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MILITARY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT—HOW ARE THE MILITARY SERVICES ADAPTING TO RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND MANAGE HIGH–QUALITY TALENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A MODERN MILITARY?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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MILITARY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT—HOW ARE THE MILITARY SERVICES ADAPTING TO RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND MANAGE HIGH–QUALITY TALENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A MODERN MILITARY?

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL,
Washington, DC, Thursday, May 16, 2019.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:28 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Jackie Speier (chairwoman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACKIE SPEIER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, CHAIRWOMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

Ms. SPEIER. Good afternoon. The Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee will come to order. I would like to welcome everyone to this afternoon's hearing.

Today we will hear from the personnel chiefs from the Department and the four military services to discuss what they are doing to improve and modernize military personnel policy to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

The military personnel policy does not just involve military personnel; it also involves the family. We ask service members and their families to make sacrifices for our Nation. When they bravely step up to this task, we must only ask them to sacrifice when it is necessary—we must only ask them to sacrifice when it is necessary for our national security, not when it is required by outdated or shortsighted personnel policies. Our job is to recruit and retain service members who will allow the U.S. military to fight and win future challenges. A modern personnel system is a crucial tool in that effort.

I spent 5 days last month visiting five different military installations, talking to leadership, service members, and their spouses so I could learn firsthand what the issues are facing our service members and families. These CODELs [congressional delegations] will continue, and I invite my colleagues on the committee to join me.

There were four major issues that stood out. One was location of assignment and its impact on school-age children, especially high school age; employment for spouses who have professional careers; woefully inadequate childcare slots; and the need for more resources for sexual assault and domestic violence for service members and spouses.

The demographics of service members have changed. More of our talented service members have talented spouses who want their

own careers, want to contribute to the financial success of the family, and are starting families early in their careers.

We have a force of volunteers that deserve recruiting and retention policies that adapt with the times, not inflexible bureaucratic cultures that demand conformity without offering new solutions.

Military families are now making decisions not only based on military members' career progression but on the whole family's future. A small number of Americans serve in our Armed Forces, and they have growing expectations. Their expectations are merited, and we must meet and exceed them.

The competition for the limited talent is fierce. The Department and the services have a great amount of flexibility in determining who is qualified to serve and must continue to look at ways to open the aperture to gain access to talent.

We have a responsibility to take these problems seriously and not chalk up our system's shortcomings to the entitled needs and misplaced expectations of a new generation. Personnel policy must be shaped to respond to those currently serving, not those who commissioned during the Cold War.

It is incumbent upon leadership in DOD [Department of Defense] and Congress to listen to and learn from those we serve. And we must make greater use of modern data gathering and survey techniques to make human resources decisions like a modern corporation. I believe the services need to think creatively and beyond their current cultures about how to manage people.

The central question for today is: How are the military services adapting to recruit, retain, and manage high-quality talent to meet the needs of our modern military? I am interested to hear from our witnesses on how they gather information on what their service members value, how does that translate to policy, and what are each of you doing to incorporate the family into policies governing the career management process.

Before we introduce the first panel, let me offer Ranking Member Kelly an opportunity to make his opening remarks.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Speier can be found in the Appendix on page 41.]

STATEMENT OF HON. TRENT KELLY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSISSIPPI, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. Thank you, Chairwoman Speier.

And I wish to welcome our witnesses to today's hearing.

I also want to congratulate Vice Admiral Burke on his nomination as the next Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

We cannot overstate the central role that our service members play in making the United States the most lethal military in the world. This strategic advantage is due in large part to the high accession and retention standards that the military services have established and continue to maintain.

However, in this extremely strong economy with a record low unemployment rate and a low propensity to serve among our young people, it is not surprising that the pool of eligible applicants is extremely small. Given the challenge in the recruiting environment, it is crucial that the services leverage every tool available to under-

stand what motivates qualified individuals to serve in the military and stay.

In addition, once qualified applicants are recruited into the military, it is essential that the services efficiently and effectively identify and retain the most talented of those service members. To that end, Congress has given significant additional authorities to the Defense Department to ensure that they have the flexibility to recruit and retain a talented, competitive, and lethal force.

However, before making additional changes to personnel management, we need to clearly understand the problem. Our previous hearing on the topic with outside experts reinforced the premise that we need to clearly understand why service members are electing to get out of the military and to understand what would have kept them in the service.

The Defense Department already has much of the data necessary to answer these questions, but I remain concerned that the Department is not maximizing their use of this information in order to make informed policy decisions.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the current efforts to effectively retain qualified service members. Specifically, what data do the services use to understand what motivates service members to remain in the service?

In addition, I am interested to hear what additional policy changes the services have made to the evaluation system, promotion system, and assignment system to identify and retain talent.

I am also interested to understand this year's end-strength request and what those numbers will buy us in terms of readiness. Will the requested end-strength increases simply round down existing units, or will it allow the services to populate additional units or platforms? I am interested to hear about the services' goals for end-strength increases over the next 5 years.

Finally, I believe family services are directly related to retention. The old adage is true: You recruit the soldier, but you retain the family.

I am particularly concerned about the severe shortage of quality military childcare. Recent statistics we have received from the Department reveal that there are several installations where the average wait time for on-installation childcare is in excess of 180 days. This is problematic not just for working families but also for spouses who are hoping to look for work. If they have limited access to childcare, how can they seek employment? This is unacceptable, and I would like to know what the services are doing to ensure families are receiving the support they need, including meaningful access to childcare.

Once again, I want to thank our witnesses and our chairperson for being here today and for their decades of service.

And I yield back, Chair.

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, Ranking Member Kelly.

Each witness will have the opportunity to present his or her testimony, and each member will have an opportunity to question the witnesses for 5 minutes.

We respectfully ask the witnesses to summarize their testimony in 5 minutes or less. Your written comments and statements will be made part of the hearing record.

Let's welcome our panel.

First, the Honorable James Stewart, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Department of Defense.

Welcome.

Lieutenant General Thomas Seamands, Deputy Chief of Staff for United States Army.

Vice Admiral Robert Burke, Chief of Naval Personnel, United States Navy. And I, too, would like to recognize that this will be Admiral Burke's last opportunity to testify before our subcommittee in this capacity.

Congratulations on your nomination to be Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Next, we will hear from Lieutenant General Brian Kelly, Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel, and Services in the United States Air Force.

And finally, Lieutenant General Michael Rocco, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, United States Marine Corps.

With that, Secretary Stewart, you may begin with your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES N. STEWART, PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. STEWART. Thank you, Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am honored to appear here before you today to discuss how the Department of Defense recruits, retains, and manages our high-quality talent to meet the needs of our Nation.

The Department is committed to the effective total force management, leveraging Active and Reserve military forces, civilian personnel, and contractors. To be effective, this effort must be long term in scope and vision and must always be focused on our service members who are at the tip of the spear.

The military services have sustained the All-Volunteer Force by recruiting the best and brightest from across the Nation. The services are on track to achieve their recruiting missions this year, but they continue to face an ever-changing recruiting environment. A robust economy, low unemployment, and significant competition from the civilian sector have highlighted and tightened today's recruiting environment.

Today, only 29 percent of our American youth are eligible for military service without a waiver, and only 2 percent are eligible, high-quality, and propensed to serve. So the Department is employing new and innovative tools to attract this group.

To reach a more technologically savvy generation, the Department is leveraging social media and other relevant technologies. We have launched an integrated digital marketing campaign targeting not only young people but those who influence them the

most—those parents, teachers, coaches, and other people in their lives who play a key role in the decision to join the military.

Our Joint Advertising, Market Research, and Studies program, or JAMRS, folks have produced several 30-second commercial spots that appeal to all segments of our society, while utilizing artificial intelligence to analyze information, allowing us to reach audiences when they will be most receptive to DOD messaging.

The Department and military services have varied outreach and marketing efforts to reach the widest audience, including specific activities targeted to reach talented women and minorities, because we rely on diverse backgrounds and perspectives to address the complex challenges facing our Nation today.

In order to manage this diverse All-Volunteer Force, we appreciate the officer management authorities you provided in the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act. These authorities give the military services new and flexible tools in the management and retention of the officer corps.

And speaking of retention, military services are each exhibiting strong retention in the aggregate, and they expect to meet or exceed retention goals this year. In fact, the Army and the Air Force are seeing retention rates of 90 percent or more, rates that have not been evidenced in decades.

Achieving and maintaining these retention rates is only possible if you take care of the member and their family. We like to say that you recruit the member but retain the family. We know that a commitment to the military often entails sacrifices, so we are making every effort to support our military families in ways that recognize and relieve the challenges that come with the military way of life.

Authorities you granted in the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, allowing families to occupy two sets of quarters in different locations while retaining the higher basic allowance for housing, eases the burdens and disruptions of PCS [permanent change of station] moves and allows for more stability for the members, especially those with children in schools or for spouses with jobs.

Concerning spouses, we know that 24 percent of military spouses are unemployed or underemployed. Supporting military spouses in their employment leads to family readiness and financial stability. That is why career counseling, finding employment opportunities, and supporting our highly successful scholarship program, My Career Advancement Account, are important.

Also important is occupational license portability, which will allow spouses to transfer professional licenses and credentials from State to State. The Department of Defense's State Liaison Office has successfully worked with the States to streamline license transfer processing and continues to work with interagency and State partners to expedite or exempt professional licensing requirements for military spouses.

Quality childcare is extremely important for our military families as well. The Department is working hard to provide high-quality, affordable childcare to our service members. We recognize the importance and impact on family readiness and are committed to meeting the increased demand for childcare services.

Our rollout of militarychildcare.com allows families to register for childcare in advance of a move or before the new addition of a child to a family. Constructing new and refurbishing existing facilities, along with streamlining human capital practices, will facilitate the Department's ability to meet our service members' childcare needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and for your dedication and support that you have given to the Department. I am eager to continue our work together to ensure that we remain the most powerful fighting force in the world while sustaining and empowering military families who support our men and women in uniform.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stewart can be found in the Appendix on page 43.]

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you.

Next, we have General Seamands.

STATEMENT OF LTG THOMAS C. SEAMANDS, USA, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G–1, UNITED STATES ARMY

General SEAMANDS. Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the women and men of the United States Army.

I have submitted a statement for the record, but I would like to highlight a few of the points now.

The Army's greatest strength is our people, the intelligent, adaptable, professional soldiers, civilians, and families who sacrifice so much for our Nation. We take care of our people by ensuring that our personnel policies are relevant, compassionate, and focused on readiness. Manning is truly the keystone in the archway of readiness and is vital to our Army's ability to fight and win our Nation's wars.

To maintain readiness and to shape the future Army, we must recruit diverse, resilient individuals of high character to fully man our formations while obtaining sustainable growth and maintaining quality standards.

Further, we must recruit in a competitive market. The Army must also continue to retain the most qualified and talented soldiers, noncommissioned officers, commissioned officers, and civilians with the experience and skills to meet our future needs.

Retention of the family is just as important as retention of the soldier. Thanks to you—I would like to echo the comments of Mr. Stewart for the work you did on the 2018 NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act]—we now have in place the authority to reimburse spouses for licensing and credentialing when they change stations based on their soldier's move.

Taking care of family remains our top priority. Thanks to your efforts in the 2018 NDAA, we are taking steps to improve our quality-of-life programs across our installations. These areas include enhancements for our dependents' educations, childcare programs, hiring authorities, as well as improvements to family support and readiness.

Thank you for the authorities, as well, in the 2019 NDAA which provided us greater flexibility in our personnel management. We are beginning to use the authorities granted to help shape the future talent base system. As such, we are transforming our business practices and developing innovations to ensure we provide a force that is optimized. We have created a marketplace of officers where officers and units meet, find optimal ways to match talent, personal and professional goals, while enhancing readiness.

The Army is undertaking a comprehensive reform of our Officer Personnel Management System to ensure we match the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of each soldier and getting them into the right position. The Army is moving away from an industrial-age personnel distribution system to an information-age market-based model. The new system will deliberately manage our soldiers based on optimized placement in positions that capitalize on their unique talents.

The Army remains committed to giving all soldiers who can meet the standards of a military occupational specialty the opportunity to serve. We have successfully assessed and transferred more than a thousand women into previously closed occupations of infantry, armor, and field artillery.

Department of the Army civilians are an integral partner in our efforts to become more lethal, enhancing our capability and capacity and ensuring critical support to our soldiers and families. We must continue to size our civilian workforce to meet the current and future demands.

The Integrated Pay and Personnel System–Army, IPPS–A, is modernizing and transforming our human resources processes as I speak to change how the Army manages our most important asset, our people. We recently completed a very successful test of IPPS–A with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. The system is now live in Virginia and will soon be live in DC and Maryland National Guard. This year, we will field the system across all our Army National Guard formations.

To ensure that we are organizationally ready for combat, we must sustain the personnel readiness of our soldiers. The Army is improving personnel readiness by strengthening our soldiers, improving resiliency skills, and fostering a culture of trust, fitness, and deployability. We believe these actions will enhance unit readiness, cohesion, and reduce the number of nondeployable soldiers.

In addition to taking care of soldiers and their families while they are in the Army, we are committed to ensuring their successful transition as they prepare for life after the service. Ultimately, we want soldiers to properly transition to productive veterans of character, integrity, and service as they return to their communities.

Our Army is the most formidable ground combat force on Earth because of the courage and commitment of our soldiers, civilians, veterans, and family members who serve our Nation. People are the Army. These men and women who serve our Nation, both in uniform and out, along with their families, are our most important asset. For the Army to be ready, our soldiers and families must also be ready.

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for your generous and unwavering support of our outstanding soldiers and civilians and their families.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Seamands can be found in the Appendix on page 57.]

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you.

Vice Admiral Burke.

STATEMENT OF VADM ROBERT P. BURKE, USN, CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL, UNITED STATES NAVY

Admiral BURKE. Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today and update you on your Navy's personnel programs.

We continue to grow the Navy's manpower commensurate with the force structure for the Navy the Nation needs. We are simultaneously working to restore full manning to our existing fleet. This year, we will grow the Navy by 7,500 people and another 5,100 next year. Our fleet wholeness continues to improve, as evidenced by steady progress in improving fleet manning and closing gaps at sea even as we are growing the Navy at this aggressive pace.

We still have work to do, and our success is directly tied to our collective commitment to consistent and full funding. Finding the right people is as important as making the numbers. The war for talent, as you have heard already, is real, and the competition is increasing.

We continue to make our overall recruiting goals, the highest in decades, mostly due to our recruiting transformation efforts, innovative use of social media, and by shifting our "Forged by the Sea" advertising campaign predominantly to the digital market.

A combination of our Sailor 2025 programs, surgical use of retention bonuses, which have been aided by predictive analytics, and other policy levers resulted in 2018 showing the largest enlisted retention improvements in a decade. This is critical as it has allowed us to establish the deep bench of experienced journeymen we are going to need to develop that next generation of masters.

Despite overall improvements in retention, we continue to face challenges in the usual critical areas.

Our Sailor 2025 initiatives continue to expand and get high marks from our sailors. This program will be a critical force multiplier going forward. The underlying transparency and the flexibility it provides directly and positively impacts our sailors' "stay Navy" decision.

We greatly appreciated the increased DOPMA [Defense Officer Personnel Management Act] flexibility provided in the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, and we are already putting each of the new authorities to work. And we look forward to reporting our successes to you in the near future.

But as important as the programs themselves is the manner in which we deliver our personnel services. It has been said several times already today, and it is true: You recruit the sailor, but you

retain the family. And what we ask of our sailors and their families is tremendous.

But if we do a poor job of delivering basic services to them, like pay and travel claim liquidation, or we pile additional financial stress onto an already stressful event like a move because of our unimaginative processes, that sends a signal to our sailors and families that we just don't care. Our customer service is clearly a key retention driver.

So we are on a path to deliver personnel services in a modern, simple, one-stop-shopping mobile-device-enabled manner with friendly, reliable call centers available 24/7 to help with the complex issues. That is what our sailors expect and deserve. And, yes, it is IT [information technology] systems, to a degree, but, more importantly, it is better, smarter, sailor-centric processes in a culture of customer service.

So this past September, we launched My Navy Career Center, delivering enhanced 24/7 personnel pay and training customer service, just like a modern banking or insurance call center. My Navy Portal is our new online, one-stop personnel shop, and it offers a multitude of self-service options.

In January, we began the move to My Navy Portal Mobile, piloting the use of commercial cloud systems without the use of—allowing sailors to access these systems without the use of their Common Access Card. By the end of this calendar year, our sailors will be doing most personnel business from their smartphones. And even the admin associated with PCS moves, one of the most frustrating evolutions all of us in uniform do, will be an afterthought so that families can concentrate on what matters most.

The other angle that we are tackling is the changing nature of our workforce. Sixty-seven percent of our officers and over half of our enlisted sailors are married, and many of them are dual-professional couples. We have to address that reality if we are going to retain the family. And we launched multiple efforts within our Sailor 2025 portfolio to start to get after that.

We have challenges that remain, and we still have a great deal of work to get to where we need to be if we are going to be truly competitive, but we are on a good path.

And I would like to close by saying thank you for your support of these efforts and for your unwavering commitment to the men and women of the United States Navy and their families. I look forward to continuing our partnership, and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Burke can be found in the Appendix on page 71.]

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, Admiral Burke.

Next, Lieutenant General Kelly.

STATEMENT OF LT GEN BRIAN T. KELLY, USAF, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR MANPOWER, PERSONNEL, AND SERVICES, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

General KELLY. Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to talk about our airmen—Active,

Guard, Reserve, and civilian. America's airmen, your airmen, remain always there as part of the joint team, providing global vigilance, reach, and power in defense of the Nation.

The Air Force's top priority is to build a lethal and ready Air Force capable of executing the National Defense Strategy-assigned missions. At its core, building a lethal and ready Air Force is about people, making our airmen and their families our most important asset. We therefore thank you for focusing this hearing on how we manage, recruit, take care of, and retain our airmen and families, particularly so to meet the needs of a modern military.

We greatly appreciate your support that you provided in the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act for continued end-strength growth to 690,500 total force airmen. This growth is accelerating our readiness recovery and will provide lethal airmen to protect and defend our Nation.

This past year, we focused the resources you provided on our frontline pacing units, the 204 operational squadrons required in the opening days of a peer fight. Prioritizing the resources you provided has allowed more than 90 percent of the lead packages to be ready to fight tonight, with 80 percent of the fleet pacing units fully ready by the end of fiscal year 2020, 6 years faster than originally projected.

The fiscal year 2020 requested growth to 700,000 total force airmen continues our readiness recovery, augments existing capacity in our space and cyber mission areas, and provides the initial maintenance and operational manpower needed for the KC–46, F–35, and B–21.

Despite an increasingly competitive market for talent, our Active Duty, Reserve, and Air National Guard are all on track to meet our overall fiscal year 2019 recruiting goals.

However, with an understanding of the keen competition for talent, the Air Force has recently established a total force recruiting service effort responsible for recruiting and coordinating efforts across all three components. As part of this effort, we recently assigned a one-star Reserve general officer as the Deputy Commander of the Air Force Recruiting Service.

We have also established two focused recruiting entities, one whose focus is to outreach to youth to increase awareness around opportunities within our underrepresented diverse populations, and the second whose job is to specifically scout, recruit, and prepare airmen for special warfare career fields. Both entities have shown promise during this year.

This tough recruiting market, coupled with the high investments we make in training, places an even greater value on retaining our airmen and our families. We therefore appreciate the Congress' support of special incentive pays, which are a critical component to complement our non-monetary retention incentives. The fiscal year 2019 budget included $1.2 billion for special incentive pays, allowing the Air Force to retain highly skilled airmen.

Our overall retention picture is positive, although we have acute pockets where we are particularly stressed, including among our aviators. The Air Force ended fiscal year 2018 with a total force pilot shortfall of approximately 2,000 pilots, with slightly more than half of that shortfall within our fighter inventory. We appre-

ciate the Congress support for increasing the pilot annual cap and monthly incentive pay levels, which we believe had a mildly positive impact this past year.

Overall, we find non-monetary programs even more important to retention and, therefore, remain focused on improving the life of and quality of service of our airmen and their families.

Responding to survey data from members and spouses, we added flexibility into the officer assignment process by leveraging technology through our new Talent Marketplace assignment matching system. We believe the increased transparency and improved member input will have a positive retention influence.

We are expanding the system to our enlisted force and testing it to identify airmen for yearlong deployments. We are also executing family moves in accordance with the Family Stability Act and are utilizing high school deferments to provide some relief from the burdens of frequent moves to our airmen and families.

The Air Force is also committed to transforming the way we develop, promote, and retain our officer corps. We thank the Congress for the increased DOPMA authorities received this past year and are utilizing early promotion and constructive credit already to fill gaps in our inventory.

With your help, we also increased support to airmen and families for resiliency. We increased funding for child and youth programs by $40 million, added 119 civilian childcare positions, increased offsets to support the 4,500 children who annually use off-base providers, and funded youth resilience camps.

We also know spouse employment is essential to family retention. Earlier this week, our Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs signed out our policy implementing license reimbursement associated with permanent change of station for our spouses. The Air Force also remains committed to continued work in granting reciprocal licensing between States and adding increased employment flexibilities for our overseas spouses.

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and represent our incredible airmen and their families. Your airmen stand ready and fully understand their responsibilities to the joint force and the Nation.

I am honored to be here alongside my colleagues, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Kelly can be found in the Appendix on page 85.]

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, General Kelly.

Now we will hear from General Rocco.

STATEMENT OF LTGEN MICHAEL A. ROCCO, USMC, DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

General ROCCO. Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the high-quality Marines who make up the Corps.

Your Marines are the foundation of the Marine Corps. They are smart, resilient, fit, disciplined, and able to overcome adversity. Re-

cruiting and retaining these high-quality women and men is my number one priority.

This year, the Corps will once again meet our recruiting mission, while at the same time exceeding all quality goals. Over 99 percent of our recruits are in the top education tier. This success would not be possible without adequate funding for advertising, and I thank you for your support in this effort.

The Corps is also on pace to meet our retention goals this year. However, this is a continuous challenge because of the strong civilian job market. This is particularly true for cyber, intelligence, aviators, and many of the other critical high-tech occupations. To be good stewards of the money you provide us, we narrowly target our incentive pays and bonuses to these occupations. These bonuses are vital to our retention effort, and we appreciate your continued support for them.

To improve recruiting and retention, we are in the midst of executing a new survey, an AI [artificial intelligence]-focused talent management line of effort. The goal of this effort is to utilize data to better determine and predict retention and performance behaviors. We believe this effort will bear fruit in the near future.

The Marine Corps is an objective standards-based organization. We want the best Marines, female and male, and have refocused and refined our outreach to ensure we bring awareness of what it means to be a Marine to a broader audience. This has paid dividends. Five years ago, the Marine Corps was 7.3 percent female. We are now 8.8 percent. In fiscal year 2018, female accessions were over 10 percent of the population, and we are on that same trajectory this year. Additionally, females are represented in all previously restricted occupational fields. We need the best our Nation offers, and we are getting them.

We appreciate the recent officer management authorities that you provided in the fiscal year 2019 NDAA. They seek to help modernize how we manage our Marines, with the goal of recruiting and retaining the highest quality talent.

Increasingly, warfighting is becoming more sophisticated, technical, and complex. Cyber operations, information and electronic warfare, enhanced command and control, and intelligence are examples of critical skills we will need for the future fight.

We are in the process of implementing lineal list flexibility based on merit for our officer corps for many promotion boards scheduled to occur in 2019. We believe that allowing the promotion board the discretion to reorder by merit will reward those high-quality officers who demonstrate sustained superior performance.

