By deploying for known requirements, the National Guard enables the joint force to meet increasing global demands while reducing strain on the active components. In FY18, our Soldiers and Airmen supported DoD missions spanning every Geographic Combatant Command and utilized some of the same skills helping communities throughout the nation in responding to emergencies such as hurricanes, floods, winter storms, a volcano, and wildfires.

The Army National Guard (ARNG) is committed to providing ready forces that are warfighting-capable and Governor-responsive. In providing ready forces for the

Army and the joint force, the Army designates select ARNG formations as Focused Readiness Units that are available to rapidly deploy and conduct contingency operations. Additionally, four ARNG brigade combat teams and the units that support them will complete decisive-action training rotations at the Army's premier combat training centers. These activities occur in parallel with deployments and exercises that our Citizen-Soldiers participate in around the world. The ARNG's primary focus in FY20 is to reverse shortfalls in recruiting and ensure full-time support is fully leveraged to achieve and maintain our readiness.

The ANG is also committed to the readiness of the force, its 21<sup>st</sup> century Guard Airmen, and building for tomorrow's fight. The Air Guard provides the same levels of readiness and deployment timelines as the active duty. It exceeded its FY18 end strength goal of 106,600 with a continued focus on training and resourcing efforts that improve readiness and lethality.

Looking to the future, the ANG must modernize and recapitalize its equipment concurrently and in a balanced manner commensurate with the active duty ensuring deployability, sustainability, and interoperability across all mission sets. The Air Guard remains focused on resourcing and training lethal, resilient Guard Airmen and developing exceptional leaders.

*Priority #2 People, Families, and Employers:*

There must be a balance between the needs of Guard members' employers and the needs of the states and the nation. Striking the appropriate balance

requires training that is predictable, when possible, and deployments that leverage this training and enhance national security.

We have increased our recruiting efforts. The current economic environment requires competing against other market forces and remaining competitive through incentives in order to recruit the very best men and women.

The National Guard fosters integrity, respect, and candor within its ranks by maintaining high standards of personal conduct and bearing. We will not tolerate those who choose to act with a lack of integrity and character, nor will we accept sexual assault, sexual harassment, discrimination, and any forms of communication that degrade or demoralize unit cohesion and readiness. We provide our utmost support and care to victims of these acts.

We are also emphasizing mental health and resiliency for our units as we strive to prevent suicides. Any Soldier or Airman who takes his or her own life is one too many. First-line supervisors, battle buddies and wingmen will continue to receive the requisite training necessary to look out for fellow Soldiers and Airmen.

We must also ensure our families are aware of family readiness programs, employment assistance programs, and where to turn when they need help. Our families faithfully commit to our nation and we must ensure we remain faithful to them.

### *Priority #3 Innovation:*

The National Guard is a catalyst for DoD's innovation initiatives. Whether looking at ways to save costs through greater utilization of untapped capacity in the National Guard, or reviewing ways to expand the competitive space and increase our advantages through our SPP, DoD has many options to use the Guard as "the innovative force" to help address today's challenges.

We have dedicated resources to ensure our culture is dynamic, and forward leaning by questioning existing processes and challenging the status quo. We have to educate and empower our Guardsmen and implement innovative measures.

Our National Guard Innovation Team (NGIT) is one vehicle we use to innovate. This team leverages the talent, experience, abilities, and insight of our traditional Guardsmen enabling the Guard to integrate skill sets and join Guard members from unconnected fields that can sometimes lead to breakthroughs. This past year, the NGIT worked on issues related to communications, employer support, recruiting and retention, reform initiatives, and technology adaptation. The challenge ahead will be in the implementation of some very innovative ideas.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The operational National Guard is an integral part of the joint force and plays an important role in every aspect of our national security and defense. I am proud of the Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen who serve to protect our homeland and interests abroad. We face many challenges ahead, some in areas not seen before.

However, I am confident we will confront these challenges as we always have – through the extraordinary talents and commitment of our Guardsmen and women. We remain...Always Ready, Always There!