The adage that we recruit the Marine but retain the family was never more true than today. To this end, we are focusing significant effort on helping our Marine spouses gain further education and obtain and maintain employment. We are finalizing our policy to provide up to $500 towards licensing and certification costs when a Marine spouse moves to another State.

I am proud to represent the men and women of character, the few, the proud, who have taken up the challenge of being a Marine. By keeping unwavering focus on our Marines and the spouses and families who support them, we can continue to keep faith with the honor, courage, and commitment they have so freely given.

I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Rocco can be found in the Appendix on page 101.]

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, General Rocco.

First of all, let me just say how impressed I am that you have recognized the importance of the family in addition to the service member. And I think that bodes well as we attempt to retain service members over the long term.

Let me start with a lightning round of questions. I am going to ask each of the services the same questions, if you could just go down the line.

The first question I have is, what is your waiting list for childcare, and how long is the wait? For each of you.

General SEAMANDS. Madam Chairman, it varies from location to location. In some cases, it is, as was cited earlier, over 100 days, in places like Hawaii where the cost of living is a little higher and it is harder to attract people. In some cases, it is a very nominal wait list, depending on, I think, the workforce as well as the space.

Ms. SPEIER. Well, that is actually not a great answer. So I would like for you to give me something that is more data-driven. When we were at Fort Bragg and meeting with the spouses, that was a serious complaint, that they had to wait over a year in some cases. So I think we need granular data from each of you if you don't have it.

Admiral Burke.

Admiral BURKE. Yes, ma'am. We have just over 8,000 personnel on wait list right now. About 2,000 of them are in excess of 180 days, you know, just over 6 months there. And we continue to work on means to expand our capacity.

Ms. SPEIER. Okay.

General Kelly.

General KELLY. Chairwoman, I will take the discussion, as you said, for more granular data to provide you, but what I will provide to you now is, as General Seamands said, it varies by bases. We have some bases with absolutely no waiting list, and we have some others who are upwards of 140 days.

And those key areas would be Langley Air Force Base for sure, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska as two that come to mind and which are also problematic in that there is not a lot of off-base childcare available at those locations as well.

Ms. SPEIER. Okay.

Yes?

General ROCCO. Chairwoman Speier, for the Marine Corps, we have 800 gaps, just over 800 gaps in childcare. Those are primarily located at Camp Pendleton, Hawaii, and Quantico. The wait list is about, on average, for those three bases, 6 months. At any of the other bases, we don't have a problem.

And the issue is not about space. It is about having qualified workers, the licensing, the high turnover. So we have an area like Camp Pendleton, southern California. They come on, they get licensed. It takes a little bit of time to get their license. They get their credentials. They are paid at the rate that we can pay them. And then, because they are credentialed in such a high-income

area, they find some childcare off-base and get paid a lot more money.

So, again, it is Camp Pendleton, Hawaii, and Quantico, and it is about 800 bed spaces.

Thank you.

Ms. SPEIER. All right. Thank you.

I am going to give a shout-out to the Navy, which seems to have done a great job in some of these issue areas.

Let's start with what is called the Career Intermission Program. At least, that is what the Navy calls it. Do each of you have one of those that gives your service members up to 3 years to take a sabbatical?

General SEAMANDS. Madam Chairman, the Army does have a program. We have about 40 people in the program—officer and enlisted.

Ms. SPEIER. And how long?

General SEAMANDS. It varies. In some cases, it is a year. It is up to the service member in terms of how long they want to go. Some, it is up to 3 years. In fact, one of the members went off to get their law degree and took the full 3 years. So it varies. Another member went off to get a scuba license to be a scuba instructor at some point.

So it depends on how long they want. It could be up to 3 years. I can get you more granularity.

Ms. SPEIER. Is that automatic?

General SEAMANDS. It is. We have approved all the requests that have come in for the amount of time the soldiers have asked.

Ms. SPEIER. All right.

And, Admiral Burke, you have one, right?

Admiral BURKE. Yes, ma'am. We have had 217 sailors use it. We have had right around 125, 130 or so sailors come full circle, complete their intermission. About 90 of those came up on a subsequent reenlistment. They reenlisted. A lot of sailors tell us they would not have stayed in or been able to reenlist had they not had that opportunity to take that sabbatical and achieve the life-work balance objectives that they were after.

Ms. SPEIER. General Kelly.

General KELLY. Yes, ma'am, we have the same program. We have been in year four now of that program. We have over 200 members who have entered in that program. Some have come back full circle, as Admiral Burke said.

We interviewed six of those folks who came back this last year. All have decided, based on their CIP [Career Intermission Program] experience, to stay with and made a decision to stay and retain with the Air Force.

Our program is about 56 percent female and about 44 percent male right now.

Ms. SPEIER. All right.

General Rocco.

General ROCCO. Yes, ma'am. We have 11 people in the program. We have had four that completed the program, two that came back into the Marine Corps and two that went to an interservice transfer.

Ms. SPEIER. Okay.

We have a high percentage of unintended pregnancies in the military. The Navy has a very good program in terms of providing information on contraception, particularly long-term contraception. I am curious if the other services have a similar program.

General Seamands.

General SEAMANDS. Chairwoman, I will take that for the record. I am not sure.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 113.]

Ms. SPEIER. Okay.

Anything you would like to add on that, Admiral Burke?

Admiral BURKE. We start it during our life skills course—that is the first thing that all our sailors go to right after boot camp—and kind of give them an education on everything to do with pregnancy and parenthood and impacts on careers and other things like that. And then we reinforce it continually throughout the career points.

I think that is about it, ma'am.

Ms. SPEIER. Okay.

General Kelly.

General KELLY. So, Madam Chairwoman, we have programs for basic education at basic training and initial skills training. I will get you specific on how those works.

I can tell you that we also put in place a program that allowed pregnant airmen to make a decision, defer a decision until after they had a chance to talk to mentors, talk to others who had been in their—understood the resources that were available. We did that with an eye towards retention, and we have seen some improvements in retention. Where we used to force them to make the decision prior to the delivery of the child, now they have up to a year after that to make the decision.

Ms. SPEIER. All right.

General Rocco.

General ROCCO. The education starts at boot camp. It is something that they can elect to attend and get educated or get some training and some classes at boot camp.

Ms. SPEIER. All right. I encourage you all to look at the Navy's program, because they have a lower—much lower rate of unintended pregnancies.

Finally, do any of you provide in vitro services?

General SEAMANDS. Madam Chair, I believe we do, but I will take that for the record to confirm.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 113.]

Ms. SPEIER. All right.

Admiral Burke.

Admiral BURKE. I don't believe that we do.

General KELLY. Yeah, I will take it for the record as well. We know of some members who have done it, but I will have to get back on the official stats, ma'am.

General ROCCO. And, ma'am, I would like to take that for the record.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 116.]

Ms. SPEIER. All right. Great.

With that, I will offer my ranking member his opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. Thank you, Chairwoman Speier.

You know, I have a continued focus on our Gold Star families and how we best serve those survivors of our Gold Star—of our warriors who die in combat. And I think that is really important overall, because we fight best when we know that our family and loved ones are taken care of. So I would just ask that you continue to keep that in mind as we go forward.

The Department of Defense has an enormous amount of data related to service members, their families, and their backgrounds. How are each of the services, real quickly, leveraging the information to better understand service members' motivations for staying in the military or leaving the military?

And we will start with you, General.

General SEAMANDS. Ranking Member Kelly, thank you for the question.

We do have a number of surveys and some data that is out there. I would say one of the top reasons people tend to leave the Active and the Reserve force is civilian opportunities on the outside. At least that is the survey indication we get. With the economy doing what it is, unemployment less than 4 percent, there is a significant draw beyond.

Having said that, sir, for officer retention and NCO [non-commissioned officer] retention, we are at record highs in terms of people continuing to stay.

Admiral BURKE. Sir, we do a number of surveys as well. In addition to the traditional exit surveys, we have developed career milestone surveys for the sailors that are staying in. That is as important as finding out why people are leaving. And then we have also developed command climate-oriented but very targetable surveys that individual commands can tailor quickly and do frequently that we are calling pulse surveys. So there are a number of survey techniques.

But, most recently, throughout our personnel system transformation and as part of our ongoing Sailor 2025 efforts, we have developed what we are calling fleet integration teams. And they go out and basically hold focus groups with sailors, spouses, family groups.

An example, we went out—we took a 2-month period a year ago, went out across the fleet to understand the pain points associated with PCS moves. And we came up with 16 independent solutions, 2 of which we are about to put into motion here very shortly, to significantly ease the burdens of making PCS travel moves. And that is how we are, you know, getting the ideas that fuel the Sailor 2025 programs.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And, General, I am going to stop here. If you guys can provide that for the record, because I want to make sure—mining of the data and getting the right data is very, very important.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 117.]

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And, General Kelly, this question will be for you.

And then I will get to you, General.

Many of the personnel reforms we have discussed in the past have included plans to increase permeability between the Active and Reserve Components. What are your views on the need for this, and what has been done in the Air Force?

And, specifically, I want to talk mostly Air Force and Army on this, the permeability between National Guard, Reserve, and Active Component.

General KELLY. Sir, as you know, our modern use in the military for our Reserve Components, both our National Guard and Reserve, is as an operational force, no longer a strategic force. That means the permeability and our ability to manage as a total force has increased tremendously over time.

We have several programs where we allow folks to move back and forth. We have a program called the Voluntary Limited Period of Active Duty, where the Reserve and Guard members serve on Active Duty for up to 3 years, and we have transition programs.

Where I would tell you we fall short and we could use help is: The ability to move easily between requires appointment sometimes, especially on the officer side, requires reappointment as you move between components. In a modern force that uses the Air Reserve Components in an operational fashion, we would like to see us get to a place where we have an appointment authority that allows us to move much quicker and much easier between those components.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. General Seamands.

General SEAMANDS. Representative Kelly, I would echo General Kelly's comments. I think the biggest improvement we could do is to make it much easier to transfer back. We talk a lot about continuum of service, and if we want to encourage people to go between the Active, Guard, and Reserve, we need to make it easier for them and their families.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. General Rocco, this is for you. We have repeatedly heard that there are severe shortages on installation childcare. In many cases, military spouses are not able to even look for outside employment without meaningful access to childcare. What can the Marine Corps do to fix this?

Because most military spouses, either husbands or wives, sacrifice a career for a job. So they do a job until their spouse retires, and then they are able to maintain their career. So what are we doing to fix this, General Rocco?

General ROCCO. Representative Kelly, thank you for that question. So I fully agree; lack of childcare impacts unit readiness, whether it is on the spouse or whether it is on the member who has to worry about their child in an appropriate child development center.

So, to that point, I would say that we need to help streamline the licensing process. And as I answered Chairwoman Speier's question about child development, our shortage is not in actual spaces, it is not installations. It is the actual folks that watch the children and the licensing and the requirements. So, one, the licensing requirements, I think, is onerous.

Number two, I think when you get to areas—and, again, Hawaii, southern California, and Quantico in northern Virginia, those areas

have child development centers outside, obviously, in the civilian market. So we spend a lot of time getting these folks licensed and get their credentials up, and then they immediately find some higher paying jobs out in the civilian market. So we need the freedom to pay the market value or the market rate for these folks that are in these high-priced areas.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And I want the answers from you all if you all will do those in writing and submit those.

[The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And final question. And I want each of you to answer this, and do it pretty quickly and succinct because we have other people.

For each of the services, what would the requested end-strength increases in fiscal year 2020 be used for? And what increases to end strength do you anticipate needing in the next 5 years?

And I will start with you, General.

General SEAMANDS. Representative Kelly, thank you very much. We anticipate 2 years' measured growth of quality accessions to grow the force, primarily initially to fill the formations, make sure they are ready to go, and beyond that, to build structure.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. Admiral.

Admiral BURKE. Yes, sir. Our end strength is all to do with force structure improvements. So 7,500 this year, and then it is a rough 5,000 increase per year out across the FYDP [Future Years Defense Program]. And that will take us from our present 288 ships out to 314, which is in the fiscal year 2020 plan.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. General.

General KELLY. Our growth for this year is 4,400 for the military—3,700 Active Duty, 700 in the Reserve Component.

It is a combination of continuing to improve our readiness and resiliency and increasing capacity and capability, to include, as I mentioned in the opening statement, adding maintainers ahead of time and operators ahead of time, anticipating the force structure growth for KC–46, F–35, and B–21.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. General.

General ROCCO. The Marine Corps growth is modest. It is 400 over the FYDP—100 this year and 300 through the rest of the FYDP. And it has to do specifically with providing special operations critical skill enablers; so radiomen, logisticians.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And just one comment. You guys, Hawaii and the other places, we have joint bases at most of those things. And I can't believe that we have—you four guys get together, and let's jointly fix this childcare problem. It is not an Army problem, it is not a Navy problem, it is not a Marine Corps problem. Let's fix it together.

And, with that, I yield back, Chairwoman.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentleman yields back.

Mrs. Luria, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LURIA. Well, thank you.

And thank you for being here today.

I am going to focus in on one service and one particular aspect of that service. I recently reviewed the fiscal year 2020 Navy Active Duty Aviation Commander Command Screening Board results, and

one statistic jumped out at me. The selection rate for women to commander command was 3.8 percent, or 7 out of 146 who were selected. Another way to say that is that 96.2 percent of all aviators selected for command in that year group were men. Additionally, only one woman of color was selected for command.

And then when you look at the aviation major command results, they were even more stark. Only 1.8 percent of those selected were women, and zero were women of color.

It also doesn't appear within those selection board results, from what I could tell, that any VFA [strike fighter] or VAQ [electronic attack] selectees—so fighter aircraft selectees—were women.

Admiral Burke, I was wondering if you could comment why the aviation command selection rate for women was and continues to be so low.

Admiral BURKE. Yeah. Thank you, Representative Luria, for that question.

I would start by saying that our enlisted population is——

Mrs. LURIA. I just would like to focus on women and officers. Thank you.

Admiral BURKE. Okay. Our enlisted population is more racially diverse than our Nation. Our officer population, in general, is not. And our aviation community, in particular, tends to be less diverse. But——

Mrs. LURIA. Is that at accession point, at commissioning, or are you talking about over time?

Admiral BURKE. And as we have recruited throughout the years, our diversity numbers have improved across the board in every community.

But what you are seeing right now, especially at the command and major command selection boards, are the result of what we were recruiting 20 or 25 years ago, depending on which board you were talking about——

Mrs. LURIA. No, this was year group 2005, so 14 years ago. And the Combat Exclusion Act was lifted in 1994. So women have, for much longer than that, 10 years since then, had the opportunity to serve their careers since the beginning of their career in combatant roles, much like I did in surface warfare.

So if we are 10 years past lifting the Combat Exclusion Act and then those women have had the same opportunities across the course of their career, how are we at the point that only 3.8 percent—this is just one community, one year group—were selected for commander command and 1.8 percent for major command?

Admiral BURKE. Again, it is law of small numbers, where—you know, we have to improve in this area. It is an absolutely critical area, because diversity obviously makes us stronger. It gives us better answers, better solutions.

But here is where the issue is. You know, we look very hard at the promotion boards, we look very hard at what we are recruiting, bringing in the front door, and our efforts to do that, and I could talk to you about that. But the area we haven't done well enough on is what goes on in between those boards—and that is a retention factor—what is the environment that is driving women to leave so that they are not around to be able to promote to that——

Mrs. LURIA. Can I pause——

Admiral BURKE [continuing]. Command opportunity or be selected for it.

Mrs. LURIA. We are limited on time, so I would like to pause. And I would like the five of you to look across the table at each other.

Admiral BURKE. Same phenomenon, though. How many——

Mrs. LURIA. And——

Admiral BURKE. How many do we retain to be eligible, that is the point, ma'am.

Mrs. LURIA. So, you know, no one——

Admiral BURKE. We have to manage——

Mrs. LURIA [continuing]. In the role of command——

Admiral BURKE. We have to manage that talent.

Mrs. LURIA [continuing]. Maybe personnel command, has ever been a woman?

So I would like to focus on that. So, in the 2004 to 2006 year group, which is the year group in this one particular command screening board, there were 13.6 women assessed. So I agree with you that the problem is retention. And what percentage of officers do you plan to commission this year are women?

Admiral BURKE. Roughly 25 percent.

Mrs. LURIA. So 25 percent as women. So that is an improvement, but, you know, really, statistically, it seems to be quite a jump. Because if I look at the numbers between—I don't have the numbers here, but, basically, in 2000 it was 14.7 percent, and in 2016 it was 18 percent. So in the course of 16 years, we only jumped approximately 3.3 percent.

Admiral BURKE. That is total inventory——

Mrs. LURIA. So we haven't——

Admiral BURKE. Yeah. Our accessions for the last 4 years have averaged at right around 25 percent women.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay. And is that reflected in all commissioning sources, the Naval Academy as well as ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] and OCS [Officer Candidate School]?

Admiral BURKE. It is.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay.

So, you know, you mentioned a couple times that you have been given additional authorities through last year's NDAA to improve with retention. And are those things that you are specifically analyzing and focusing on with women and also women's input throughout their service across the career milestone gates as to how you can use those tools effectively?

Admiral BURKE. Absolutely. We have to create career paths that all, you know, candidates, women and men alike, can see themselves both growing professionally and personally. And they have to meet their life goals as well as their career goals. So, you know, the ability to have some life-work balance, the ability to start and raise a family if that is a goal, whether you are a man or a woman, that has to be part of the formula.

And DOPMA, as it was before the fiscal year 2019 NDAA, really pressurized career paths, especially in our aviation community and especially in the two communities you singled out earlier, our TACAIR [tactical air] air communities. If you didn't go immediately

into an aviation production job, you wouldn't meet the next milestone, you wouldn't meet the next statutory promotion opportunity.

So the flexibilities you have given us, the opportunity to opt out of promotion, the opportunity to build up-and-stay career paths, those are very specific examples of where we are building those pieces in, to give places to do something different, achieve that life-work balance, and then come back and get back on the treadmill without penalty to that upward mobility, whether it is command or——

Mrs. LURIA. So have any of the——

Ms. SPEIER. Excuse me. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you.

Ms. SPEIER. Ms. Escobar is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you, Madam Chair.

To all of our panelists, thank you so much for your service. Thank you for being here.

General Seamands, it is good to see you again. I really appreciated our time together in the office yesterday and you answering some of my questions during our meeting.

I wanted to follow up on something that we discussed regarding making sure that spouses have opportunities for employment in the communities where they are living in. And one of the things I shared with you was not just the licensing issue, but hopefully one of the things we look at changing is making sure that we standardize or we create, like, a uniform standard for folks so that they don't have to worry about State by State standards. So that is something definitely that we can work on.

But I am very curious about how we can help military spouses who have professional careers who are less able to adapt to frequent moves. Are there strategies that you all have thought of and are putting into place for that group of spouses?

General SEAMANDS. Ma'am, thanks for the question.

Yes, we have. One of the things we do, the Secretary and the Chief said we need to get away from conventional wisdom. In other words, you have to move on a certain rotational basis. So they have instructed us to tell an officer, if you are someplace, say, Fort Hood, your spouse is happy, your family is happy, and you are going off to a professional military education, we give you the opportunity to come back. Five years ago, that wouldn't have happened. And what that allows is stability for the family to stay in place, to build a little financial wealth if they live off-post, and provide stability for the spouse and the soldiers.

The authority to reimburse them for their licensing, I think, is going to be a big, big deal.

The Secretary is also approaching the overseas spouse, which is probably one of the most underemployed segments of our population, trying to make sure they have an opportunity for employment as their soldiers deploy overseas.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

Could the other service leaders weigh in, as well, if there are other strategies that you have seen that might be workable or that are in the pipeline?

Admiral BURKE. On the overseas point, ma'am, I agree with everything that General Seamands said, but, specifically, I know all

three service secretaries just signed a memorandum of agreement to go after that specific issue.

And, you know, it involves starting simple. There are some internal barriers that we can remove, like the ability to run a home business in on-base housing, the ability to run a business out of your APO [Army Post Office] or FPO [Fleet Post Office] mailbox, things of that nature.

And then the corporate world can help us as well. Similar to the programs that we run in CONUS [continental United States] with OSD's [Office of the Secretary of Defense's] help, the Fortune 500 companies that participate with preferential spouse hiring for military contractors, and then actually provide them portable careers that tend to move base to base. There are some opportunities in not all but many of the overseas locations, so expanding that portfolio.

That is where we are starting, but room to maneuver from there.

Mr. STEWART. Ma'am, can I jump in here as far as DOD and what we are doing in that area?

We have the Military Spouses Employment Partnership, which works with 390 partner employers out there. About 134,000 have been hired since 2011. So we have some programs out there that are helping the services.

General ROCCO. Yes, ma'am. So, for the Marine Corps—and, granted, we are the smallest service, so our problems pale in comparison to the larger services, but we have—from assignment policy, which I run in my building, we have monitors to represent every occupational field. And a Marine never gets orders unless they have spoken to their monitor and said, okay, here is what we are doing and where we are doing it.

And we don't just move Marines to move them. We move them based on their promotion, there is a school, or they have a command. And we always take into account the spousal employment. We just recently had a senior officer—and if we can't come to an agreement, a mutual agreement, then it comes up to my level to see how do we adjudicate. And we recently had a senior officer whose spouse is a certified medical professional in southern California. Very limited on where she can practice. So we were able to find a place where he can both be assignable and still continue to be a Marine and not harm his career and provide her the ability to transition.

So, again, it is on a personal level that we deal with trying to find an agreement that works both for the Marine Corps and the couple.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much.

And I just want to jump in—I am running out of time. I just want to echo the concerns by my colleague who spoke prior to me on diversity. And my concern also is diversity not just for women but for all people of color in that upper echelon. It is hard to recruit diverse people if they think there is no place for them to move upward. So I just want to echo those concerns.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentlewoman yields back.

Mr. Cisneros is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CISNEROS. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you all for being here.

I am actually going to touch on diversity. You know, Mr. Stewart, in your written testimony, you mentioned the efforts the services are undertaking to promote diversity and inclusion. But you also mentioned in your written testimony that there is no particular program of—no goals to recruit to women or minorities.

So how can we expect these demographics to be properly represented, particularly in our officer corps, which are greatly underrepresented between, you know, women and minorities? If we are not setting goals, how can we expect to recruit to these communities and increase their population?

Mr. STEWART. Well, sir, we certainly don't want to go ahead and set quotas, but we definitely want to go ahead and make sure that we are reflecting the Nation as a whole.

And so particularly in the area of diversity, I know you had a question—and, in fact, sent a letter, which we are going to get back to you on—as far as what we are doing in this area, particularly in the military leadership area at the senior ranks.

We have the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, which basically was in the NDAA 2009, which we are basically going ahead and moving out on. I have an actual office that works those kinds of issues, and it is the Force Resiliency Shop and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. I have a Dr. Allison Greene-Sands, who actually is working on that very issue as we speak.

Before I came over here, I made sure that we checked on the progress of your letter to the Secretary, and we are working that, and we are going to get an answer back to you, sir.

Mr. CISNEROS. Thank you. I appreciate that.

General KELLY. Sir, if I can add in—this is General Kelly. If I could add in, regarding that discussion on goals, right, so I am with Mr. Stewart; we don't have quotas. But we have set goals for applicant pool goals for the United States Air Force Academy, for our ROTC programs.

And I will tell you that this year, so our applicant pool goal—so the applicant pool goal for female applicants at the academy was 30 percent. We achieved that for the first time this year for our class of 2022. We are at 28 percent for our ROTC program.

The other thing we have done is internal, is, once you get them in the door, how do you retain them and move them up the chain? For all of our key slates, key slates for jobs such as general officer aides, general officer executives, key front office jobs, every slate that we produce in those environments today have to have both gender and broader diversity candidates on each slate, and that has improved those numbers from about 18 to 22 percent across the board.

Mr. CISNEROS. Do we have programs in the other services?

Admiral BURKE. Sir, yes, if I could add to that. We have similar as what Air Force said. We set targets for gender recruiting, for gender and other areas.

But more importantly, what we do is focus our efforts to make sure that we are in the right places, that we are accessible to folks, that we don't intentionally alienate groups when we are sending the message of what the Navy can do for individuals or what they can do for us and that we don't overlook any source of talent.

And then, once folks are in, in terms of retention, it really is the key. It is management of the small numbers, and we put a renewed focus on managing at the very junior level so that you have those folks available to promote up to senior levels.

We have got a number of focus groups that continue to work. We have set a Navy-wide high-leverage outcome goal of eliminating unconscious bias.

We have looked hard at our promotion systems, you know, who is eligible and who gets promoted. We think those are working right. But what is happening is who leaves in between those promotion boards, those command screening opportunities, and things like that; is our culture driving them out?

And there are human unconscious biases that drive that, and this high-leverage outcome is getting at that, engineering processes that overcome those unconscious biases.

And then we have an Inclusion and Diversity Impact Plan that goes with our culture of excellence that is going to reinforce this all down to the deckplates, and I am happy to talk with you more about that when we have more time, sir.

General SEAMANDS. All right. It really starts at accession, sir. So far, on the enlisted side, what we are doing is attacking 22 cities that we have not given as much attention to in the past, which will bring a lot more diversity to the force. On the officer side, sir, it starts as we bring people to West Point, ROTC, and OCS.

This week, sir, the United States Military Academy will graduate 34 African American female cadets to become second lieutenants, highest number ever. It will be the highest number of female Hispanic officers being commissioned, and we will commission the 5,000th female to graduate from West Point since they started accepting females.

So it starts at that point, and it requires care and nurturing as you go up to make sure they get the right assignments so you have a broad bench to pick up for flag officers later on.

General ROCCO. And, sir, in the Marine Corps, as I stated before, in 2018, we accessed over 10 percent female, and this year we are on the same trajectory. On every promotion board, there is a representative female, and there is also an officer of color, a diverse officer. We also—by MOS [military occupational specialty] so we don't—we don't help one particular MOS over another. And we also included unconscious bias training in our—all of our schools.

Mr. CISNEROS. My time has expired. Thank you very much.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentleman yields back.

Congresswoman Davis is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you. Thank you to all of you for your dedicated service.

I wanted to just pick up on the what we call childcare issue and just thinking about what I would call child development educators. They don't really just watch kids. They educate them. And whether that—and, sir, turning to you, Lieutenant General Rocco, at Pendleton for, as an example, where you have higher pay for a number of the educators in the area, do you know generally what that gap is? Because you talked about the needs—the freedom, really, to pay higher salaries there. Any sense of that, what that gap is?

General ROCCO. Ma'am, I don't know what the gap is, but I can certainly come back to you on that and just—and I fully agree with you in my mischaracterization of it. I have two grandchildren who are on—who are being educated and being—are in the child development system. So I have got personal reasons to make sure this is done right. But we will certainly get back to you on the numbers as far as what that gap is.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Is it an authority that they are looking for to do that? Is that across the board that people would have to have authority or just in particular areas? Do we need to write something specific?

General ROCCO. I think it is a matter of—because of how they are paid—they are paid a certain salary. And that salary, whether you are in Camp Pendleton, Twentynine Palms, or wherever you may be, because it is government work, it is one salary. And, of course, you go to the high-income areas—where it may work in, say, the Midwest, it doesn't necessarily work in high-income areas like Hawaii or southern California and certainly northern Virginia where they can get a much larger salary to work out in the civilian market.

Mrs. DAVIS. Certainly, right. I understand that. Because I think what happens—and I may be not necessarily fully correct about this—but at Pendleton and some of the other bases in San Diego that I am familiar with, often we do have spouses who develop their own businesses in their home basically. And so they are kind of paid outside of that system.

General ROCCO. Very well—and I am sure that is exactly—but just from a base—and, again, from Quantico, where I am stationed at, it is a very good system. They are very flexible in children and who they take and when they take and their hours.

But it comes down to they can work in Arlington or they can move up further north closer to the Capital and get paid more money than we can pay them down at Quantico.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. STEWART. Congresswoman, can I help them out a little bit on that?

Mrs. DAVIS. Sure.

Mr. STEWART. Within the military community and family policy area within the Department of Defense, we are addressing salary, benefits, and other initiatives with Joint Service Compensation Working Group that we are currently working on right now.

This is an area that has been identified, and we basically have the same problem with all of the services. And so this is at the OSD level that we are trying to help them out with that, ma'am.

Mrs. DAVIS. All right. Thank you. And I know the standards are great. People are very pleased with that. But perhaps there are some alternatives to helping a number of women or men, for that matter, establishing businesses that might comply and be able to create some of those within the community. So that would be good to take a look at.

I also wanted to just for a minute talk a little bit about bonuses for retention and sort of understanding whether they are necessarily competing with equivalent civilian salaries or whether there are some incentives that would be more salient, more critical

to families that would be desirable and perhaps—you know, you are doing some of those—obviously the Navy is doing some—about career intermissions. I was really happy to hear you talk about that, because, you know, we worked hard on that trying to make people understand how important that was for quality of life.

I spoke to so many women who left the service as a result of that. So I am glad to know that you are working on it.

But what about that? I mean, are we trying to equate higher salaries and maybe not looking at other kind of bonuses, other kind of benefits that would be helpful?

General KELLY. Congresswoman, I will start. So, when we look at our bonus structures, very rarely are we trying to compete 100 percent with the civilian salaries. It is really difficult. And I will give you the aviation example we brought up before. We can't compete with those folks. What we do with those monetary bonuses is just sort of offset the discussion and help tilt the equation in our favor.

What we really focus on is those other incentives like you just talked—there are other quality-of-life things we can do. We have almost done like a sort of USAA [United Services Automobile Association] model, if you will, where we try to, person by person, find out, what is your incentive? What is your discussion? Is it staying longer at the place you are at? Is it PCSing to a certain base? Is it, you know, deciding that you want to stay through your child's high school years? We try to almost tailor person by person to work on the retention piece, with the monetary piece just offsetting. But we do not try to compete with the civil sector on that.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

And I was going to ask about the Blended Retirement Systems and the fact that we see a difference, really, in the higher or lower rates of Active Duty and Reserves, and perhaps for another time you would be able to kind of address that issue.

Thank you very much.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentlewoman yields back.

Maybe you can provide that information to us for the record.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 119.]

Ms. SPEIER. Next, Ms. Haaland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. I am sorry. We are not——

Ms. SPEIER. Oh, well, we were doing it based on who came in, but in fairness, yes, Mr. Bergman is recognized for 5 minutes.

I apologize, Ms. Haaland.

Mr. BERGMAN. You want me to yield the 5 to her and then get it back?

Ms. SPEIER. No, you are fine.

Mr. BERGMAN. All right. I will take 6 back, give 5. Government math.

Okay. Thanks for being here, everybody. And thanks, Madam Chairwoman, for the chance to ask a couple of questions.

Number one, each of the services, you have got first termers. What is the percentage of your first termers that you hope to retain for a second enlistment and then therefore potentially towards, you know, a career of 20? Any rough numbers for each service?

I think in the Marine Corps, it used to be somewhere around 25 percent or—somewhere between 25 to 30 percent was our first term?

General SEAMANDS. For the Army—all of the services have a pyramid. For the Army, it is higher than that. It is probably about 50 or 60 percent we would like to stay. Our retention rate is about 80 percent of those people who are fully qualified are staying, between——

Mr. BERGMAN. So really when someone comes in, you hope that you will get a minimum of 50 to 60 percent to stay for 20?

General SEAMANDS. Not for 20, sir. About 20 percent will stay all the way to 20. But——

Mr. BERGMAN. Okay.

General SEAMANDS [continuing]. As they go up.

Mr. BERGMAN. So you build that career force, if you will, out of 20 percent of those who come in the door?

General SEAMANDS. Roughly, yes, sir.

Mr. BERGMAN. Okay. Fair enough.

Navy?

Admiral BURKE. Yeah, first term retention, so our contracts tend to run a little longer. So that's a 6-year contract to the second 6-year contract.

When we are at a stable size, we need roughly around 55 percent retention to that second contract. Right now, we need much higher than that because we are trying to balance accessions versus retention, because we don't want a really junior force manning that 355-ship Navy. We want a mix of experienced people. So we need in the, you know, 70 to 80 percent region, and we are in that ballpark right now.

Mr. BERGMAN. Okay.

Air Force?

General KELLY. Yes, sir. So, similar to the Navy, we use 6-year enlistments as our predominant method. And when they come in, we are looking for somewhere between 60 and 75 percent of those 6-year enlistments to take a second enlistment.

The numbers that we are looking to get to 20 years, similar to the Army, we are looking for about 23 to 25 percent to get to 20 years on our enlisted force as they go forward.

And what I would tell you is, right now, our enlisted, if I look across all of our specialties as a whole, 90 percent of our enlisted specialties are retaining at or above the levels that they were in the previous year. So we are in pretty good shape right now.

Mr. BERGMAN. Okay. Thank you.

We all know—you hear the numbers—roughly 70 percent of the age-eligible men and women who we would try to enlist can't. Largely obesity is a big—you know, big problem.

What, if anything, are you as the services doing to help those who may walk in your recruiting center overweight to get them so they can successfully complete boot camp?

Admiral BURKE. I will take this one to start, if you guys don't mind.

We took a holistic look at all the medical accession standards. And those that the Department of the Navy had flexibility in, we worked with our Bureau of Medicine to take a fresh look at

through the lens of modern medicine, things like ADHD [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder], hearing loss that could be corrected with hearing aids, eczema, stuff like that that we used to just immediately turn——

Mr. BERGMAN. I guess I really want to focus on the obesity.

Admiral BURKE. The same thing with the weight issue. So we started putting people in delay—in physical training [PT] programs.

Mr. BERGMAN. Like a delayed entry program, get them into shape?

Admiral BURKE. And then we started running the entrance exam at the beginning of boot camp.

Mr. BERGMAN. Okay.

General ROCCO. And, sir. I think you know in the Marine Corps, we have the DEP, the delayed entry program, and we just get them on the treadmill and PT them.

Mr. BERGMAN. Really, we do that?

But it is okay. I mean, we—because each service has a different mission, and we need different, you know, levels of capability in our service members to complete—to complete our mission. But we know it is a national problem of obesity. And I know that you all can set the standards for the entire Nation for what—for especially our 18- to 24-year-olds.

I would like to, for the record, take it—you don't have to answer me now. But the cost per individual from the day they walk in the door, or let's say that you allocate—if you picture—or your advertising dollars in your recruiting, the cost per individual to get them through boot camp. And just if you could, you know, take that for the record, I would appreciate it to see what that cost is.

And thanks, Madam Chairwoman, and I yield back.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 121.]

Ms. SPEIER. The gentleman yields back.

Along the same lines, I think it would be helpful to the committee if each of the services could provide us with the reasons why those who attempt to enlist are declined the opportunity. It would be helpful for us over the long run.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 113.]

Ms. SPEIER. Now, Ms. Haaland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you very much, gentlemen, for being with us this afternoon. I appreciate your service to our country. And thank you so much.

I hope I am not repeating any questions, because I came in a little late. But we will try.

Maybe this question would be best answered by Lieutenant General Kelly.

How do you envision we can better use our Air Guard to solve our current pilot shortage?

General KELLY. Thank you for that question.

As I mentioned earlier, but I will go again on this, is we use our Reserve Components as operational reserves. So when we deploy our forces, it is quite often almost impossible for you to tell wheth-

er it is an Active Duty member, a Reserve member, or a Guard member. They are completely interchangeable for us, and we utilize them in that fashion.

We find, though, in this pilot retention problem where we are at, that we have shortages across all three components. And so, while we are able to sometimes, you know, substitute Active Duty shortages with the Guard, we find similar shortages in our full-time—particularly full-time pilots in the Guard and Reserve. And so the problem for us goes across all three components in that case.

Ms. HAALAND. Anyone else like to take that question?

Admiral BURKE. Yes, ma'am. We are able to do similar with everything—except for our TACAIR that deploys on aircraft carriers, just because of the operating model and the deployment cycles, the training—train as a unit, deploy as a unit, and remain ready as a unit to surge deploy.

But with other types of aircraft that deploy as detachments, we actively integrate our Reserve Component. So helos, patrol aircraft, transports, so on and so on and so forth.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you. Thank you.

I was just thinking—I was recently—I gave the commencement speech at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute. It is kind of a—it is a Tribal college, but it is a community college, in Albuquerque. And the JROTC [Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps] who did the color guard, they were all Native girls, an all Native girl color guard, which you don't see often.

I am just wondering, is—how—like what is the percentage of JROTC students who eventually enlist, and is like reaching high school students a viable way of ensuring that diversity and the female population has an equal chance at a career in the military?

Mr. STEWART. From an OSD perspective, I will take that for the record, to go ahead and get back to you on those numbers. I will let the services talk about specifically their Junior ROTCs. But, overall, we will try to get back to you with that, ma'am.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 121.]

Ms. HAALAND. Okay.

General SEAMANDS. Within the Army, ma'am, we own about half of the Department of Defense Junior ROTC programs. Great citizenship programs. Even if they don't come into uniform, the leadership they learn, the skills, the values, the discipline, I think pay off in life later on.

A number of them do come in; not only to the Army, they come into other services as well. But we are very proud of our Junior ROTC programs. We think they make a big—great contribution to our Nation.

Admiral BURKE. I would echo General Seamands; same for the Navy.

Ms. HAALAND. Okay.

General KELLY. I would echo as well, ma'am. But then I would also add that there are other organizations for us besides the Junior ROTC where we focus to try and increase our female accessions in effect. We look to areas like BEYA, the Black Engineer of the Year, societies. We have partnerships with the robotics, with ELeague, with GoPro, a bunch of the other folks, where we can do

some partnerships to try and make sure that we increase the interest and the opportunity for them to know about the Air Force.

General ROCCO. Ma'am, I think it is just a wonderful program. And we can get back to you with the numbers, at least for the Marine Corps, that we get. But it is programs like that that encourage folks to serve.

Ms. HAALAND. Because really when I think about the opportunities in our Native American communities, sometimes the unemployment rate is as high as 50 or 60 percent, and it just seems that those are opportunities that we could increase in those areas.

And sort of along those lines, Lieutenant General Seamands, with 79 percent of new recruits having a relative who served, what efforts are being made to appeal to new recruits outside of that demographic?

General SEAMANDS. Thank you for the question. A lot of our recruits come from kind of a southern smile, from the DC area all the way down to Florida, Georgia, into Texas. So we are expanding beyond that range. We have identified 22 cities, big cities, Pittsburgh, Seattle, other places that we may have neglected a little bit in the past, where we think we can reach into some diversity across our Nation.

We really want our Army to look like our Nation, and we can't do that unless we tap into all the right places to bring in applicants to become soldiers.

Ms. HAALAND. Thank you so much.

And, Madam Chair, I will yield back.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentlelady yields back.

There has been a request for a second round. So we are going to engage in that.

Let me just say at the outset to all of you and to Mr. Stewart that one of the areas that is oftentimes overlooked is girls' high schools in terms of recruitment. And I think that would be a good area for you to pursue as well.

Mr. Kelly.

Mr. KELLY OF MISSISSIPPI. And I am not going to take long. But I have a unique—we are having our first Mississippi National Guard armor officer who is a female was commissioned last weekend. And I got to meet her; very great young lady.

But we have a policy—it is either DOD or Department of the Army—which requires that she be—have another female officer with her in order to serve, okay?

And so we have got to be careful with policies that segregate, and we have got to integrate, okay? And what that means is, is she doesn't need to be in HHC [Headquarters and Headquarters Company]. What she needs is to be commanding a tank platoon with whoever is in that tank platoon.

And so we have to be real careful that we—because that is a leadership deal. We have got to make sure we keep folks in line; that we treat them right. But we can't segregate for the purpose of integrating, because it does not work. We have got to make sure we give them the opportunities to perform as a tank platoon leader, whether they are female or male or anything else.

So I just ask that we look at that, to be careful not to try to help and hurt by trying to help, okay?

And, with that, I yield back, Chairwoman.

Ms. SPEIER. The gentleman yields back.

Mrs. Luria, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LURIA. Well, thank you. I would like to continue along the line of questioning from earlier.

So, across the country, women make up about 56 percent of all college attendees. And since one of the primary factors in receiving a commission is a degree, I was curious as to why currently in the Navy—and I would like to hear from the other services, the previous question I asked, your current accessions and people that you will be commissioning this year, why is that percentage only half of the current population?

And, General Kelly, you might have alluded to it some as well when you mentioned the Air Force Academy application pool, you are getting about 30 percent of applicants.

So is it a question of the number of people applying and presenting themselves to, you know, be members of the military and be commissioned as officers, or is it somewhat goals that are being set are capped by the academies and other commissioning sources?

General KELLY. Congresswoman, thanks again for the followup question. I will just clarify where I was before.

Our program has been focused on increasing our applicant pool goal. So we have had to go out and do targeted efforts, do targeted engagements to increase that applicant pool goal. So our initial step was to get the applicant pool goal above 30 percent at the academy and ROTC. Once we get—our goal was continue to move that north, right? We would like to get that up to be representative of the population.

Mrs. LURIA. So, with 30 percent applicants, assuming that is the incoming class, what percentage acceptancewise are actually going to be attending the Air Force Academy this summer?

General KELLY. So we believe the class of 2022 will be close to 30 percent applicant pool goal that we reached.

Mrs. LURIA. You said applicant pool goal. I mean, we are at the point now we have offered appointments. What is the actual class composition?

General KELLY. We believe it will be 30 percent, which will be up from—in the past, it has been about 25 percent, so we have moved it up about 5 percent.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay.

And, Admiral Burke, for the Naval Academy?

Admiral BURKE. I would have to get back to you on the applicants versus selectees. I can tell you what we graduate, and that is what we——

Mrs. LURIA. So you don't know the statistics for the incoming class?

Admiral BURKE. I don't know how many applicants we seek versus how many we select.

Mrs. LURIA. Right. I would like that information as a followup.

Admiral BURKE. I will get that for you.

[The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mrs. LURIA. And, General Seamands, for West Point?

General SEAMANDS. Yes, ma'am, I will confirm the exact numbers, but it is between 23 and 25 percent.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay. Thank you.

And I would like to go back to Admiral Burke because, you know, we talk about both accession, recruitment, but we also have talked a lot about retention and how those numbers have dwindled off significantly. The example I gave about one community screening board was at approximately the 15-year commission service date.

But within the Navy overall, female officer retention is the lowest of all the services, yet male officer retention is higher than other services.

Can you comment on that discrepancy, you know, with any of the programs we had the opportunity to speak about in my office yesterday? How are you targeting those specific programs to fix these problems?

And just before you answer, I would like to comment as well on the fact that, you know, when we talked about issues here, about what are your policies and training on birth control, and no one was familiar with that at the table. IVF [in vitro fertilization] services, none of you know whether Active Duty military have access to IVF services? That is somewhat surprising because that is important to a female service member who has fertility issues.

And so these are just things that I am just trying to elevate. These are important to female sailors. And I was a female commanding officer of female sailors, and these are things that came up over the course of my career when these women worked for me.

So, to go back to my question, Admiral Burke, can you talk a little bit about the programs that we mentioned yesterday and how you plan to target those to the demographic, to increase, you know, both diversity and retention of women over the course of their career?

Admiral BURKE. Absolutely. Thank you.

Again, we have to do better here and make it so that folks can see a path not only for the professional career but for the personal goals as well.

So we talked about the Career Intermission Program. But the parental leave latitude that was given to us in fiscal year 2017 NDAA, I believe it was, and how we are implementing that has been a tool.

We talked about childcare. We have expanded the hours and the capacity——

Mrs. LURIA. Can we stop on that? Because we just—there was study in The Virginian-Pilot, our local paper—obviously Norfolk Naval Station, the largest naval station in the country—that for overnight childcare, because many Navy service members have to stand duty overnight, and for single parents or dual-military parents, where one parent is deployed, there are only 24 spots for overnight childcare within the Hampton Roads region. That seems like an unacceptable amount to meet the demand. And I will further carry—I know this—and I will follow up with Langley Air Force Base, which is also in my district, about the need there.

But for the Navy, you said that you are approximately 8,000 or so spots short for childcare. I just looked at a U.S. Naval Institute report that the most current reporting, as of last week, shows that

we are at 9,298 spots short within the Navy. So you need to increase your childcare capacity by 24 percent. And that is only in places where there are childcare facilities that have waiting lists.

In my district, for example, Wallops Island is a remote area that has a Navy facility and has no childcare facility at all. So every time I have a townhall on the Eastern Shore of Virginia—myself and Senator Warner were there a few weeks ago—we have service members show up and talk about the fact that there is absolutely no childcare available, not only on base, but not even within the adjacent community.

So I am just, you know, putting this out there as far as, you know, identifying the scope of the need.

Admiral BURKE. Absolutely. And to your point, you know, we have 35,000-children capacity with our intrinsic, you know, Navy government sources. We are outsourcing the rest of them, some to certified home providers, some to, you know, community commercial providers.

One thing that we have launched here, Commander of Navy Installations Command, for example—Mary Jackson, is leading this effort—is requests for information about the feasibility of partnering with community commercial businesses to increase both the facilities as well as the capacity of childcare. And that would be a good opportunity for a location like Wallops Island.

Ms. SPEIER. All right. The time has expired.

Let me just underscore what you have heard from virtually everyone on this panel and something I heard everywhere I went. It didn't matter if it was the Army, the Air Force, the Marines—it didn't matter. Childcare is a huge problem on every one of our bases. And I think what needs to happen is a comprehensive look at what the need is and then immediate steps taken to either start building the facilities or finding the opportunities for these families to get quality childcare.

I will also point out that many of the childcare opportunities that service families have to access off base are more expensive, and they are only being subsidized to what the rate is on base, so they are doubly impacted by it.

Mrs. Davis, do you have any further questions?

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I am just going to return very quickly. I echo that as well, obviously. I think that we need to think out of the box about this. There are some options that I don't think have been tried. So perhaps we can take a look at those as well and really developing the personnel in the communities.

I wanted to talk just a minute about the Blended Retirement System because we know that there is a difference. The Marine Corps, for example, had the highest rates among Active Duty and Reserves in opting in whereas the Army had the lowest rates of adoption.

So just trying to understand, perhaps from Mr. Stewart and from the services, if detailed analyses have been performed as to the origin of those differences and how those findings can inform the retention of talent among our All-Volunteer Force.

Mr. STEWART. So, as far as the data, ma'am, we are not there yet. Again, the Blended Retirement System, as you know, is new.

But we are tracking it, and we will provide you data associated with it on the take rates, the reasons why, all of the details associated with that because we know Congress is very, very concerned about the Blended Retirement System.

Mrs. DAVIS. Great. Anybody else want to comment?

General SEAMANDS. Ma'am, for the Army—on the Reserve Component—I don't have any survey data other than me going out and asking people why they did or didn't participate. On the Reserve side, what they told me is if they have a civilian job, their 401(k) is capped. In other words, they have a good program in the civilian world. This would not necessarily enhance them by going to blended retirement.

On the Active side, two things we got back in terms of feedback. One was a lot of the soldiers intend to stay until 20 years, so why would they go to 40 when they intended to stay for 50?

The second issue was for those people who intended to get out, you can't access your blended retirement until 59-and-a-half without a penalty. So they were investing themselves for things, knowing they would get out at year 10 and want to buy a house, start a business and things like that, as opposed to having a deferred compensation package. That was the feedback we got.

Admiral BURKE. Yeah, for the Navy, we had a very robust, you know, financial education campaign around this, as did all of the services. But with a largely career-oriented force, folks looked at the numbers and realized if you hadn't been contributing really from day one, depending on your assumptions about market values and things like that, you may not be able to break even if you made the switch.

So we had a relatively low number of Active Component folks that were in the decision window switch over. But that was the driving reason; it was running the numbers.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay.

General KELLY. I would echo what my colleagues have already said, ma'am. And so our numbers for the Active Force were about 29 percent and far less on the Reserve Components. But the Active Force, I would say a lot more career-minded folks who are thinking about 20 years as a career. You heard us talk about our retention goals being very high for an Air Force that is technically oriented.

So we weren't overly surprised by the opt-in rates for those folks. But the discussion of 50 percent versus 40 percent if you were career-minded definitely came into play for those folks.

General ROCCO. And, ma'am, I think for the Marine Corps, because our numbers were so high, we are also opposite of our other services, where we have the largest turnover, close to 70 percent that we don't retain after the first enlistment. So they looked at this as an opportunity to get vested, even for a few years, that they can benefit from.

Mrs. DAVIS. Right. And would you just say overall that this was a good move, to create the opportunity?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, ma'am, if I can. Just my impression is that, in the past, whenever an individual spent time with the services, it was "thank you very much for your service," and as they headed out the door, they had nothing to show for it.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay.

Mr. STEWART. So this package that we have——

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Great. Thank you.

And just a question about the higher retention rates, and, you know, we have talked about, you know, women in the services and whether or not, in fact, culture has something to do with whether or not they stay in and what their experiences have been that have perhaps driven them out prematurely.

So I want—you know, I don't know if you want to comment on that. The other thing I would just say is it is my understanding, when it comes to IVF, that many of our wounded warriors have had the ability to get those services. And so I was a little surprised as well that, in fact, people in the Active Duty are not able to access those services. So that would be good to follow up on.

Thank you very much. I believe my time is running out.

Culture.

Ms. SPEIER. Twenty-one seconds on culture.

Mrs. DAVIS. Is that——

Admiral BURKE. I mentioned those high-leverage outcomes, and that is exactly what our focus groups are getting at. It is, what is it about the culture that they are either seeing or choosing to not see that is driving people's decisions?

Mr. STEWART. And if I may, ma'am, just for the record, the Coast Guard actually did a gender diversity report that we are looking at in OSD. They just recently did it, and we are taking a look at that.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Thank you. Thank you all very much.

Ms. SPEIER. Okay. Mrs. Davis yields back.

All right. Gentlemen, you have, I think, gotten a good sense of where our issues are.

Let me end with two more points.

In visiting many of these bases, I found that the spouses were either not aware that their professional license transfer was available to them, and of the ones that did, they said they couldn't get anyone at wherever they are supposed to contact them in order to get it processed. So we have an issue there.

I also think it should be increased up to $1,000. And we will attempt to address that in the NDAA.

But the other thing that they said—and I think it is a thorny issue, and I would love to have you think about it and then provide us a written response to—is that when many of these spouses go out to get employment, they are discriminated against because they can detect from their résumé that they are a military family member. And so there is a reluctance to hire them.

So it is a huge problem. I don't know exactly what the answer is, but I would certainly appreciate your comments on that.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 114.]

Ms. SPEIER. And then, finally, housing. The conditions of lead, mold, asbestos that hasn't been addressed is a serious problem.

And then the second one is the lack of responsiveness by the housing management firms that we hire to accommodate, you know, a clogged sink, a toilet that doesn't work, and they are totally nonresponsive.

And we have got to get that fixed because we are paying good money for them to provide those services, and the extent to which they are not is very problematic. And one of the things that we are considering is whether we need an ombudsman at the—each of the bases to be able to provide that kind of service to the families and, you know, shake the management firm. So those are my questions, and I want you to give some thought to it and get back to us.

Okay. Mr. Kelly—okay.

With that, we stand adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

May 16, 2019

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MAY 16, 2019

Statement of
Representative Jackie Speier
Military Personnel Subcommittee

"Military Personnel Management – How Are the Military Services Adapting to Recruit, Retain, and Manage High Quality Talent to Meet the Needs of a Modern Military?"

May 16, 2019

I would like to welcome everyone to this afternoon's Military Personnel Subcommittee hearing. Today we have the personnel chiefs from the department and the four military services to discuss what they are doing to improve and modernize military personnel policy to sustain the all-volunteer-force.

Military personnel policy does not just involve military personnel, it also involves the family. We ask servicemembers and their families to make sacrifices for our nation. When they bravely step up to this task, we must only ask them to sacrifice when it's necessary for our national security, not when its required by outdated or short-sighted personnel policies. Our job is recruit and retain servicemembers who will allow the U.S. military to fight and win future challenges. A modern personnel system is a crucial tool in that effort.

I spent five days last month visiting five different military installations talking to leadership, servicemembers, and their spouses so I could learn firsthand what the issues are facing our servicemembers and families. These CODELS will continue and invite my colleagues on the committee to join me. Two main issues stood out: location of assignment and its impact on school aged children, especially high school age, employment for spouses who have professional careers, woefully inadequate childcare slots, and the need for more resources for sexual assault and domestic violence for servicemembers and spouses.

The demographics of servicemembers have changed. More of our talented servicemembers have talented spouses who want their own careers, want to contribute to the financial success of the family, and are starting families early in their careers. We have a force of volunteers that deserve recruiting and retention policies that adapt with the times, not inflexible bureaucratic cultures that demand conformity without offering new solutions.

Military families are now making decisions not only based on military members' career progression, but on the whole families' future. A small number of Americans serve in our armed forces and they have growing expectations. Their expectations are merited, and we must meet and exceed them.

The competition for the limited talent is fierce. The Department and the services have a great amount of flexibility in determining who is qualified to serve and must continue to look at ways to open the aperture to gain access to talent.

We have a responsibility to take these problems seriously and not chalk up our system's shortcomings to the entitled needs and misplaced expectations of a

new generation. Personnel policy must be shaped to respond to those currently serving, not those who commissioned during the Cold War. It is incumbent upon leadership in DOD and Congress to listen to and learn from those we serve. And we must make greater use of modern data-gathering and survey techniques to make human resources decisions like a modern corporation.

I believe the services need to think creatively and beyond their current cultures about how to manage people. The central question for you today is: How are the military services adapting to recruit, retain, and manage high quality talent to meet the needs of a modern military?

I am interested to hear from our witnesses how they gather infomation on what their servicemembers value, how does that translate to policy and what are each of you doing incorporate the family into policies governing the career management process.

Before I introduce our first panel, let me offer Ranking Member Kelly an opportunity to make any opening remarks.

PREPARED STATEMENT

OF

MR. JAMES STEWART

PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (PERSONNEL & READINESS)

REGARDING

RECRUITING RETENTION AND TALENT MANAGEMENT OF THE TOTAL FORCE

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

May 16, 2019

Chairman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of this committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of the Department of Defense (DoD) to discuss the recruiting, retention, and talent management of our military force. I cannot emphasize enough that our people are the key to success. Our military Services have sustained the All-Volunteer Force by recruiting and retaining the best and the brightest from across our Nation. The diverse backgrounds of the individuals, and their dedication to national service allows us to be lethal, and find solutions to the many complex national security issues we face around the globe. The continued success of our All-Volunteer Force begins with recruiting, and the viability of the force is assured with successful retention.

Total Force

The Department is committed to aligning its resources to properly support a well-structured Total Force, comprised of Active and Reserve Component members along with our civilians and contract support. Effective Total Force Management is long-term in its scope and vision, and sets the stage for local commanders to successfully execute their missions. There is no "one size fits all" solution for the Total Force; the varied nature of the Department's Components and missions requires a policy framework that enables success by providing flexibility.

Each Military Service requested modest military end-strength growth. This growth will allow the Services to meet the goals of the National Defense Strategy, while improving and restoring readiness and addressing critical capability gaps. The overall strategic vision behind this growth will, aside from improvements to readiness, prepare the Army's capacity for force-on-force decisive action, ensure the Air Force's air and space superiority, help sustain the continuous demand for Navy operating forces, and support the Marine Corps' Force 2025 project of modernization and enhancement.

Recognizing the unique strengths of each part of the Total Force is an important aspect of Total Force Management, and these end-strength increases will support the Nation's "tip of the spear." These end-strength increases are supplemented by other areas of the Total Force, such as the Reserve Component, our DoD civilian personnel, and contracted services, to enhance warfighting capability and capacity.

End-strength growth is not the Department's only strategy – a ready Total Force is one that is properly sized and cost-effective. The Military Departments have integrated Total Force

analysis into their requirements determination processes by "baking in" questions about labor sourcing, and we continually strive to ensure that we are putting the right people into the right places at the right times. By ensuring that military personnel are being aligned against operational capabilities rather than support functions, we can increase the lethality of the Services, and ensure that end-strength growth is targeted, deliberate, and meets specific capability-related needs.

Recruiting for the Future Force

The Military Services continue to face a tightened recruiting market, making it more difficult for them to achieve their recruiting missions. The strong economy, low unemployment, the size and quality of the youth market, and world events will make recruiting almost a quarter of a million qualified volunteers each year a challenge for the foreseeable future. The widening of the military-civilian divide is also having a significant negative impact on our ability to effectively recruit for the All-Volunteer Force (AVF). The shrinking military footprint in many parts of our country, due to base closures and realignments and the declining veteran population, has taken its toll on society's perception and understanding of military service.

Today, youth propensity to join the military remains low and steady, at approximately 13 percent. Additionally, only 29 percent of today's youth are eligible for military service without a waiver to meet eligibility requirements, and only 2 percent of today's youth are eligible, high-quality, and propensed to serve. Not only is there a limited number of qualified youth, but those who are qualified are harder to reach today than in the past. In order to reach the technologically savvy youth of today, we must ensure our recruiting efforts are focused toward that market. We must leverage social media and other relevant technologies to appeal to this new generation of youth.

Currently, the Army and the Navy Reserve face the largest hurdles in making their Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 mission. The Services, however, are taking proactive steps to offset the difficult recruiting market, including increases in the number of recruiters in the field, marketing resources, and enlistment bonuses. Total Force Recruiting Centers are improving the recruitment and placement process by internally and immediately providing candidates the best-fit option to join the Active, Reserve, or National Guard components. The Services are also placing an increased premium on recruiting duty, sending only their best and providing recruiters preferred handling on promotion selection boards. Additionally, the Department and the Military Services continue to

explore and implement innovative recruiting techniques (e.g., on-line unproctored testing, virtual/remote recruiters) to maximize recruiting production.

In support of the Military Services' recruiting efforts, the Department, through the Joint Advertising and Market Research & Studies (JAMRS) program, recently launched a joint integrated digital media campaign targeting primarily influencers, but focused on our young adults as well. In partnership with platforms using artificial intelligence that evaluate user sentiment, content consumption, and location data, JAMRS was able to reach target audiences when they were most likely to be receptive to DoD messaging. Additionally, campaign placements on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn drove 1.3 million social engagements, and LinkedIn's hypertargeting capabilities enabled campaign content to reach educators, guidance counselors, and coaches. These digital outreach efforts resulted in 99 million video views during the first six weeks of the campaign. Furthermore, research indicates that 36 percent of influencers recall seeing a JAMRS ad, and those who saw an ad are more likely to recommend military service than those who did not see an ad (54 percent vs. 41 percent). DoD and the Military Services will continue to explore other initiatives to expand the recruiting market and mitigate the challenges encountered to ensure we meet recruiting mission objectives.

The Department remains focused on ensuring that our Armed Forces are comprised of individuals from all parts of our society. We rely on our diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise to enable us to address the complex challenges of the global security environment. To accomplish this strategic imperative, the Services have gone to great lengths to vary their outreach and marketing efforts to reach the widest audience, including specific activities targeted to reach talented women and minorities. While the Services may not have specific recruiting goals in these demographics, they apply various methodologies that bolster their recruiting efforts. Specifically, the Services have developed robust marketing and advertising campaigns, integrated social media campaigns, developed key partnerships with community leaders and other influencers, and frequently participate in specific outreach programs intended for women and minorities. The Department's overall female Active Duty enlisted force grew by approximately 5 percent between 2007 and 2017; within the officer corps, female representation experienced even greater growth at 20 percent. Additionally, Hispanic commissioned officers increased by more than 50 percent over the same period, and the number of Asian and Pacific Islander officers grew by 67 percent. While

the Services continue to make strides in recruiting women and minorities, they still face challenges and are in fierce competition with civilian employers.

The Department also continues to implement and codify recommendations made by the Military Leadership Diversity Commission to improve diversity of its senior officers. The newly opened combat occupations can potentially lead to additional opportunities for women for greater advancement into senior-level positions. The Department strives to improve the promotion, advancement, and retention of all Service members. Building an environment free from personal, social, or institutional barriers that prevent Service members from rising to their highest potential is fundamental to maintaining the most capable military force and meeting our national security mission.

Military Personnel Authorities Reform (DOPMA/ROPMA)

The Department recently completed a comprehensive review of officer career management policies pursuant to the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) and Reserve Officer Personnel Management Act (ROPMA). Our review looked across the entirety of the officer career lifecycle, including original appointments, promotions, career development, retention, selective continuation, and separations or retirements to ensure military personnel policies support and enhance warfighting readiness and force lethality.

On the heels of our review, Congress provided the Department with additional officer management authorities in the FY 2019 John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The FY 2019 NDAA provided the Military Departments new flexibilities for managing their officer corps. This added flexibility allows the Services to be more creative in managing officers in the 21st century, as it is becoming more and more evident that conventional career management approaches may not yield the human capital needed for success in highly technical mission sets.

The Department has already updated its policies to allow implementation of the new authorities, and the Military Departments have begun using, or are planning to use, several of the new authorities. The Navy recently conducted its first promotion selection board using merit reordering, and plans to use the expanded constructive credit authority, deferral of promotion consideration, expanded spot promotion authority, and extended age continuation in FY 2020. The Army has approved six of the nine authorities for pilot programs or Army-wide implementation—

temporary promotions and officer promotion list merit reordering will both be implemented this year. The Air Force is developing plans to use many of the new NDAA authorities, and the Marine Corps will use officer promotion list merit reordering for their FY 2021 Major through Colonel promotion boards which meet this summer.

Retention

Despite the improving economy, the Services are each exhibiting strong retention in the aggregate and expect to meet or exceed their respective retention goals for FY 2019. This past year, the Army produced historic retention rates of over 90 percent of the eligible population of active component Soldiers. The Air Force is also experiencing its highest retention in nearly 25 years with 90 percent of enlisted Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC) retention stable or trending upward and 98 percent of officer AFSCs either stable or trending up. Likewise, the Navy and Marine Corps retention campaigns continue to be successful.

While the continued aggregate success is encouraging, each Service has retention challenges that they continue to prioritize. There are shortfalls in specific enlisted skillsets including cyber operators, nuclear power technicians, special operators, aircraft maintenance technicians, and intelligence specialists, to name a few. For officers, the Services continue to work aggressively to retain pilots, combat systems officers, special operations officers, and officers with various medical specialties. To address these specific shortages, the Services have made judicious use of the special and incentive pays including selective and critical skills retention bonuses and continuation pays that Congress has authorized.

Overall, our success in retention is a tribute to the strong, engaged leadership in our Services and the tremendous commitment and willingness of our dedicated Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines to serve. Also, the collective investment the Department has made, with the support of Congress, to improve the quality of life for our Service men and women and their families has aided in retaining the Force.

Non-Deployability

This past fall, the Department implemented a retention policy for our non-deployable Military Service members. The policy reinforces the expectation that all Service members are expected to be deployable, as deployability, readiness, and lethality go hand-in-hand. Our

objective is to reduce the number of non-deployable Service members, which improves personnel readiness and lethality across the joint force.

Then-Secretary Mattis established a goal throughout the Department that no more than 5 percent of each Service's military personnel may be non-deployable. As of our latest report (end of March), the Navy and Marine Corps have already achieved this goal. The Army and Air Force are making steady progress toward achieving the 5 percent goal. Since July 2018, the percentage of non-deployable Service members fell from 6.4 percent to 5.5 percent. This reduction can be attributed to renewed emphasis by both the individual Service member and their commander on ensuring individual readiness is maintained, so that we may ensure our military is ready to fight today and in the future.

Family Stability

The Department understands that you recruit the member, but retain the family. With this thought in mind, we are very concerned with the number and quality of moves a member and their family endures during a career. The Department's assignment policy allows for exceptions to tour length requirements, as necessary, to provide for operational requirements, or to enable specific career development objectives. Additionally, it allows several exceptions associated with family stability including: married military couples programs, the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), medical travel restriction for pregnancy, reassignments with a low-cost move, and reassignments for humanitarian reasons.

The FY2018 NDAA gave the Department additional authority for families executing permanent change of station (PCS) relocations to occupy two sets of quarters (family and single) for greater stability. With this authority, the Department established policy so a family may continue living in government-owned or government-leased housing while the Service member moves ahead of the family; or the family may move into government-owned or government-leased housing at the new duty station before the Service member detaches from their old duty station. Additionally, the policy allows Service members to keep the higher housing allowance when a Service member moves to a less expensive area ahead of family. These provisions give families greater flexibility and enable families to execute their moves to best meet their personal situations. The new policy gives families the opportunity to allow dependent children to finish or start their school years despite the date of the PCS, or allows spouses to transition their professional careers

more smoothly while moving between duty stations.

Quality of life programs are derived from various DoD issuances, however, DoD Instruction 1342.22, *Military Family Readiness*, provides overarching policy guidance, responsibilities, and procedures to ensure family readiness services are available to all Service members and their families. These services include relocation assistance program, spouse education/career opportunities, deployment assistance, morale, recreation, and welfare programs, personal financial management assistance, non-medical individual/family counseling, and emergency family assistance, to name just a few. The policy also refers to the Family Readiness System, which is composed of DoD-operated and community-based family readiness services delivered through a variety of access points, including, for example, Military and Family Support Centers and the web-based MilitaryOneSource.mil. The Military Departments are responsible for implementing the policy guidance and allocating adequate resources to ensure these services are available to all Service members and their families wherever they are permanently assigned.

Finally, relocation assistance programs are available to Service members and their families, and are intended to minimize the adverse effects of stressors associated with PCS moves. Relocation assistance includes information, education, and referrals related to preparing for the new duty station, like moving costs, housing options, child care, schools, community orientation, and service for family members with special needs.

Spouse Employment

The Department of Defense is committed to supporting military spouse employment and mitigating challenges caused by frequent family moves. We recognize that being a military spouse may lead to obstacles to reaching career goals, and the Department provides resources to assist spouses in overcoming those hurdles. No-cost masters-level career coaches, for example, are available six days a week to provide advice and coaching that can be accessed through MilitaryOneSource. These career coaches work with military spouses one-on-one on résumé development, mock interviews, job search strategies, and funding education. One important resource the Department uses to help fund a military spouse's education is the My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) scholarship. The MyCAA scholarship provides eligible military spouses with up to $4,000 in financial assistance as they pursue licenses, certifications, certificates, and associate degrees necessary for careers and occupations that are most likely to have virtual and

on-site job openings wherever they live. Eligible spouses include those whose service member falls under Title 10 authority and is within the pay grades of E1-E5, W1-W2, and O1-O2.

An early independent evaluation of the MyCAA scholarship program found that it positively impacts spouse earnings and increases service member retention. Clearly, this positive impact is only possible when a military spouse is aware of and uses the resource. The Department is working to implement communication tactics to help increase awareness of the MyCAA program. One such tactic is search engine optimization. As a result of the ongoing communications work, the MyCAA webpage on MilitaryOneSource now displays its search engine results more prominently. Beginning in May 2019, the scholarship program and webpage will be used in search engine marketing to help highlight and promote the MyCAA scholarship to eligible military spouses.

While the Department is working diligently to ensure all eligible military spouses are aware of the financial assistance provided through the MyCAA program, we are also exploring the feasibility of expanding the eligibility requirements for the scholarship to allow a greater number of military spouses to take advantage of the program. In order to be successful, it will be important to deliberately and thoughtfully study the implications of any proposed expansion, to ensure the changes will enhance military spouse employment opportunities, while remaining financially feasible for the Department.

Military Spouse Licensure

License portability is important to 34 percent of military spouses, and directly contributes to the stabilization of military families. Between 2011 and 2016, the Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) worked with States to enact legislation in 47 States to modify license endorsement requirements, increase opportunities for temporary licenses, and expedite application procedures to limit the time lost to relicensing. These laws helped streamline processing, but did not necessarily reduce the time and effort required of military spouses to prepare applications.

Since 2017, there have been several initiatives emphasizing the need to make further improvements to license portability for military spouses. For example, the Department of Labor (DoL), the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Council of State Governments have been working with a consortium of 15 States to develop licensure best practices, particularly for vulnerable populations to include military spouses. The

Department is playing an important role in this effort. Additionally, in February 2018, the Secretaries of the Military Departments sent a letter to the National Governors Association stating that license portability for military spouses would be a consideration in future mission basing decisions.

DSLO is following-up on renewed interest to improve State-specific laws to expedite or exempt licensing for military spouses, and to support interstate compacts for occupations. Compacts, such as the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact and the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact, allow all licensees to retain a home State and the privilege to practice in other member States. DSLO has worked with other occupations in developing compacts, with special provisions for military spouses that can stabilize their license to a single home State throughout a military career. There are approximately 15 occupations currently being considered for development of interstate compacts. While all of this emphasis and effort to improve license portability is ongoing, the Department is also collaborating with the DoL to provide information and guidance to military spouses and DoD employment counselors regarding State licensure processes and improvements. DoL is developing media products to assist with this effort, and DoD will feature these media messages on its MilitaryOneSource platform as well as on Spouse Employment and Career Opportunities websites and call-in centers. Additionally, DoL and DoD are collaborating on a series of webinars to educate military spouses and employment counselors on navigating the State licensing processes.

Child Care

Child care is an issue that directly impacts the readiness of our Service members and supports greater family stability. The Department recognizes the importance of providing military families with access to quality, affordable child development programs and is committed to meeting the increased demand for child care services due to frequent deployments and high operating tempo. Each day, the DoD child care program supports approximately 160,000 children of working parents through a comprehensive, affordable, and robust child care delivery system. Installation-based child care is provided to children from birth to 12 years of age, in approximately 710 child and school-age care centers around the world, and 800 Family Child Care homes. Approximately 98 percent of DoD child care programs are accredited, compared to less than 15

percent of civilian programs. Additionally, each of the Military Services provides fee assistance to eligible families, designed to offset the cost of child care in civilian communities.

In order to better manage the demand for child care, DoD has developed and deployed an online child care request management system, MilitaryChildCare.com, that is utilized across all of the Military Services. MilitaryChildCare.com not only allows military families to request child care anywhere in the world, but also provides the Military Services with an accurate reflection of waiting lists and the demand for child care at each installation. MilitaryChildCare.com enhances families' ability to register in advance for child care once they receive orders to their new duty location, or when they are expecting the birth of a child.

Accessibility to quality, affordable child care is a national challenge. Despite caring for 160,000 military children on a daily basis, the availability of DoD-provided child care remains an issue for many military families. More than half of all DoD child care program needs for military families is clustered in four geographic regions – Hawaii, San Diego, Norfolk, and the National Capital Region. It will take a multi-faceted approach to meet the needs of these families. The approach must include construction of new facilities, refurbishment and potential expansion of existing facilities, and a long-term recapitalization plan for the entire DoD child care system. However, a focus on facilities alone will not solve this challenge. My team has initiated a work group focused on exploring the human capital aspect of our child care programs. This group will look at compensation across the DoD child care system, as well as new and ongoing child caregiver recruitment and retention efforts. Working in collaboration with Auburn University's Military REACH initiative, the work group will examine retention strategies across multiple industries to better inform the Department's practices in this area.

As the largest employee-sponsored child care system in the United States, DoD continues to be recognized as a model for providing high quality and affordable child care. We must continue to explore new ways of expanding availability to those families that require care so that Service members can focus on completing the mission and spouses can focus on maintaining their careers.

Secondary Education Efforts

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) has focused on college and career readiness of military dependents, and ways DoD can continue to best serve our military-

connected student population. DoDEA has examined their operations, and analyzed the investments they make in their organization to sustain and improve critical infrastructure and education programs that directly support student achievement, and specifically, the College and Career Readiness of military connected children. The College and Career ready curriculum and the DoDEA Comprehensive Assessment System are two examples of programs that are essential to continue improving student achievement in order for DoDEA to remain among state-level leaders in education.

Understanding that students have different career goals, DoDEA has made extraordinary efforts to provide students with rigorous opportunities to prepare them for entering the workforce. The career pathways and course progressions have been realigned to meet the workforce needs identified by the Department of Labor. These pathways build on rigorous coursework and instruction, and provide students access to industry credentials and real-life work experiences. In support of the National Defense Strategy, DoDEA is in the second year of a Cyber Security pathway, and will begin two new pathways in the Fall: Pharmacy Technician and Teaching.

Seamless transitions in and out of DoDEA and public school systems is critical to ensuring on-time graduation for military connected children, and DoDEA has worked to improve those transitions for many years. DoDEA has engaged in a stronger and more aggressive approach using the DoDEA Virtual High School to ensure high school students have continued access to rigorous curriculum, continuity in their education, and the opportunity to finish courses despite mid-year moves. Transitioning high school students have the opportunity to finish a course he/she started in DoDEA, but was not offered in the new high school.

DoDEA has sharpened its focus on high school environments, academic achievement, and student engagement activities all to produce engaged, skilled, problem solvers who will become our future productive members of society. With great pride, DoDEA cut the ribbon on two new state of the art 21st Century high schools in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and Kaiserslautern High School in the Kaiserslautern Military Community in Germany. These schools provide students with an innovative and motivating environment that enhances new approaches to instruction that focus heavily on problem solving and critical thinking.

Transition Assistance

When our Service members decide that it is time to transition to civilian life, our assistance does not stop. With the implementation of the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011, the five day Transition Assistance Program (TAP) became mandatory. TAP is an interagency service delivery program. The DoD and other Federal partners provide courses, activities, counseling and service referrals to all transitioning Service members who have served 180 continuous days on Title 10 orders, also in order to assist Service members in preparing for the transition to civilian life, and achievement of their personal post-military career goals.

The FY2019 NDAA brought modernization to the TAP. It requires transitioning Service members to begin the transition process 365 days prior to their date of separation or retirement. TAP counselors provide individualized face-to-face counseling, assisting the transitioning Service member in selecting a pathway and post-transition goals by utilizing a self-assessment and completion of the Individual Transition Plan. Additionally, DoD provides awareness and training with regards to Military Occupational Codes Crosswalk (translation of a military position to a civilian position), resiliency, and financial preparation for transition. For transitioning Service members whose post-transition goal is to become a full-time student, DoD provides an Accessing Higher Education Course, ensuring transitioning Service members know how to utilize a college comparison tool and provide guidelines for success in appropriately utilizing their GI Bill to ensure success as a student.

Chairman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of this committee, I again thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony and for all the immeasurable dedication and support this Committee has given to the Department, specifically to our Service members and their families. I look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that we remain the most powerful fighting All-Volunteer Force while sustaining and empowering their families to support them.

Mr. James N. Stewart
Performing the Duties of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

The Honorable James N. Stewart is currently Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Mr. Stewart was sworn in as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs on October 22, 2018. In this capacity, Mr. Stewart serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on all matters relating to Civilian and Military Personnel Policies, Reserve Integration, Military Community and Family Policy, and Total Force Planning and Requirements. Additionally, he exercises day-to-day supervision of the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Defense Commissary Agency.

Prior to beginning his tenure as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Mr. Stewart served as the Economic Development Committee Chair, North Carolina Military Affairs Commission by appointment of Governor Pat McCrory. In that position he provided advice, counsel, and recommendations to the General Assembly, the Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs, and other state agencies on initiatives, programs, and legislation that would increase the role that North Carolina's military installations, the National Guard, and Reserves play in America's defense strategy.

Mr. Stewart retired from the United States Air Force as a Major General after 37 years of service in the active and reserve components. He is a command pilot with over 4,700 hours of flight time with experience in five different air frames. During his military service, Mr. Stewart held leadership positions at the unit, group, wing, Major Command, and Office of the Secretary of Defense levels. His last military position was in the Office of the Secretary of Defense serving as the Military Executive Officer for the Reserve Forces Policy Board.

Mr. Stewart is a distinguished graduate of the Auburn University ROTC program and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology/Criminology from Auburn University. He also holds a Master of Science degree in General Administration from Central Michigan University and a Master of Science degree in National Security Strategy from the National War College, Fort McNair, Washington D.C.

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY
LTG THOMAS C. SEAMANDS
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-1
UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST SESSION, 116TH CONGRESS

ON ACTIVE, GUARD, RESERVE AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

MAY 16, 2019

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of this committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of the men and women of the United States Army.

America's Army stands ready today to deploy, fight, and defeat any threat or adversary because of the courage and commitment of the Soldiers, Civilians, Veterans, and Family Members who serve our Nation. Readiness remains our number one priority. In order to sustain Army readiness, we must ensure that our people are ready, by focusing on first-class programs that provide continued care and resources for Soldiers and their Families. There is no doubt that personnel readiness is the keystone in the archway of unit and force readiness.

Today, only 29% of 17-24 year-olds in the U.S. are eligible to serve in the Army, and only one in eight has a propensity to enlist in the military, making Army accessions a challenging and resource-intensive activity. Further, America's youth are increasingly disconnected from the military and lack knowledge about military service. Individuals who are related to a service member make up most of our applicants, with 79% of new recruits having a relative who served and 28% having a parent who served.

The Army continues to focus on recruiting and accessions in order to responsibly grow end strength. We enlisted ~70,000 Active Component recruits in FY18, the largest production since 2011. Despite challenges in the recruiting environment, the Army increased its entry standards last summer in a number of areas, making clear its commitment to "Quality over Quantity". The Army is also on a path to achieve the FY19 recruiting missions in all three components. The FY19 Active Component mission is 68,000, USAR is 15,600 and the ARNG is 39,000. Recruiting is a total Army approach to include: budgeting $450M in FY2019 for Active Army bonuses; investing $50 million to add, relocate or improve recruiting centers in more than 200 critical markets; upgrading "goArmy.com"; achieving 100% recruiter manning by January 2019 (after adding nearly 800 recruiters in FY18); more effectively using social media platforms; and improving advertising to include the development of a

new marketing tagline. These investments provide the Army better footing to achieve the recruiting mission for all three Army components.

The Army must continue to retain the most talented Soldiers and non-commissioned officers with the experience and skills necessary to meet current and future needs. The AC, USAR and ARNG each achieved their FY18 retention missions. FY18 was a historic year for the AC, retaining over 90% of our eligible population. The previous record was 85% in FY17 and the historical average is ~81% of a specific year group. Each component is set to accomplish their respective retention missions while maintaining quality standards in FY19. These retention achievements support meeting our NCO requirements in the near to mid-term. These achievements would not be possible without the funding support for incentives granted by Congress.

The Army has seen an increase in officer retention in FY18, retaining 89.0% of the Army Competitive Category Captains and 94.4% of Majors compared to 87.7% and 92.8%, respectively, in FY17. Overall, the Army retained 91.7% of all officers in FY18 Since 2016, there has been nearly a 2% officer retention increase. Approximately 76% of officers are staying at least one year past their Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO).

Our officer corps is a strong, diverse and high-performing force. Army efforts to increase officer diversity resulted in FY18 officer accessions being 68.3% white and 31.7% minority, versus the US population of 25-34 year olds with bachelors or higher degrees being 72.9% white and 27.1% minority. FY19 Officer branching increased racial and ethnic diversity within the combat arms branches, resulting in 29.9% minority selections. In FY19, the United States Military Academy increased to 3.3% of their total population in African American cadets assigned to Infantry (IN) and Armor (AR) (32 compared to 19 in FY18) and the U.S. Army Cadet Command increased to 1.5% (48 as compared to 38 in FY18). Additionally, the percentage of Hispanic cadets branching IN and AR grew in both sources of commission to 2.2% of their total population. Female representation in combat arms also increased in FY19, as the Army is currently

scheduled to access 56 women into Infantry and Armor branches in FY19, a 28.6% increase from FY18. The Army will maintain a firm emphasis to integrate diverse attributes, experiences and backgrounds into our Officer Corps to lead our All-Volunteer Soldiers

The Army strives to continuously improve efforts to assess and train the right Soldier for the right job. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command continues to use the Occupational Physical Assessment Test (OPAT), implemented in January 2017, as a physical assessment screening tool for Officer and Enlisted Accessions. Passing the OPAT ensures new Soldiers, regardless of gender, can succeed in an assigned specialty and verifies their readiness for training. Longitudinal studies on OPAT are being conducted by the Army Research Institute to measure OPAT's effect on morale, cohesion, and readiness.

Any Soldier who can meet the standards of a Military Occupations Specialty (MOS) can be afforded the opportunity to serve in that MOS, regardless of gender. To date, the Army has successfully accessed and transferred more than 1,000 women into the previously closed occupations of Infantry, Armor, and Field Artillery.

Currently, 80 female officers are assigned to Infantry or Armor positions at Forts Hood, Bragg, Carson, Bliss, and Campbell. In 2019, assignments will expand to Forts Stewart, Drum, Riley, Polk, and Italy. Additionally, the Army has transferred, trained and assigned female NCOs into both Infantry and Armor specialties. As part of a multi-year effort to open other assignments to female Soldiers, as many as 500 women currently serve in every active Brigade Combat Team in the Army down to the company level. To date, 29 women have completed Ranger School and two officers are assigned to the Ranger Regiment. The Army continues its long-term studies on gender integration and continue to use a standards-based approach to increase the diversity in all our units.

The Army could simply not take on its mission of fighting and winning our nation's wars without its talented civilian workforce. Civilians serve across the institutional Army and around the globe. Civilians provide continuity and enable the Army to free up Soldiers for service in the operational Army. About 22% of the Army's total personnel are civilians. Since 2011, the Army has drawn down the civilian workforce by about 15%. As military end strength increases, the Army may need to increase the capabilities of the Civilian Workforce to support our Soldiers and their Families. Department of the Army Civilians are key enablers of our readiness and operational capabilities. As the Army looks to become more lethal, enhance both its capability and capacity, and ensure critical support to the Solider and their families, our Department of the Army Civilians are an integral partner, and must be right sized to ensure that part of our workforce can meet current and future demands.

In an effort to enhance our prevention efforts and gain positive, synergistic effects, we've combined the Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program (SHARP) Office with the Army Resiliency Directorate. This merger not only aligns the Army with the Department of Defense and sister Services, it also supports our goal of developing ready, resilient Soldiers of character who are able to fight and win our Nation's wars. Through the consolidation of the SHARP and Resiliency Directorates, we're realizing efficiencies in functionality, especially with regard to our prevention, policy, and research mission areas. Additionally, we're able to provide Command Teams with common initiatives and tools to help them realize and reinforce healthier organizational climates, which we believe is essential to the Army's first priority—Readiness.

To ensure we're organizationally ready for combat, we must sustain the individual readiness of our Soldiers. The Army is improving personnel readiness and deployability by strengthening Soldiers, improving resiliency skills, implementing the new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT), new deployability standards, and fostering a culture of trust. We believe these actions will enhance unit cohesion—one of the intangibles of organizational readiness.

We are continuing our efforts to provide commanders and leaders increased visibility of their readiness with improvements to the Commander's Risk Reduction Dashboard (CRRD) Increment 2. This tool gives Commanders visibility of their Soldier and unit risk history, trends, and factors impacting Personal Readiness. The Army is working to field CRRD Increment 2 to the Total Army starting this year.

In the past year, we successfully fielded Engage, which provides Soldiers with skills to recognize and enable bystander intervention and improve unit cohesion across formations. Research indicates that Soldiers lack the expertise to successfully and routinely execute professional interventions. Engage encourages engagements across a wide variety of situations to enhance communication with peers, subordinates and supervisors.

The “Not in My Squad” initiative, developed by the Sergeant Major of the Army, continues to empower squad leaders to establish healthy unit climates and encourage bystander intervention. Research has determined that squad leaders have the greatest impact on units, the individual Soldier and the organizational climate.

Engage and “Not in My Squad” are now used at 27 Ready and Resilient Performance Centers across all components of the Army. We have Certified Master Resiliency Trainers who are embedded in company-level formations and train Soldiers on sixteen resilience skills that focus on sustaining personal readiness and optimizing human performance.

The U.S. Army remains fully committed to eliminating sexual assault, sexual harassment, and associated retaliatory behavior from its ranks. Reports are thoroughly investigated, and Soldiers who commit those crimes are held accountable for their actions. All victims of sexual assault are fully supported and provided recovery services and victim protection.

Prevention, while providing professional comprehensive response when these incidents do occur, remain a top priority for the Army. We continue to focus our resources to reduce sexual misconduct across all components of the Army, while encouraging those who have experienced unwanted sexual contact to come forward. In fact, we're anticipating the third straight year of increased reporting, which reinforces our belief of increased confidence in the chain of command and our response system

We recognize that regardless of the progress that has been made, more work must be done. For example, the January 2019 report on Military Service Academies Gender Relations (SAGR) survey showed an increase in prevalence since the last time the survey instrument was administered in 2016. Our leaders at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) have been working the past 18 months on revamping the school's prevention program prior to the SAGR survey results. As a result of a bottom-up review, the leadership at USMA has set into motion plans to enhance the climate through a commitment to provide a safe environment grounded in the Army Values of dignity and respect so all cadets can reach their full potential in service to our Nation as leaders of character. As part of this effort, USMA is implementing a plan of action that includes: (1) Reoccurring Stand Down's that will focus on safety and alcohol consumption; (2) Increased Barracks Presence by the Academy leadership; (3) Alcohol Management; and utilization of (4) Subject Matter Expert Panels and Education to supplement the SHARP curriculum. Additionally, reporting increased at USMA for the fifth straight year. We previously made changes to facilitate the ease of reporting for cadets and are encouraged by the fact that they trust the leadership at USMA and are confident in the Academy's response system. We also participated in the Navy led a national discussion on sexual assault and sexual harassment occurring at America's colleges, universities, and Service Academies in April with the Army, the other Services, Congress, and 125 leaders from institutions of higher education, on sexual assault and sexual harassment occurring at America's colleges, universities and service academies. The dialogue included the sharing of lessons learned and ongoing initiatives. The Navy closed by passing the torch for next year's national discussion to the Army.

First-line leaders are foundational to the Army's primary prevention efforts regarding sexual assault, sexual harassment, and associated retaliation. Army leaders must set and enforce standards, practice healthy relationships, and set the conditions to prevent sexual misconduct from occurring. We will continue to build a climate of trust that respects and protects the dignity of every team member, and ensure individuals are skilled in problem identification and effective in early and proactive interventions that reduce all types of misconduct.

Suicide remains a complex national problem that the Army works to resolve as do the rest of the Services. The Army Senior Leadership remains concerned with the high number of deaths by suicide over the past two years and have mandated a rigorous implementation of initiatives and command emphasis across all components of the Army. We have better awareness of the demographics for most of our deaths being males in the ranks from Private First Class through Staff Sergeant who have a combination of relationship, financial, work-related, and behavioral issues. With this increased awareness, Army Senior Leadership has mandated command emphasis and leader engagement across all components of the Army.

In 2019, the Army will conduct a pilot at select locations intended to test the following new initiatives: Leader tools designed to improve visibility, improve Soldier communication with complex and sensitive subjects, and provide Soldiers a better self-assessment; Surging capabilities to train and educate Soldiers on resilience skills designed to improve individual coping mechanisms and make resiliency an Army core competency; and renewed partnering with external agencies such as the VA, Center for Disease Control, leading universities and research Institutions to examine and potentially implement new initiatives to help reduce suicides across the Army and entire Joint Force. If these prove beneficial we expand them to the entire force.

This Army continues to work to decrease the stigma associated with seeking behavioral health care, and we are seeing some positive results. Behavioral Health encounters for the Total Army grew from FY07 to FY17, indicating greater trust in the

system. The practice of embedding behavioral health personnel and substance abuse disorder providers within combat units provides Soldiers with more comprehensive care. So far in 2019, we're experiencing the lowest suicide rate in 5 years, with 13 fewer losses of Soldiers to suicide than at the same point in 2018. We view this as an indicator of potential progress.

Total Army Non-Deployable personnel reduced by ~97K or 9% from June 2016 to December 2018 (~153K or 15% to ~56K or 6%). The current 6% Non-Deployable rate is a result of aligning Army reporting with the current DoD Instruction and with command emphasis at all levels. Beyond reducing the number of Non-Deployables, the published policies (*DoDI 1332.45, Retention Determinations for Non-Deployable Service Members, and Army Directive 2018-22, Retention Policy for Non-Deployable Soldiers*) are establishing a culture change. While policy revisions have proven to aid in increasing deployability and lethality, additional Army initiatives have and continue to provide positive results. To increase deployability, the Army established the Holistic Health and Fitness Program (H2F), which synchronizes all physical fitness and health initiatives, and legacy systems used throughout the Army. It is a paradigm shift to a proactive injury prevention strategy. H2F is composed of five enduring elements: governance, programming, equipment, personnel and leadership education. The program fosters more resilient Soldiers who are better prepared to conduct their wartime mission. While we continue to monitor the impacts of recent policy revisions and established initiatives, we are confident we're trending in the right direction, as evidenced by the increased readiness in our Brigade Combat Teams.

The readiness of Regular Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) has doubled since June 2016, when only 12 of 31 or 39% of RA BCTs achieved the highest state of personnel Readiness. As of March 2019, 24 of 31 or 77% of RA BCTs achieved the highest state of personnel readiness. In addition, the RA BCTs achieved the 5% Non-Deployable goal and continue the trend of improved overall personnel readiness. The increased personnel readiness is attributable to the collaborative efforts of leader emphasis and a continually engaged medical community.

The Army remains committed to efficiently evaluating potentially ill and injured Soldiers in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES), returning fit Soldiers to duty or assisting unfit Soldiers in transitioning to civilian life. Improving trends in case processing times demonstrate the Army's resolve. Average processing times are 214 days for Non-Active Duty Soldiers and 171 days for Active Duty Soldiers (below the OSD October 2019 goal of 180 days). Processing times were impacted during FY18 due to Information Technology (IT) migration activities involving our separate Medical Evaluation Board and Physical Evaluation Board case processing applications merging into a single disability case processing application. As of now, the IDES non-deployable population remains steady between 10,000 and 11,000.

The Army is undertaking a comprehensive reform of the Officer Personnel Management System to ensure we match the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of each soldier to the right position, optimizing both in order to dominate in land combat against any adversary. The Army Talent Management Task Force is leading the Army's efforts to shift from an Industrial-Age personnel distribution system to an Information-Age market-based talent management model that deliberately manages our Soldiers and Civilians based on optimized placement in positions that capitalize on their unique talents. The task force oversees initiatives to ensure the Army acquires, develops, employs, and retains Soldiers and Civilians with the diverse talents required for the current and future force.

The 2019 NDAA provided us great flexibility and we use the authorities granted in it to help determine what a future talent-based system looks like. For example, the Army direct commissioned four Captains and has plans to direct commission at least 12 more officers this fiscal year, including a Major. Implementation of merit-based promotions are scheduled to begin in July with the Army Competitive Category Major promotion board. Under the Talent Assessment Program, the Army piloted a battery of talent assessments and plans to expand the program to all junior captains attending the captain's career courses starting this summer.

Talent assessments are not new to young officers. In fact, many of the second lieutenants entering the Army today are products of talent-based branching. The program was first piloted at West Point in 2012 and expanded to ROTC in 2016 and OCS in 2018. Cadets undergo a battery of assessments that inform their branch choice and determine if it is a good fit for both the branch and the individual. An unexpected outcome of talent-based assessments is that it changed cadets' behavior over time as cadets became more aware of their own talents and more informed about branches.

In January, the Army Talent Management Task Force held a planning conference with 183 representatives from more than 80 organizations across the Army. The outcome of that conference was a series of initiatives that the Army will use to understand, assess, experiment, and implement a new talent management system – a system that when appropriate, includes spot promotions, opting out of promotion boards, and a new alternate promotion authority. Bridging the gap between the current and future system requires a regulated marketplace, integration of holistic assessments, and flexible career paths. We are currently running multiple pilots to test and gather lessons learned. For example, Assignment Interactive Module Version 2 (AIM 2) is conducting marketplace matching between officers designated to move and available assignments. Moving to an Officer Talent Management System will require fundamental changes in Army culture – changes we're already seeing with the adoption of the AIM 2 marketplace and talent-based branching. The Army is transforming its business practices and developing innovations to ensure we provide a force that is optimized to fight and win our Nation's wars.

For the first time ever, IPPS-A will enable the Army to manage all 1 million Total Force Soldiers in a single, integrated personnel and pay system that will directly impact the readiness of the Total Force and improve the lives of our Soldiers. It will provide a full end-to-end audit capability to ensure Army personnel and pay transactions are compliant with the law. We will introduce a mobile capability providing full transparency of actions and the Army will clean its disparate HR data from over 200 personnel and

pay systems, creating an authoritative data source for HR data inside of IPPS-A. I am excited to share that we completed the Release 2 IPPS-A Limited User Test with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard this past February and we are now Live in both Pennsylvania and Virginia with Maryland and District of Columbia scheduled for June 2019. The test was a success and approved for deployment to the remainder of the National Guard throughout 2019 and into early 2020.

Over the next several years, the Army's continued use of market-based, talent based branching-integrated with initiatives to redesign promotion selection processes-will help us retain talented officers. We will recognize high performing officers and be able to manage them accordingly with the authority to make order of merit promotion list adjustments. Additionally, the use of Opt-Out provisions will offer flexibility for promotion consideration. Our analysis of the broad alternate promotion authority will allow us to develop additional initiatives; and together, the use of the new authorities granted in the FY19 NDAA will help the Army transform its business practices and develop personnel management innovations that ensure we provide a force optimized to fight and win our Nation's wars.

Taking care of Soldiers and their Families while they are in the Army is just one part of our commitment to ensuring their successful transition. We never forget we must continue our efforts to prepare our Soldiers for transition in the community as productive Veterans.

The Army's Soldier for Life program conducts strategic outreach and shapes education, employment, and health policies, programs and services to inspire citizens to serve and to create an environment where Soldiers transition to be productive members of society. The program connects private and public organizations to transitioning Soldiers and spouses looking for educational and employment opportunities.

For FY18, the Army's Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act compliance increased from 88% to over 90% -- the Active Component at 91% (+1%), ARNG at 91%

(+5%), and USAR at 82% (+3%). We continue to enhance our policies and procedures for transitioning Soldiers and have ensured Commanders understand that they must ensure their Soldiers attend VOW Act-mandated briefings. It is in the Army's and our Nation's best interest to ensure Soldiers transition successfully back into our communities. Further, according to data from the Department of Labor, in 2018 Soldier for Life – Transition Assistance Program efforts assisted in reducing the unemployment rate for Veterans that joined the Army after September 11, 2001, to less than 4% (3.8%) for the first time, with the lowest amount of unemployment compensation for Veterans in 17 years. Between FY11 and FY18, SFL-TAP efforts have contributed to an 82.2% decrease in total Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members (UCX) payments ($514.6M to $91.4M). The FY18 UCX invoice is the lowest since FY01 ($89.8M).

We have invested a tremendous amount of resources and deliberate planning to preserve the All-Volunteer Force. People are the Army...these men and women who serve our Nation, both in uniform and out of uniform, along with their families, are our most important asset. For the Army to be ready, our Soldiers must be ready. The Army will not sacrifice readiness or quality as we continue to grow. Chairwoman Speier, members of this committee, I thank you for generous and unwavering support of our outstanding Soldiers, Civilian Professionals, and their Families.

Lieutenant General Thomas C. Seamands
Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1
United States Army

Lieutenant General Thomas C. Seamands is the product of an Army Family. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management from the University of Dayton and was commissioned through the ROTC program into the Adjutant General's Corps. He is a graduate of the AG Officer Basic Course, AG Officer Advanced Course, and the Army Command and General Staff College. He attained a Master of Science Degree in Management from Webster University, was the Army's Leadership and Management Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and a Fellow at MIT's Seminar XXI: Foreign Politics, International Relations and the National Interest. Lieutenant General Seamands assumed his current assignment as the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, United States Army, Washington, DC in May 2017.

Lieutenant General Seamands' most recent assignment was as the Commanding General, United States Army Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky. His previous assignments include: S-1, 649th Engineer Battalion, Germany; Executive Officer, HHC, 1st PERSCOM, Germany; Chief, Personnel Administrative Service Affairs Division, later Chief, Enlisted Strength Management Division, 82d Adjutant General Company, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Commander, 82d Replacement Detachment, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Chief, Officer Strength Management Division, 82d Adjutant General Company, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Chief, Personnel Actions, later Executive Officer, 556th Personnel Services Company, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Deputy G-1, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, North Carolina; Chief, Enlisted Distribution Division, United States Army Pacific, Hawaii; Chief, Combat Service Support Team and Continental United States Distribution Team, United States Army Personnel Command, Alexandria, Virginia; Executive Officer, 82d Personnel Services Battalion, later Executive Officer, 82d Soldier Support Battalion, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Deputy Commander, 18th Personnel Group (Airborne) and 18th Soldier Support Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Commander, 556th Personnel Services Battalion, later Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Assistant Chief of Staff, CJ-1, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq; Chief, General Officer Management Office, Office of the Chief of Staff, Army, Pentagon; Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, United States Army Forces Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and Director of Personnel Management, Army G-1, Washington, DC.

His awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal (Two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters), Legion of Merit (One Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (One Silver Oak Leaf Cluster), Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (One Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), Master Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and Army Staff Identification Badge.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF

VICE ADMIRAL ROBERT P. BURKE, U.S. NAVY

CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

AND

DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

(MANPOWER, PERSONNEL, TRAINING & EDUCATION)

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

OF THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON

RECRUITING, RETAINING, AND MANAGING THE FORCE

TO BUILD THE MODERN MILITARY

MAY 16, 2019

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished Members of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss our Navy's most important strategic asset, our people.

READY AND CAPABLE GLOBAL NAVY

For over 240 years, the U.S. Navy has been a cornerstone of American security and prosperity. In an increasingly globalized world, the Nation's security is ever more dependent on the Navy. People are the strength behind every organization — the talent in our workforce is our most critical differentiator in a world complicated by numerous security threats. Today's workforce is very different from that of previous generations, changed by national trends in family, education and work dynamics. We are building a larger fleet with new operating concepts, which requires people of diverse backgrounds and experiences, critical thinking skills and the mental agility to operate across the spectrum of change that lies ahead while addressing the needs of the modern workforce, including an innovative personnel system, equally agile and flexible, and ready to meet the challenges and uncertainty of a great power era.

To compete for talent and dominate in the maritime domain, we must apply cutting-edge human resources management practices and technology, and as importantly, continue our efforts to become a customer-experience-driven organization that shows, through action, that we value Sailors and their families. We must consistently take care of them as they endure lengthy deployments, often in harm's way, and with prolonged family separations. Sailors deserve and rightly expect to be treated as valued members of the team, or they will go elsewhere. All of those antiquated things we ask Sailors and their families to endure about today's industrial-age systems send a signal that we do not value them as intelligent technology-oriented members of the Navy family. To remain a ready and capable global Navy, we must complete ongoing efforts to transform the Navy personnel system, as soon as possible.

COMPETING FOR TALENT

Economic trends have a significant influence on the workforce. Under good economic conditions, America's youth have more options at their disposal, challenging Navy's ability to meet recruiting requirements as potential candidates explore alternative employment opportunities. This past year, the U.S. economy experienced its strongest growth since the recession of 2008, resulting in significant expansion of employment opportunity in an ever-tightening labor market. National forecasts predict regional labor shortages in the working-age population among critical occupational categories, e.g., computers, mathematics and healthcare. Economic trends reflect the difficulty private sector employers are experiencing in filling job vacancies. The proportion of firms with unfilled jobs, and the proportion of vacancies for which there are few or no qualified job applicants, have increased to historically-high levels. The number of employees choosing to leave their jobs has also escalated, making private sector retention increasingly difficult.

The labor market, especially among blue collar and service employees from which we draw most of our enlisted workforce, is experiencing extremely low unemployment and high wage growth. That segment of the workforce is declining as increasing numbers of youth in our target market attend college. Our competitive pay and benefits package may be the most significant factor buffering us from the impacts of this shift in the economic environment. Additionally, the demographic diversity of the workforce is increasing. These environmental factors are the foundation for understanding our workforce and how to manage talent. Labor market conditions may entice Sailors in certain critical skills to leave for the civilian job market. Using better predictive analytics, we are striving to retain key labor skills by adjusting enlistment and retention bonuses ahead of need. We have also increased the number of recruiters and enhanced our marketing and advertising efforts through our new "Forged by the Sea" brand and a digital recruit prospecting strategy.

END STRENGTH AND BUDGET GROWTH

The Navy is recruiting and retaining the talent needed for our growing fleet, and Sailor 2025 and MPT&E transformation efforts are vital to delivering and sustaining *The Navy the Nation Needs*. Our Navy personnel team plays a pivotal role in executing the direction outlined in the new National Defense and National Military Strategies, particularly in ensuring readiness and lethality, and reforming business practices and systems to achieve greater performance and affordability. *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority, 2.0* announced in December, details Navy's implementation plans in support of these strategic documents.

We are arming our talented workforce with a modernized, agile and flexible personnel system, ready to meet the challenges and uncertainty of an era of emerging great power competition. We are growing our ranks to support shipbuilding, modernization and aircraft procurement authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18 NDAA), as we work towards building *The Navy the Nation Needs*. Sustaining the larger Fleet requires continued investment in people and reliable, steady funding. We are aggressively working to complete the MPT&E transformation effort to simplify management and curtail personnel costs for Navy military manpower. Similarly, our Sailor 2025 initiatives are critical to recruiting the best Sailors up-front. To accomplish this mission, we will offer better talent-matching, greater career flexibility, modernized and portable training delivery, better life/work balance, and pay and incentives that keep pace with market forces. These factors will lead to higher retention and a leaner, more sustainable personnel footprint.

ENLISTED FORCE MANAGEMENT

MPT&E transformation has delivered initial capability into the hands of Sailors and their families, heralding a new era in Navy personnel management that offers world-class customer service. We are demonstrating that we value Sailors and their families by designing every personnel process and policy with a Sailor-centric approach.

We have implemented several initiatives to address enlisted fleet manning shortfalls, including adjusting High Year Tenure (HYT), increasing enlisted accessions, modifying Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) separation policy, and aligning sea tours with service obligations. We

established a new distribution policy to improve supervisory manning levels at sea and other operational units by transferring ~1,260 chief petty officers to operational units and restored the Sailor Early Return to Sea (SERTS) policy to reduce sea duty vacancies in pay grades E4-E9. Our Targeted Reentry Program (TRP) pilot identifies select Sailors for expedited return to active duty by eliminating burdensome reentry processes, enhancing Active and Reserve Component permeability. New pilot programs influence Sailors to stay Navy, through an Advancement-to-Vacancy Selection Board that spot advances enlisted Sailors into priority billets, and by offering a performance-based Selective Reenlistment Bonus premium for Sailors in certain ratings who meet key performance marks.

Enlisted Recruiting

Over the past two years, we increased our annual enlisted accession goal by approximately 4,000 recruits, to meet growing fleet manning requirements. We achieved 100 percent of our Active Component (AC) accession goal in FY18. We have now met goal for 143 consecutive months. We fell short in Reserve Component (RC) Non-Prior Service and Prior Service accessions, and Active and Reserve New Contract Objective (NCO). Record AC retention means fewer separating Sailors available to affiliate in the Selected Reserve contributing to slight RC under-manning. While manageable, this shortfall is indicative of the changing environment.

We are improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our recruiting organization through realignment, transformation, workforce improvements and policy reform. "Street to Fleet" has been realigned under the Force Development pillar, led by Commander, Naval Education and Training Command, creating synergy and unity-of-effort throughout the recruiting and training pipeline. This allows us to better-identify talent needs and performance indicators up-front, reducing attrition and increasing retention, thereby lowering the demand for new recruits. We are focusing on talent acquisition while aligning our workforce based on individual skill sets to maximize productivity. In FY18, we transitioned four legacy Navy Recruiting Districts (NRD) into Navy Talent Acquisition Groups (NTAG) and subordinate Talent Acquisition Onboarding Centers (TAOC). Two additional NRDs transitioned to NTAGs in FY19. This new model eliminates the "middle layer" of the NRD and associated overhead and bureaucracy, while improving overall recruiter performance output by 25 percent.

We are streamlining processes, through digital improvements in interactions with the civilian population and processing new leads, and we began a targeted and digital-focused Marketing and Advertising campaign under our new brand. Digital Prospecting allows recruiters to leverage messaging tools on the Navy.com website and other social media to start initial conversations with potential recruits, increasing the number of recruiting prospects, and reaching diverse markets, while lowering costs-per-lead — the most efficient Marketing and Advertising campaign in Navy's history.

We added 200 recruiters in FY18 by mobilizing Reserve Sailors, and will add 200 more in FY19 while extending over 400 Sailors on recruiting duty for six to 12 months. We increased incentive pay for top-performing recruiting teams, and advancement opportunities for top-performing Sailors, and will soon advance high-performing Sailors who volunteer for recruiting

duty. We increased the amount, number and types of enlistment bonuses and tailored packages to a prospective recruit's needs to more effectively and efficiently target incentives.

We eliminated obsolete accession policies and improved others that excluded a potential source of talent. We expanded opportunity by aligning Armed Forces Qualification Test scores and age limits with the other military services and contemporized certain medical waiver criteria based on societal norms (e.g., ADHD, eczema, allergies). These types of changes resulted in nearly 8,300 additional Sailors in FY18, who otherwise would not have been able to serve, or who were influenced to join by greater job opportunities.

The net effect of these changes, most of which originated with deck-plate recruiters, has been staggering. The table below compares the difference in recruiter force size (boots on ground recruiters) and budgets, for FY18 and FY08, the last time we had an Active Component enlisted force recruiting mission of this size.

Navy Recruiting – FY08 Compared with FY18		
	FY08	FY18
Active Accession Mission	38,419	39,000
Beginning of Year Delayed Entry Pool	18,855	18,384
Production Recruiters	4,600	3,200
Total Obligational Authority (O&MN) ($K)	$ 341,986	$ 177,677
Marketing and Advertising ($K)	$ 190,375	$ 48,824
Enlistment Bonus ($K)	$ 101,705	$ 29,988

Enlisted Retention

Retention of every capable Sailor remains a vital element of our growth strategy. We increased retention across all pay grades in FY18, by applying a range of force management tools, and are maximizing retention efforts for proven performers to meet growing mission requirements. A fairly steep growth trajectory imposes some challenges for all ratings and skills. While overall enlisted retention in FY18 was the highest seen in many years, critical skill communities, such as Nuclear Field, Special Warfare, Advanced Electronics, Aviation Maintenance and Information Technology require focused retention efforts including targeted reenlistment bonuses. Special and incentive pays continue to play a vital role in retaining Sailors in high-risk, high-demand and/or high-investment skill sets and we are proactively managing force structure growth to man new units to operational requirements. Monetary incentives remain an integral part of our retention strategy, including our new pilot program that adds a merit-based component to enlisted retention bonuses.

We are refining force management policies by reducing the number of circumstances in which commanding officers must make individual force management decisions, while expanding Sailor choice for reenlistment or lateral conversions into other career fields. Efforts to-date have yielded positive retention results, although some, e.g., easing High Year Tenure gates, offer immediate gains that will decrease over time. We have also expanded reenlistment and rating

conversion opportunities, resulting in unprecedented retention and numbers of conversions under the Reserve Component to Active Component program. Shortfalls among high-demand critical skills in FY18 were mitigated through conversion of 1,163 Reserve Sailors to the Active Component.

OFFICER FORCE MANAGEMENT

Competition remains keen as we continue using every force management lever to recruit top talent into our officer corps, train them with cutting-edge technology and techniques, and retain their expertise in which we have heavily invested, to preserve our competitive advantage in the maritime security environment. In addition to our Fleet Scholars Education Program (FSEP), Tours with Industry (TWI), and Merit-based retention incentives, we immediately began development of programs to implement officer personnel management reforms enacted in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, including:

- expansion of constructive service credit to recruit civilian candidates with education, leadership, and experience credentials for leadership roles in cyber and engineering duty officer fields,
- expansion of spot promotion opportunity to designated O-5 and O-6 billets,
- executing merit promotion authority to incentivize top performers,
- retention of certain control grade officers with targeted skills in aviation, acquisition, engineering duty officer and attachés beyond traditional statutory limits,
- relaxation of the requirement that original appointments be granted only to individuals able to complete 20 years commissioned service by age 62.

Beginning with the FY21 promotion board cycle, we plan to exercise promotion deferment authority to afford greater flexibility to top performing officers whose competitiveness might otherwise suffer due to participation in career-broadening and education opportunities encouraged by the Navy, e.g., Rhodes and Olmsted Scholars, and Tours with Industry. We appreciate Congressional support for enactment of these provisions and look forward to updating you on our progress as we leverage these vital transformational force management tools.

Officer Recruiting

We continue to see strong interest in commissioning opportunities through the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) and Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) program, as the number of highly qualified applicants vastly exceeds the number of available appointments. We continue to attract the finest applicants and graduate well-rounded, technically competent leaders for commissioned naval service. While overall officer accession goals were met in FY18, the market continues to be challenging in certain designators, e.g., Judge Advocate General's Corps within the active component, and Medical Corps in the reserve component.

Officer Retention

While officer retention is sufficient to meet milestone requirements in most officer communities, meeting our demand signal among aviation warfare officers in specific

type/model/series platforms, nuclear-trained surface warfare officers, submarine officers, and naval special warfare (NSW) officers, specifically Navy SEALs, remains challenging. We continue to apply and refine a combination of monetary and non-monetary incentives to address retention among these groups.

Naval aviation's inventory and accessions (tactical, maritime, and rotary wing combined) remain sufficient to meet operational requirements. However, declining pilot retention in some Active and Reserve communities, especially strike fighter (VFA) and electronic attack (VAQ), continues to present serious challenges to aviation long-term health. Low affiliation of maritime patrol (VP) aviators due to platform transition uncertainty, and high turnover rates within Fleet Logistics (VR) caused by commercial airline hiring, remain a concern in the Reserve Component. Challenges in retaining mid-grade and senior aviators continue to be primarily rooted in lack of flight hours, tactical training and progression of qualifications associated with aircraft material readiness challenges, quality of life dissatisfiers, especially in non-fleet concentration areas, and the perception of a broadening pay gap with the commercial airline industry.

Aviators seek more career path flexibility and opportunities for personal and professional development, and flexible, merit-based monetary incentives competitive with civilian sector. In March 2018, we announced substantial across-the-board improvements in Aviation Bonus for department head and command, and Aviation Incentive Pay, applying a holistic approach that synchronizes targeted increases in flight pay and bonuses in a mutually-supportive fashion to coincide with major aviation leadership milestones. These changes show early promise in improving retention and significantly increased take-rates in areas such as the Command Bonus.

We have expanded access to career-enhancing opportunities to improve flexibility in the Naval aviation career path, e.g., graduate school and fellowships, Tours with Industry and the Career Intermission Program. This past year, we leveraged authorities enacted in the FY19 NDAA and implemented the Professional Flight Instructor (PFI) Program that allows select pilots and naval flight officers to serve continuously as flight instructors as an alternative to the traditional sea/shore rotational career path, affording greater assignment stability and rewarding experiences through developing our newest naval aviators.

The combination of existing aviation-specific incentives and Sailor 2025 officer personnel reforms are expected to slow, and ultimately reverse, the trend of aviators choosing to leave the Navy after their initial commitment. Sustained support for readiness enabler accounts, including flight hour and aircraft spare parts accounts, is critical to improving the quality of aviation service in the near term. This support, coupled with personnel initiatives, should address most of the critical issues causing aviators to leave the Navy.

We are refining the NSW Officer Bonus to increase take rates and improve retention, and expanding eligibility to alternate career paths to improve inventory at pay grades O-4 and O-5. We are also consolidating Jump, Dive and Demolition pays into a single Skill Incentive Pay.

Submarine and Surface Warfare (Nuclear) communities are using monetary and non-monetary incentives to retain their best talent. Monetary incentives include retention bonuses for officers willing to commit early to future service and special duty pays for challenging nuclear

billets. Recent changes to conventional (non-nuclear) Surface Warfare Officer Department Head retention bonuses, among our first to add merit components, continue to provide adequate retention.

SAILOR 2025

Attracting and retaining the best Sailors in an increasingly competitive talent market requires continued flexibility and transparency in policies and practices. Sailor 2025, a dynamic set of over 50 initiatives, is a roadmap to improve personnel programs by providing choice and flexibility. Sailor 2025 is modernizing personnel management and training policies and systems to more effectively identify, recruit and train talented people and manage the force while improving warfighting readiness. The modern, innovative, information technology infrastructure we are building will improve how we recruit, train and retain talent, more accurately and efficiently assign talent, better design and account for compensation packages and generate a system that affords greater flexibility and permeability. Sailor 2025 is built on a framework of three pillars, a modern personnel system, a career learning continuum with modernized delivery methods, entitled Ready, Relevant Learning (RRL), and Career Readiness, that is shaping resilient, tough Sailors bolstered by a family support network, which fosters a career of service.

Personnel System Modernization

The first pillar, "Personnel System Modernization," is wholesale modernization of our entire personnel system. We are creating flexible policies and additional career choices and empowering commanding officers with tools to retain the best and brightest Sailors. We continued to implement programs in FY18, including primary/secondary caregiver leave, O5/O6 Selective Early Retirement Board, Targeted Re-entry, and Reserve Component (RC) to Active Component (AC) Fast-Track programs. We are also expanding "Detailing Marketplace" pilot initiatives, overhauling the performance evaluation system, modernizing advancement examinations coincident with rating modernization and achieving greater AC-RC permeability.

Ready Relevant Learning

The second pillar, "Ready, Relevant Learning" (RRL), is a holistic approach to training our career enlisted force, which will accelerate learning for faster response to rapidly changing warfighting requirements in increasingly dynamic operational environments. Legacy training does not take full advantage of existing and emerging technology for knowledge-transfer. Skills acquired during accession pipeline training atrophy due to delays between receipt of training and on-the-job performance, increasing the burden on the fleet and potentially compromising operational readiness. We are using the science-of-learning to transform the current training model to modern training solutions delivered at the point-of-need, better prepare Sailors to operate and maintain equipment at its technological limits, and meet rapidly evolving warfighting requirements. This will occur across three lines of effort: (1) career-long learning continuum, (2) modern delivery at the point-of-need, and (3) integrated content development.

We are approaching the end of the first stage of the career-long learning continuum line of effort, known as Block Learning, which divides existing accession-level training content into

smaller blocks moved to real-world points-of-need in a Sailor's career, shortening initial accession training and sending Sailors to the fleet sooner. Block Learning uses existing content as we reengineer training to meet future RRL training continuum objectives. We have completed Block Learning analysis and approved changes for all 54 ratings — 46 executing training in block delivery construct, one projected to implement in FY19, and seven designated to move directly into the second line of effort, i.e., modern delivery at the point of need.

The second RRL line of effort leverages emerging learning technology to more-efficiently deliver training at the point-of-need, i.e., the waterfront or operational unit. Applying science-of-learning principles makes training more effective, efficient and available by leveraging technology to provide online training tools, including virtual reality and interactive "apps", at the time and place needed, thereby, reducing the necessity and costs of returning Sailors to retrain at legacy brick-and-mortar schoolhouses. We have completed modernization requirements-development for two ratings and 23 more are scheduled for completion in FY19. Eighteen additional ratings are undergoing requirements with development to be delivered at a later date. We continue to identify and align IT capabilities to support delivery of modernized content ashore and afloat. We are on track to deliver modernized content in September for our first rating, Operations Specialist, to be followed by two other ratings in FY20.

We have entered the third line of effort - integrated content development, solidifying the fleet's role in defining training requirements and validating analysis that aligns training-content and delivery methods with fleet needs. An RRL Integration Board provides a framework to offer strategic guidance, approve major implementation and phasing decisions and address resourcing requirements. An RRL Training System Program Manager (TSPM) staff is responsible for planning and acquisition of RRL training content and hardware, and monitors program cost, schedule and performance. These governance and program-oversight initiatives align stakeholder efforts and resolve seam issues to ensure program success.

Career Readiness

The third pillar, Career Readiness, will remove barriers to continued service and improve work-life balance, health and wellness. We will enhance career readiness by better-developing leaders and removing obstacles that negatively influence a Sailor's decision to Stay Navy. We are more powerful and lethal when we leverage the talents and strengths of the workforce and instill an environment in which all are valued and respected, a force multiplier. We have incorporated the One Navy Team concept into leader development to make our force more diverse, inclusive, resilient and competitive, equipped and ready to deter war and protect the National security. In FY18, we updated the Naval Leadership and Ethics Center curriculum in support of Navy-specific unconscious bias education and training.

MANPOWER PERSONNEL TRAINING & EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

This past year, we made significant headway in our transformation journey to holistically modernize the MPT&E Enterprise. MPT&E Transformation is vital to combat current and emerging threats, deliver global lethality and maintain maritime superiority. Ultimately, Navy

will benefit from a more agile, adaptive and better-trained force, ready to meet an increasingly complex mission. We achieved critical milestones toward our vision and future state.

The Undersecretary of the Navy's recent Education for Seapower Study demonstrates the critical importance of effective education to support the National Defense Strategy in an era of great power competition and pervasive technical change that the study calls "The Cognitive Age", signaling the need for continual breakthroughs and education in artificial intelligence, robotics, autonomous systems, and machine learning to enable strategic and critical thinking to flourish.

In September, we launched MyNavy Career Center (MNCC) Beta, delivering enhanced personnel, pay and training customer service. Sailors access tiered-service delivery with 24/7 customer support for phone and email queries and transaction requests. MyNavy Portal self-service options offer online knowledge tools and a select set of HR pay and personnel transactions, freeing-up time for Sailors to focus on warfighting missions and families. This year, we will achieve another MNCC milestone with our Initial Operation Capabilities (IOC) launch, which will bring new Customer Relationship Management and Telephony technology combined with numerous process improvements. Ultimately, Sailors and families will be able to conduct HR pay and personnel business online in the same secure manner in which they currently transact with banks and insurance companies.

We established a Results Delivery Office (RDO) and assigned Business Design Owners (BDOs) to matrix our organization and accelerate transformation. This past year, RDO and BDOs partnered to identify opportunities to enhance the Sailor experience and improve HR services to meet the needs of Sailors and their families, including:

- an interactive, customized My PCS Checklist, and Lean Orders to improve the Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move experience, and a forthcoming PCS mobile capability for easier, smartphone access to orders, submission of travel claims and other improvements
- a Performance Evaluation Transformation coaching tool to provide immediate performance feedback and clearer understanding of career development opportunities
- a "competition counter" into Career Management System - Interactive Detailing (CMS-ID) that provides greater transparency and helps Sailors evaluate opportunities,
- three prioritized solutions to provide additional opportunities and greater clarity in support of Credentialing, Apprenticeships, and Voluntary Education (CAVE)

Progressing towards a single, secure Navy Pay and Personnel (NP2) system, MPT&E Field Test 1 (FT1) prototype achieved its objective of demonstrating 60 percent of a Sailor's "Street-to-Fleet" HR requirements using a Commercial-off-the-Shelf (COTS) system with no more than 10 percent customization. We launched a Rapid Prototype Pilot (RPP) to begin building a Treasury Direct Disbursement (TDD) and pay capability for Active and Reserve Sailors by December 2020.

Completing our new operating model, we stood-up an Enterprise Support group and developed an MPT&E Comprehensive Analytics Strategy and Roadmap that defines the steps needed to integrate state-of-the-art analytic methods into MPT&E Enterprise business processes.

This will improve our ability to man the fleet with the right Sailor, in the right place, at the right time, and provide leadership with modern, predictive and prescriptive analytics tools.

Delivering transformed, 21st Century, worldwide, 24/7 personnel services and training to Active and Reserve Sailors and their families is incumbent on the ability to operate and interact in the commercial cloud. In 2018, working closely with DoD cyber security experts, we began prototyping numerous cloud-based capabilities, to provide a full production, secure, MPT&E system-of-systems in a commercial cloud environment.

This year of execution and progress, combined with ongoing Sailor 2025 and Ready Relevant Learning efforts, has moved us from planning to delivery of new capabilities and solutions, steering MPT&E to a more Sailor-focused organization. Sailors are beginning to see the benefits of improved transparency, connectivity and customer service. Fleet leaders are beginning to see faster translation of personnel and training needs to action, with access to more accurate data about how those needs are being met. I am confident our proven methodology and significant investment in stakeholder engagement with key partners will enable us to continue gaining velocity in transformation in the coming year.

TAKING CARE OF SAILORS AND NAVY FAMILIES

Family Framework/Support Programs

The *Navy Family Framework* reinforces the role families play in mission success and enhances support for families by improving support programs, improving communications and spouse training, expanding our education network, conducting meaningful command leader engagement and reinforcing family connection with the Navy and its core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

Informed by feedback from world-wide spouse engagement sessions, we recently launched the MyNavy Family mobile application to identify, consolidate and standardize information into one authoritative source. In fiscal year 2018, we conducted 36 Live Well webinars — available online — on managing the unique demands of the military lifestyle, while installation commanders led over 150 all-hands calls and 100 town hall meetings to engage Navy families. We are continuing this effort this year with 18 webinars conducted to-date, while commanders continue to engage the military community. A Governanee Board was established to advise leadership on policy and efforts to ensure ready and resilient families. The Family Employment Readiness Program assists military spouses in obtaining employment and maintaining a career, particularly as they are impacted by changes in the economy, labor market conditions and military lifestyle. Navy is currently developing plans to implement reimbursement of spouse licensure fees authorized in the FY18 NDAA.

Lack of accessible, affordable child care continues to be an important family readiness issue. Despite current shortfalls, we continue to invest heavily in meeting the child care needs of Sailors to ensure they are always mission-ready, aware that their families are well cared for. We have added 7,000 child care spaces in the last decade and have extended hours of operation where needed. MilitaryChildCare.com is operational, allowing families to view available

military child care world-wide, request child care at any DoD location and obtain anticipated placement time based on the family's priority. It offers a single source for available child care resources, raising awareness of available resources, enabling a family to better plan for a move, and allowing for earlier placement on waiting lists, thereby reducing wait times during transition. We are exploring partnerships with organizations to expand child care availability, which would benefit other organizations as well as Navy families in fleet areas with long waiting lists. Because most Sailors don't reside near extended family, the family network used by the general population is unavailable to Sailors. There is a nationwide shortage of child care, and a projected 1.4 million civilian space shortfall in locations where most Navy demand resides.

Navy morale, welfare, and recreation programs provide core fitness and recreation for Sailors and families to enhance quality of life and encourage life-long positive and healthy leisure pursuits. As part of Sailor 2025, we extended hours of operation at fitness centers and child development centers in response to demand from Sailors and families, which positively influences decisions to Stay Navy and improves our ability to meet fleet readiness requirements.

To make the Navy a truly family-friendly service, we have to do much more. Career paths that support life-work balance over the long-haul, in part made possible by recently enacted officer personnel management reforms, will be part of the mix. Finally, Navy culture must change. We must take the long view where a Sailor's family needs are at stake. This culture change is being hammered home through a combination of training at officer and enlisted leader development courses and a number of policy changes.

Culture of Excellence

The Culture of Excellence campaign is an integrated, holistic approach at preventing destructive behaviors — from suicide and sexual assault to excessive use of alcohol — leveraging science and analytics, and promoting signature behaviors. It reinforces mission-effectiveness by instilling toughness, trust and connectedness, to achieve warfighting excellence, promote healthy life choices and help-seeking behavior, and skills that facilitate them, e.g., communication, conflict resolution, resiliency and problem-solving. Primary prevention efforts target three key focus areas:

- Defining problems using human factors analyses and predictive data analytics to understand Sailor needs and providing necessary support. For example, we are Beta-testing a Commander's Risk Mitigation Dashboard (CRMD) prototype to assess unit readiness levels and predict future readiness and performance. We continue to expand use of embedded mental health providers, deployed resilience counselors and chaplains to support leaders in addressing identified challenges. Use of non-uniformed counselors, which serves to de-stigmatize counseling, are showing great promise.
- Identifying primary prevention touchpoints for behavioral learning across the career continuum using avatar-based training adapted for Sailors at career milestones, or when facing life changes or other behavioral health challenges.
- Implementing evidence-based Policies, Programs, Practices, and Processes that address the full spectrum of behaviors, are continuous and balanced, and supported by Navy leadership. We are conducting a pilot that targets Sailor behavioral health e.g., Rational-Thinking and

Emotional-Regulation through Problem-Solving (REPS) Training, at Recruit Training Command, which promotes mental fitness by addressing problematic thoughts, emotions and behaviors to help cope with emotional distress.

Our Culture of Excellence Governance Board, led by the Chief of Naval Operations, meets regularly to advance priorities, align resources, and promote a full spectrum of positive behaviors to maximize Sailor potential. Proven programs, such as the Navy Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention program, continue to support enhanced fleet, family and Sailor readiness, while the "Keep What You've Earned" campaign fosters improved decision-making regarding alcohol consumption, offers alternatives and educates about the consequences of poor decision making.

CONCLUSION

The Secretary of the Navy has established priorities that center on People, Capabilities and Processes, which we will achieve through speed, value, results and partnerships. Readiness, lethality and modernization drive these priorities. *The Navy the Nation Needs* demands that we produce outstanding leaders and teams who learn and adapt faster than our adversaries. We are charged with ensuring that every Sailor and unit maximizes their potential and is ready for decisive combat operations. MPT&E Transformation and Sailor 2025 are the primary vehicles by which we are delivering this mandate. I look forward to working with you as we continue shaping our Navy to meet these challenges. On behalf of the men and women of the United States Navy, thank you for your unwavering support.

Vice Admiral Robert P. Burke
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
5/27/2016 - Present

Vice Adm. Robert Burke grew up in Portage, Michigan, and holds bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from Western Michigan University and the University of Central Florida.

Burke's operational assignments include service aboard both attack and ballistic missile submarines, including USS Von Steuben (SSBN 632), USS Maryland (SSBN 738) and USS Bremerton (SSN 698). He commanded USS Hampton (SSN 767) in Norfolk, Virginia, and was commodore of Submarine Development Squadron 12 in Groton, Connecticut. Burke was recognized by the United States Submarine League with the Jack Darby Award for Leadership in 2004 and the Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale Award for Inspirational Leadership in 2005.

His staff assignments include tours as an instructor and director for the Electrical Engineering Division at Naval Nuclear Power School, junior board member on the Pacific Fleet Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board, submarine officer community manager/nuclear officer program manager; senior Tactical Readiness Evaluation Team member at Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; the deputy director for Operations, Strategy and Policy Directorate (J5) at United States Joint Forces Command; the division director, Submarine/Nuclear Power Distribution (PERS-42); and director, Joint and Fleet Operations, N3/N5, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

As a flag officer, Burke has served as deputy commander, U.S. 6th Fleet; director of operations (N3), U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa; commander, Submarine Group 8; and most recently as director, Military Personnel Plans and Policy (OPNAV N13).

He assumed duties as the Navy's 58th chief of naval personnel May 27, 2016. Serving concurrently as the deputy chief of naval operations (manpower, personnel, training and education) (N1), he is responsible for the planning and programming of all manpower, personnel, training and education resources for the U.S. Navy. He leads more than 26,000 employees engaged in the recruiting, personnel management, training and development of Navy personnel. His responsibilities include overseeing Navy Recruiting Command, Navy Personnel Command and Naval Education and Training Command.

His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit (five awards) and various campaign and unit awards.

Updated: 13 September 2017

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: MILITARY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT—HOW ARE THE MILITARY SERVICES ADAPTING TO RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND MANAGE HIGH QUALITY TALENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A MODERN MILITARY?

STATEMENT OF:

LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRIAN T. KELLY
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF MANPOWER, PERSONNEL
AND SERVICES, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

MAY 16, 2019

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INTRODUCTION

Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, Distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee to talk about our Airmen, Active, Guard, Reserve and Civilian. America's Airmen remain "Always There" providing Global Vigilance, Reach and Power to protect and defend our Nation.

BUILDING A LETHAL AND READY AIR FORCE

Great power competition provides the central challenges to U.S. prosperity and security. To face these challenges, the United States Air Force must compete, deter, and win across the five priority missions of the National Defense Strategy:

- Defend the homeland,
- Provide a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent,
- Defeat a powerful conventional enemy, while we
- Deter opportunistic aggression, and
- Disrupt violent extremists in a cost-effective manner.

To accomplish this, we must continue to develop and build a lethal and ready Air Force. At its core, building a lethal and ready Air Force is about people. Our Airmen (military and civilian) and their families are our most important asset.

End Strength

The Air Force appreciates the support for continued end strength growth to 690,500 Total Force Airmen in the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act. We are meeting our projections to reach the desired state across our Active and Reserve components. The growth you have authorized is accelerating our readiness recovery and will provide more lethal Airmen to protect and defend our Nation today and tomorrow. This past year we focused the resources Congress provided on our pacing squadrons, the 204 operational squadrons required in the opening days of a peer fight. More than 90% of our pacing squadrons are ready to "fight tonight" with their lead force packages – the first Airmen to deploy at the beginning of a conflict. Overall readiness for pacing units is up 24%. When we include their follow-on forces, these pacing squadrons are on track to reach 80% readiness before the end of FY20, 6 years faster than originally projected. As our front-line squadrons meet their readiness goals, we are also working to ensure the remainder of our operational squadrons reach the 80% readiness mark by 2022.

The National Military Strategy directs a balanced "boxer's stance" of military readiness, and our operational pacing squadrons form the clenched fist of American resolve. But a fist is nothing without the power of the body – our supporting squadrons – behind it. While readiness indicators are moving in the right direction and active military manning in most squadrons averages 97%, manning across our supporting units and in some high demand areas remains at lower levels. Undermanned units create fragile readiness where units have single points of failure, higher operational tempos, and limit a commander's ability to mitigate readiness impacts caused by periodic non-availability of Airmen. Without continued end strength growth, our gains in readiness will slow and the Air Force will find it increasingly difficult to compete, deter, and win against near-peer competitors and across a wide spectrum of priority missions.

Our FY20 budget request builds on the progress we have been making in 2019 to restore the readiness of the force, increase lethality, and cost-effectively modernize by continuing our growth to 700,000 Total Force Airmen – 332,800 Active Duty, 107,700 Air National Guard, 70,100 Air Force Reserve, and 189,400 Civilians (number includes other service civilians, SOF and Defense Health Program).

The Total Force military growth between FY19 and FY20 is 4,400, including 3,700 Active Duty, 600 Air National Guard, and 100 Air Force Reserve Airmen. The requested growth continues our readiness recovery, augments existing capacity in our space and cyber mission areas, and provides the initial maintenance and operational manpower needed for the KC-46, F-35, and B-21. The following chart provides the specific utilization for the requested growth.

Career Area	Air Force Specialties	FY20 Proposed Growth		
		Active	Reserve	Air Guard
Rated Officer Aviator Revitalization	Pilots (11X), Combat Systems (12X), ABM (13B), RPA (18X)	195		155
Rated Enlisted Aviator Revitalization	Aircrew Operations (1A)	200		
Aircraft Maintenance Revitalization and New Force Structure	Aerospace Maintenance (2A)	1,200		246
Special Warfare Squadron Revitalization	Special Tactics (13C), Combat Rescue (13D), Combat Control (1C2), TACP (1C4), SERE (1T0) Pararescue (1T2)	110		
Cyber Squadron Revitalization	Cyber Operations Commander (17C0), Cyberspace Operations (17D), Cyber Warfare Operations (17S & 1B4)	140		32
Intelligence Revitalization	Intelligence Analyst (14N & 1N)	220		83
Non-Rated Operations Revitalization (Space, Nuclear and Missile, C2)	Space Operations (13S & 1C6), Weather (15W & 1W) Nuclear and Missile Operations (14N) Search & Recovery (13C, 13D, 1T), RPA Senor Op/Pilot (1U)	180	100	
Logistics Squadron Revitalization	Logistics Readiness (21R, 2F, 2T), Missile Maintenance (21M & 2M), Munitions and Weapons (2W)	280		
Security Forces (Nuclear) Squadron Revitalization	Security (31P & 3P)	197		
Combat Support and Combat Service Support Revitalization	Information Operations & Cyberspace Support (14F & 3D), Civil Engineering (32E & 3E) Force Support (38F & 3F), Public Affairs (35P & 3N), Medical (4X), Acquisitions (6X), Special Investigations (7S)	978		84
Grand Total		**3,700**	**100**	**600**

The Budget Control Act still threatens to disrupt the progress we are making. A return to sequestration would erase the gains we made over the last three years and inflict substantial damage to our programs. In 2013, in the wake of sequestration, we were forced to stand-down one-third of our combat flying squadrons. We cancelled large-scale exercises and lost over one million work-hours of depot maintenance. To maintain operational capability, we also reduced our total force size by nearly thirty thousand Airmen resulting in the loss of valuable experience. Recovery from these actions is lengthy, but your support over the last three years has been extremely helpful. Any return to the Budget Control Act will not only arrest the gains we have made, but will also likely add to current readiness recovery timelines.

Recruiting and Accessing

Readiness is first and foremost about having the right number of capable Airmen within your Air Force. Today only 29% of 17 - 24 year old men and women in the United States are eligible to serve and only one in eight have a propensity to serve in the military. Despite this, the Regular Air Force achieved its FY18 enlisted (29,450) and officer (Line – 4,039) accession goals. The Air National Guard achieved 92% of their enlisted goal (10,529), but met their end-strength target by exceeding their officer goal (968) and maintaining high retention. The Air Force Reserve achieved their combined enlisted and officer goal of 8,450.

The FY19 Air Force Active Duty enlisted recruiting goal is 32,300. Thus far, we have met 48% of the overall goal and have identified recruits with projected future dates for basic military training that will take us to 74% of the goal. The FY19 Air Force Reserve combined officer and enlisted recruiting goal is 8,650 with 50% already met. The FY19 Air National Guard combined officer and enlisted recruiting goal is 10,378 with 60% already met. In summary, Active Duty, Reserve and Air National Guard are on track to meet overall FY19 recruiting goals.

While we have been able to meet most of our recruiting goals, we are keenly aware of a growing competition for talent and expect the recruiting environment to be more challenging. The Air Force is committed to improving how we recruit and prepare Airmen to succeed. With your support, we have added 159 new recruiters and our budget for operating, advertising and marketing has increased by 49% since FY17. To assist in predicting career interest for potential recruits, the Air Force uses a survey on its official website titled Air Force Work Interest Navigator (AF-WIN), which has generated over 141,000 leads to date — an average of over 400 surveys per day.

With an understanding of the keen competition for talent, the Air Force has moved out on setting up a total force recruiting service responsible for recruiting and coordinating efforts across all three components. As part of this effort, we recently assigned a one-star Reserve general officer as the Deputy Commander of the Air Force Recruiting Service. In addition, we are embedding Reserve and Guard officers and enlisted Airmen in the staff and are working toward combined

marketing and operating budgets. All of our new recruiters now attend a joint training course covering efforts across both active and reserve components. In addition, we are working to utilize a common IT recruiting system and a common online presence. We are also establishing a centralized medical accessions cell that can review, standardize, and work medical waivers to ensure talented Americans have an opportunity to serve. Finally, our Air Force Recruiting Service has partnered with our civilian recruiting teams at the Air Force Personnel Center, both at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas, to leverage and conduct joint recruiting events. Our ultimate goal is for our recruiters to be able to recruit for all our needs by asking a few simple questions and referring the talent we attract accordingly. Are you interested in wearing a uniform or do you want civilian employment? Do you want to be full or part time? We want to capture and vector the talent accordingly, regardless of where their interests may lie.

While we are on track to achieve our total recruiting goals, we have challenges in some specific skill sets. For a number of years, we struggled to recruit significant numbers of Airmen qualified for special warfare programs. This past year we established a new training group and new recruiting squadrons focused on critical warfighting career fields such as special warfare Airmen, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and survival, evasion, resistance and escape (SERE). These recruiters and the associated training group are actively scouting for volunteers who have the right skills for this special duty area. In addition, the training group prepares the recruits both before and after arrival at basic training to increase their success rate. So far this year, the Air Force has seen early success in meeting our monthly goals for special warfare and has also seen reductions in the attrition rates in these lengthy and difficult training pipelines. We have slightly missed our targets for EOD and SERE Airmen in three different months. We are working to make those goals up later in the year.

We are fully committed to the integration of women into combat positions, have increased targeted marketing to further attract female recruits in all specialties, and placed female cadre within our special warfare training units. Prior to 2016, 99% of the Air Force's positions were already open to women to include flying combat aircraft which opened in 1993. Since that time we have had multiple female fighter wing commanders, a female 4-star Combatant Commander, and currently have a female 4-star commander at Air Mobility Command. Since January 2016, when we opened the last six special warfare related specialties, 100% of Air Force occupations and positions have been open to women, including removing previous gender based assignment restriction for 22 closed positions serving with the Army/Special Operation Forces (SOF). The percentage of active duty women serving in both combat-related and flying roles is 13.7% (9,027). Finding qualified volunteers for special warfare career fields, both males and females, continues to be challenging. The training programs are demanding and require higher and broader levels of physical fitness to meet the demands of the occupationally specific, operationally relevant tests. The average historical attrition rates for both males and females ranges from 40-90% depending on specialty; consequently, we do not foresee large numbers of females in special operations units in the near term. To date, ten female Airmen have entered

into special warfare training but none have yet to qualify and graduate. Currently, we have two females in training: one in Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) training and one in Special Reconnaissance (SR) training.

Retaining talented female Airmen remains a priority for our service. One program which aims to make progress in this area is the Career Intermission Program (CIP). The program provides flexibility for Airmen looking to pursue goals such as advanced education, raising or starting a family, or aligning career timing for dual military couples. While we are just starting to measure the effectiveness of the program, it appears to be working. In CY18, 54% of CIP participants were female and 100% of the Airmen (6) that have completed the program and their follow-on commitment have elected to stay in the service. That said, the current service commitment payback is perceived by some as excessive and may cause Airmen to choose separation from the service, rather than taking advantage of the program.

We have also focused on increasing our female applicant pool within our accession sources. We set a target to achieve growth in applicants to 30% female and achieved that mark at the Air Force Academy for the class of 2022. Within our ROTC program we raised our applicant pool to 28% female, marching toward the 30% goal.

While increasing accessions is positive, we also know we must do more to retain our talented female and diverse Airmen. Knowing opportunity and advancement have a lot to do with retention, we have increased focus on ensuring exposure for younger officers to key developmental positions such as selection for Aide-de-Camp and Executive Officers for senior leaders. By way of policy, we ensure all selection slates for these key positions have a minimum of one qualified female and one qualified diverse candidate for consideration. In a short period under this policy, we have seen a 17% increase in female selections and a 21% increase in African American female selections.

We also appreciate the authority Congress provided allowing us to award constructive credit, which we are applying to recruit officers in very competitive cyber career fields. In our successful pilot program, we selected two highly skilled enlisted candidates who have cyber master's degrees. We recruited them from within the Air Force to expedite the assimilation of these candidates into the cyber warfare officer corps. Their experience, exemplary records, and top leadership recommendations all support use of constructive credit and allowed us to advance them to positions filling key holes in our officer inventory. We are working parallel efforts to recruit cyber talent from industry and academia using the same constructive credit provisions.

Funding for enlistment and accession bonuses as well as scholarships are also key when competing for top talent. In the FY19 President's Budget, Congress supported an increase of

$18M in Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship funding allowing us to offer additional scholarships for targeted skill sets in STEM related career fields.

Retaining Airmen and Families

While the Air Force generally sees high retention rates in both the officer and enlisted corps — 90% of enlisted Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC) are stable or trending up on retention over the last 12 months with historical numbers closer to 80%, and 98% of officer AFSCs are stable or trending up versus a historical average of 90% — the aggregate success sometimes masks pockets of retention challenges. For our enlisted force, we have lower retention for cyber; space; nuclear security; maintenance in some mid-to-high skill levels; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); and special warfare among mid-to-high skill level Airmen. For our officer force, retention continues to be challenging among our pilots, combat systems officers, some medical specialties, contracting officers and has begun emerging in our air battle managers. These trends are generally more acute in our mid-grade officer ranks.

We appreciate Congress' support of special and incentive pays which are a critical component, complimented with other non-monetary incentives, to maintaining and improving retention. The FY19 President's Budget included $1.2 billion for special and incentive pays allowing the Air Force to target critical skill shortages. These special and incentive pays assist in compensating Airmen for hazardous duty or high demand skill sets critical to our warfighting excellence. With the existing competitive recruiting market, retention becomes even more essential to having a lethal and ready force.

We are particularly grateful for Congress' support of aviation incentive and bonus pays. To ensure we are making the best use of our aviation bonus authorities, we continue to use a business case model targeting payments based on four main criteria: manning levels, retention trends, cost to train for a particular weapons system, and the length of time to train.

The Air Force ended FY18 with a total force pilot shortage of approximately 2,000. Shortfalls in the fighter pilot inventory are the most acute. Aviation bonus take rates are important leading indicators of future retention rates. After four straight years of steady decline, the overall take rate for the Air Force Active Duty aviation bonus stabilized and went up slightly from 44% in 2017 to 45% in 2018. The take rate for fighter pilots increased by 9%, from 35% to 44%, and bomber pilots went up 7%, from 46% to 53%. Unfortunately we saw a decrease in our largest category, mobility pilots, where the take rate went down from 44% to 38%. Overall we are below the retention target of 65% needed each year and within each pilot category to sustain a healthy inventory. Based on emerging retention challenges for our Air Battle Managers, in FY19 we added them to the bonus plan making them eligible for an aviation bonus for the first time.

Monetary incentives are one small piece of our retention portfolio. The majority of the retention portfolio is in fact non-monetary and is focused on improving quality of life, quality of service,

and mitigating operational tempo. Earlier this year we expanded the high year of tenure limits for Senior Airmen, Staff Sergeants and Technical Sergeants to retain technical skills and experience. We also reduced the number of forward deployed 365-day assignments by 20% from the last fiscal year and are projecting to reduce that number an additional 38% in FY20, utilizing reach back or shortening tours to help stabilize the operational tempo for our Airmen.

We have also added flexibility into the officer assignment process by leveraging technology to improve our assignment matching system. After researching industry best practices, we implemented an information technology solution known as "Talent Marketplace." Talent Marketplace uses an algorithm, based on the Nobel- Prize winning National Medical Residency Matching Program, to assist in matching officers to available assignments. This algorithm takes into account the officer's assignment preferences and the hiring manager's ranking of officers being considered to produce a preliminary match.

While Talent Marketplace provides an automated "scientific" match at the beginning of the process, it then assists the Air Force Personnel Center assignment teams in applying the "art" to finalize the process. This two-pronged process approach of "science" and "art" assists with transparency in the assignment process and enables improved talent management. We are working Talent Marketplace expansions into our enlisted force, joint assignments, and for advertising and filling 365-day extended deployments. We believe the increased transparency and improved member input will be a positive retention influence.

Having a lethal, agile and flexible force, capable of winning in any environment, goes beyond solely the overall size of the force. It also encompasses looking after our Airmen's mental and physical wellbeing and ensuring we take care of their families so they can focus on the mission. Airmen must be able to withstand, recover, and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands.

Wounded Warrior Program

The Air Force has approximately 3,200 Wounded Warriors serving today. Our commitment to our wounded, ill and injured Airmen remains resolute as these Airmen, their families and caregivers deserve nothing less. As such, the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program provides world-class medical treatment along with physical, psychological, social and family healing through a variety of avenues to include recovery care coordinators that provide care management assistance. Our goal is to return Airmen to duty, whether back to their unit or to another opportunity to serve in uniform. For those who cannot return to duty, we provide personalized transition support from housing and education services, to employment and financial coaching.

Exceptional Family Member Program

More than 34,000 Total Force Airmen have dependents enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program. Because retention of these skilled Airmen and their families is critical to readiness, we are improving support to our program. We increased monthly respite care hours from 12 to 40 hours per child per month and are providing 50K total hours of care per month on average. To help educate and provide information, we established a quarterly Facebook Live webcast connecting to more than 100K family members. We also formally trained 57 of 99 installation-level family support coordinators in FY18 and are training the remaining coordinators in FY19, all with an eye toward improving the quality of life and service for our families within this population.

Child and Youth Programs

Airmen cannot be ready and effective if they are worried about their children. In FY19, with Congress' support, we increased Child and Youth funding by $39.6M for a total of $100.2M to help ensure we continuously recognize and resource the child and youth program's impact on readiness and retention. With this additional funding, we are (1) expanding child care for those needing childcare outside of normal duty hours, (2) providing fees to support 4,500 children annually who must use off-base child care, and (3) funding youth resiliency camps. The funding increase also included 119 additional civilian child care positions across the Air Force, supplies, closed circuit television repairs, and national youth partnerships such as Boys and Girls Clubs and 4-H. We still have a gap between available on-base child care demand and capacity but have improved our ability to provide suitable alternate accommodation.

Supporting Working Spouses and Children During Military Moves

The Air Force works closely with Department of Defense State Liaison Office to provide updated spouse licensure information to military spouses through the Air Force Employment Assistance Program. We continuously address spouse employment challenges to help meet the needs of our Airmen and families, and assist with retention and mission success. All aspects of the Air Force Employment Assistance Program provide a robust support system, committed to connecting spouses to resources designed to improve employment opportunities. The Air Force is currently working and expects imminent release of our policy for reimbursement of spouse re-licensing/re-certification costs up to $500 resulting from a Permanent Change of Station/Assignment (PCS/A) from state to state. Airman and Family Readiness Centers across the Air Force offer individual assistance, skill building workshops, resume and interview assistance, career planning and referrals. Additionally, we support Air Force spouses with education, training and certification opportunities such as the Department of Defense *My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA)*. This web-based application offers scholarships towards certifications, licenses, certificates, or associate degrees in high-demand, high-growth portable career fields. The Air Force also administers grants for entry-level job assistance training for spouses through the Air Force Aid Society Spouse Employment Program.

To assist families with the difficulties of school transitions, the Air Force has installation School Liaisons. They serve as an advocate, an advisor, and an alliance builder by connecting families, schools, and the military community. They problem-solve school transition issues ensuring local school districts follow the provisions of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. This compact ensures the children of military families are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children by helping transitioning students become adjusted to new schools, successfully transferring their credits and enabling opportunities to join sports and clubs. In addition, Air Force School Liaisons offer opportunities to help connect youth while building transition and resiliency skills.

The Air Force is also executing "family moves" in accordance with the Family Stability Act. We are approving requests from Airmen for relief and are aware that frequent moves make it difficult for military spouses to pursue their own careers or complete their education, and for the children of Airmen to be able to complete every school year in one location. This new legislation provides our military families more options to help address their individual needs by allowing them to either move early or remain at their current duty station, for up to six months, while their spouse begins a new assignment. We are anticipating this accommodation will be another boost to retention.

BUILDING OUR NATION'S AIR FORCE FASTER AND SMARTER

In this era of near-peer competition and the rapidly evolving technological and multi-domain environments in which the Air Force operates, we realize our Talent Management system, must also evolve to be more agile, responsive, transparent and effective at empowering and driving performance. These attributes are the bedrock for increasing lethality and developing exceptional leaders. They are also the filters we use to evaluate the effectiveness of new reforms or initiatives.

Performance Management

Hiring, developing, retaining and managing workforce talent is a top priority. We need agile, responsive military and civilian personnel management systems to ensure that the Air Force wins the war for top talent. Ultimately, Air Force readiness depends on having the right total force team — military and civilian — in place.

Enlisted

Over the last several years, we have evolved our enlisted performance system incorporating feedback from the field and garnering trends from industry. Our evolution has focused on making the system more agile, more transparent and simple, to focus on and drive performance as we strengthen the readiness and professionalism of our vital enlisted force. One recent

example is our initiative to go to a "board only" process, removing the Weighted Airmen Promotion System (WAPS) test for selection to the grades of Master Sergeant, Senior Master Sergeant, and Chief Master Sergeant. This change ensures duty performance is the most important factor in evaluating promotion to the next higher grade. Another significant policy allows senior noncommissioned officers who complete an associate's degree or "higher level degree from a nationally or regionally accredited academic institution" to be eligible for promotion and senior rater stratification or endorsement consideration. This adds agility for our Airmen freeing them up to advance their skills and education in ways that best suit their needs and personal time.

Officer

Air Force success in carrying out the National Defense Strategy requires us to have an officer corps that can adapt, innovate, and demonstrate agility in dealing with today's complex security environment. The evolving needs of the force and security landscape require us to evaluate and modify how we manage, develop, assign and promote our Airmen. We are making changes to our talent management system to ensure that we can meet these needs head on. Recently we implemented a change to incentivize recruiting and instructor assignments allowing us to deliberately choose the right officers with the competence and character to shape the future force. The Air Force is also looking at its business practices and reforming them to ensure mission success. An example of this is our recent initiative to adjust our promotion recommendation form to more clearly focus on an officer's potential by streamlining the process.

Our analysis of the National Defense Strategy also identified a need for increased agility in developing the officers we need for success in future conflicts. Since our inception in 1947, the Air Force has promoted line officers in a single category whereby we competed and selected officers deemed "best qualified leader" regardless of specialty. To be competitive in this approach, career fields and the officers within them naturally evolved to having similar development paths that checked key boxes and demonstrated common experiences. As we evolve into the multi-domain environment associated with future conflicts, and consider the emergence of cyber, space, artificial intelligence, and other key technologies it is clear we need different and more agile development paths to satisfy our various requirements. For example, developing cyber officers is not the same as developing public affairs officers, nor can we develop space experts in the same way we develop pilots. As a result, we are modifying our current single category structure into six different competitive categories that will roughly cover Air and Special Operations, Space, Nuclear Missile Operations, Information and Intelligence Operations, Combat Support, and Force Modernization. This is a major change for our force, but one we see as necessary to increase lethality and build the force we will need for future conflicts.

We also appreciate the additional Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) authorities given to us in the FY19 National Defense Authorization Act. Among the new DOPMA provisions, we are already engaged in utilizing several, including "early promotion" and "lateral

entry" to fill inventory gaps. We are also looking at incorporating other authorities such as promoting officers based on order of merit, permitting officers to opt out of promotion consideration, and alternative promotion for designated career fields as part of our overall talent management transformation. These new flexible authorities provided by the Congress, coupled with our modernizing initiatives, give us the ability to create more agile development paths and better match the officer inventory to actual requirements which is vital to increasing the readiness and lethality needed for success in future conflicts.

Civilian

Another key component of our force are the more than 189,000 Department of the Air Force civilian employees stationed across the globe. The civilian workforce shares the same responsibility to our nation as the men and women in uniform. Working in over 600 occupations and professions, the civilian workforce underpins the Air Force. Civilian engineers work in research labs and social workers help children acclimate to new environments. Civilians are physicians treating Airmen and their families. They are cyber security experts on the front line guarding against hackers, police officers, aircraft mechanics, nuclear physicists, mathematicians, human resources professionals, electricians, and rocket scientists among many other occupations. At home and abroad, to include deploying to combat zones, our civilian members work shoulder to shoulder with their military counterparts. Having a high quality force and being able to recruit and compete for top civilian talent is an essential aspect of our total force and critical to our readiness. As such, we are thankful for all the previously granted Congressional authorities for civilian hiring. They have recently enabled us to bring on talent in critical career fields much faster than before. However, legislative relief has resulted in 66 different civilian personnel systems within the Department of Defense, more than 60 classification systems, and more than 45 new hiring and related authorities since FY10. This complexity drives administrative burdens and costs. It forces the Air Force to focus too much on being compliant instead of focusing on winning the war for civilian talent.

Kessel Run

Data science, continuous software development, and artificial intelligence are becoming a requirement for every Air Force mission and unit. How we identify, recruit, cultivate and retain digital talent directly affects the Air Force's lethality and readiness. To maximize our capability in this area we are investing in a Computer Language Initiative where we are looking within our force to identify and incentivize Airmen with coding skills similar to the way we identify and incentivize Airmen with language skills. These Airmen are able to leverage their skills to solve issues across the force. At Kessel Run, more than 20 applications and mission capabilities were created in collaboration with Airmen and team members from operational units. As an example, the Kessel Run Team stood up a program called Mad Hatter made up of coders, maintainers, and Lockheed Martin members to drive logistics solutions for the F-35.

In concert with utilizing our internal talent, Kessel Run held a hiring event in January 2019, where we used the direct hiring authorities afforded to us by Congress. Ahead of the event, we used multiple social media platforms like LinkedIn to gather resumes. After screening and vetting potential candidates, 50 were invited to the hiring event for on-site interviews. As a result, 28 on-the-spot job offers were extended and by the close of the hiring event 12 selectees received firm job offers. We reached a major milestone through the selection, on-boarding and swearing in of one of the candidates during the event. Through these innovations, we are revolutionizing the way we build and deliver software to sense and respond to conflict in any domain, anytime, anywhere.

Healthy Food Initiative

Airmen today desire performance "fueling" menu items. The Air Force has taken a comprehensive approach to meet this requirement by implementing Food 2.0 which delivers healthier food options across the enterprise in both appropriated and nonappropriated food and beverage operations. Food 2.0 is in place in 37 facilities at 23 installations in the United States with 3 more installations to be transformed this year. Additionally, we partnered with Culinary Institute of America Master Chefs to offer comprehensive hands-on culinary training in FY18 focused on new cooking methods to prepare healthier menu items. Nonappropriated fund facilities at 10 locations have already been modernized and 20 additional locations are planned to be upgraded in FY19 to incorporate healthier menu items. Plans are being finalized to host a "healthier" training forum to better educate, train and focus food service professionals on our healthy food initiative. Training will be performed for both appropriated fund and nonappropriated fund food and beverage operations utilizing healthier food preparation methods in addition to "Choice Architecture" – which entails strategic product placement, lighting and merchandizing to encourage healthy food choices.

Digital Transformation of the Air Force Talent Management Portfolio

The Air Force has made great strides in modernizing our Talent Management Portfolio to provide Airmen a cutting-edge digital experience. We have transitioned several key human resource applications to our new cloud environment. This is allowing us to consolidate 120 independent systems into eight cloud platforms. We have also migrated all Talent Management applications to the cloud from our Langley Data Center and plan to close our San Antonio Data Center in September 2019, sending over 30 systems into the cloud — two years ahead of schedule, saving money and improving performance for our Airmen who demand and deserve a modern digital experience. We are also among the first in the Department of Defense to establish a rapid prototyping process for new human resource capabilities, allowing us to fast-track software development for the cloud using agile development methods.

To further enhance and provide a true digital experience, we acquired a commercial product know as OKTA for identity and access management enabling secure login using mobile devices without a Common Access Card (CAC). We consider this digital transformation essential for delivering the best user experience our Airmen can have, and equally essential in recruiting and

retaining Airmen. We cannot be a technology-focused force without a human resource IT system that matches.

Air Force Integrated Personnel and Pay System

Another key component in achieving a modern human resource IT system is our Air Force Integrated Personnel and Pay System (AFIPPS). AFIPPS will enhance our already fully operational personnel system for all three components, Active, Reserve and Guard, by integrating payroll. We are currently in the development phase of AFIPPS. Full development is on schedule for completion in February 2020. This timeline will give the Air Force the opportunity to test the new system and train Airmen on the new procedures to ensure the transition to AFIPPS will be seamless for the total force. In January 2021, the Air Force will have a fully integrated personnel and pay system, auditable and regulatory compliant, which will resolve existing pay issues Airmen experience today.

CONCLUSION

Resilient and ready Airmen, both military and civilian, are the bedrock of the Air Force's readiness and lethality. Your Air Force is evolving to *compete*, *deter*, and *win* with unmatched power through the air, space and cyber domains. We must ensure our Airmen have the resources, training, development and tools to meet these demands. We are committed to prioritizing and resourcing what is most important and look forward to partnering with Congress in our endeavors to protect and defend our great Nation. I thank you for your continued support of your Air Force — those in uniform, our civilian professionals and the families that support them.

Lieutenant General Brian T. Kelly

Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly is the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. General Kelly serves as the senior Air Force officer responsible for comprehensive plans and policies covering all life cycles of military and civilian personnel management, which includes military and civilian end strength management, education and training, compensation, resource allocation, and the worldwide U.S. Air Force services program.

General Kelly entered the Air Force in 1989 as a graduate of the University of Notre Dame's ROTC program. He has held several command and staff positions at the base, major command, Air Staff, and Joint Staff levels. His command tours include a Mission Support Squadron, Mission Support Group, Combat Support Wing and the Air Force Personnel Center.

Prior to his current assignment, General Kelly served as the Commander of the AFPC at Joint Base San Antonio- Randolph, Texas.

EDUCATION
1988 Bachelor of Science, Aerospace Engineering, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind.
1995 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Distinguished Graduate
2001 Master of Military Operational Art and Science, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2001 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., Distinguished Graduate
2006 Master of Science, National Resource Strategy, National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.
2006 Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., Distinguished Graduate
2010 Air Force Enterprise Leadership Seminar, Darden School of Business, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
2013 Capitol Hill Enterprise Perspective Seminar, Washington, D.C.
2016 Advanced Senior Leadership Development Program, Strategic Engagement Seminar, Warrenton, Va.
2017 Driving Government Performance: Leadership Strategies that Produce Results, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

ASSIGNMENTS
January 1989 - January 1993, Mission Control Engineer, Foreign Technology Division, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio
February 1993 - May 1997, Engineer, Program Manager Advanced Tactical Intel Systems, Executive Officer, Classified Duty Location assigned to Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
June 1997 - June 2000, Program Element Monitor and Chief General Officer Promotion and Policy, Headquarters United States Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
July 2000 - May 2001, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
June 2001 - July 2003, Commander, 92nd Mission Support Squadron, Fairchild AFB, Wash.
August 2003 - July 2005, Deputy Director, Civilian Career Management, Air Force Personnel Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas
August 2005 - June 2006, Student, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.
July 2006 - June 2007, Executive Officer to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower and Personnel, Headquarters
U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
July 2007 - May 2008, Director of Manpower, Personnel and Administration (J1), Headquarters, U.S. Southern Command, Miami, Fla.
June 2008 - June 2009, Deputy Director for Human Resources, Resources and Assessments Directorate (J8), Headquarters, SOUTHCOM, Miami, Fla.
June 2009 - March 2011, Commander, 31st Mission Support Group, Aviano Air Base, Italy

March 2011 - July 2013, Commander, 501st Combat Support Wing, RAF Alconbury, United Kingdom
July 2013 - January 2014, Director, Manpower, Personnel and Services, Air Combat Command, JB Langley- Eustis, Va.
February 2014 - September 2014, Director, Force Management Policy, Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel, and Services, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
October 2014 - June 2017, Director, Military Force Management Policy, Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel, and Services, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
June 2017 - August 2018, Commander, AFPC, JB San Antonio-Randolph, Texas
September 2018 - present, Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel and Services, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS
May 2004 - October 2004, Deputy Director of Manpower and Personnel (J1), Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq, as a lieutenant colonel
July 2007 - May 2008, Director of Manpower, Personnel and Administration (J1), Headquarters, U.S. Southern Command, Miami, Fla., as a lieutenant colonel and colonel
June 2008 - June 2009, Deputy Director for Human Resources, Resources and Assessments Directorate (J8), Headquarters, SOUTHCOM, Miami, Fla., as a colonel

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
Distinguished Service Medal
Defense Superior Service Medal
Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
Bronze Star Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Joint Service Commendation Medal
Air Force Commendation Medal
Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster
Joint Meritorious Unit Award
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with oak leaf cluster
National Defense Service Medal with bronze star
Iraq Campaign Medal with bronze star
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION
Second Lieutenant Nov. 11, 1988
First Lieutenant Nov. 11, 1990
Captain Nov. 11, 1992
Major Aug. 1, 1998
Lieutenant Colonel Feb. 1, 2003
Colonel Sept. 1, 2007
Brigadier General June 2, 2014
Major General Aug. 2, 2017
Lieutenant General Sep. 4, 2018

(Current as of September 2018)

NOT PUBLIC UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT

OF

LIEUTENANT GENERAL MICHAEL A. ROCCO

DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MANPOWER & RESERVE AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

CONCERNING

MILITARY PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

ON

16 MAY 2019

NOT PUBLIC UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is my privilege to appear before you today to provide an update on your Marines. Since our founding in 1775, Marines have answered our Nation's call, faithfully serving the American people and maintaining a high standard of military excellence. Your Marine Corps is, and will continue to be, our Nation's expeditionary force in readiness. We are warfighters who are ready to rapidly respond to crises around the Globe to ensure the continued security of the American people and to protect the interests that underpin our Nation. Marines will be *always faithful* to the trust which the American people have vested in them.

OUR PEOPLE

Mission first, people always. Marines are the foundation of the Marine Corps. They are the Corps' most critical resource, and always have been. Your Marines are recruited, trained, educated, and retained to win our Nation's battles. They are smart, resilient, fit, disciplined, and able to overcome adversity. Your Marines are supported by our Reserve Component and civilian workforce, which provides an integrated Total Force striving toward one goal – to win our Nation's battles. Recruiting high quality youth and retaining those whose past service and future potential continues to make the Corps stronger are our highest priorities. With your help, we will ensure that we continue to recruit and retain the highest-quality Marines with the right skills for the future fight.

RECRUITING

Unique among all of the services, recruiting efforts across the Marine Corps - officer, enlisted, regular, reserve, and prior-service - fall under the purview of a single entity, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command. Operationally, this provides us with tremendous flexibility and unity of command, facilitating efforts to meet accession and end strength requirements.

Last fiscal year, we successfully achieved all enlisted and officer recruiting goals for both the active and reserve components, and we expect to do the same again this year. We also will exceed all quality goals. The Department of Defense requires 90 percent of enlistees to have a high school diploma or equivalent (Education Tier 1), and 60 percent of enlistees score in the Mental Groups I-IIIA (mental aptitude). Last year, the Marine Corps achieved 99.9 percent for Education Tier 1, and 71.2 percent for Mental Group I-IIIA. We expect to be at or near these levels at the end of FY19.

To meet the challenges ahead, it is imperative that we resource our recruiting command adequately. We remain committed to assigning our best Marines to this challenging duty. We are equally committed to ensuring our recruiting command has the necessary funding for both recruiting operations and advertising. Our advertising program is vital to building awareness of the Marine Corps among high-quality, diverse population groups that are increasingly disconnected from military service. A healthy advertising program enables our recruiting command to attract and recruit the highest quality accession cohorts which, in turn, yields us lower first-term attrition and ultimately higher quality Marines.

While only eight percent of new Marine Corps recruits receive an enlistment bonus, these incentives are critical to enable us to ship new recruits at the right times to balance recruit loads at the recruit depots and meet school seat requirements.

We appreciate Congress' support for these priority programs that assist our contracting high quality Marine recruits. Recruiting quality young individuals translates into higher performance, reduced attrition, and improved readiness for the operating forces. Our actions, commitment, and critical investments in recruiting today ensure a high state of readiness in our Corps tomorrow.

RETENTION

As the Marine Corps manages our force, we work to retain the very best available Marines capable of fulfilling our leadership and operational needs. This is accomplished through a competitive career designation process for officers and a thorough evaluation process for enlisted Marines, both of which are designed to measure, analyze, and compare our Marines' performance and accomplishments. However, there is a continuous challenge to keep high-quality Marines in the service, especially in a competitive civilian job market.

Marine Corps retention models, systems, policies, and processes emphasize consistency of leadership, personnel stability, and sustained readiness across the force. Officer career designation incorporates a board system that enables leaders to examine officer records and accomplishments. After designation, the promotion process continues the evaluation of Marine officers. It is a primary tool by which we retain only the best and most qualified Marines.

For enlisted Marines, a tiered rating system takes into account a number of quantifiable performance factors and includes inputs from both immediate and more senior leaders. It helps to set acbievable goals for Marines as they compete for retention. After initial reenlistment, the evaluation and continued retention of high quality enlisted Marines is supported by a detailed and continual performance evaluation system which is fully integrated with the promotion process. Those Marines with the best proven performance are retained and promoted.

Always striving for improvement, we are working to modernize our performance evaluation system to provide the all necessary information to selection, retention and promotion boards. The upgraded Performance Evaluation System will improve and simplify the evaluations for our junior enlisted Marines in the ranks of Private through Corporal by replacing our legacy proficiency and conduct marking system. Once complete, the Performance Evaluation System will integrate into our current automated performance evaluation system used to evaluate Sergeants and above and all

officers. This modernized system will ensure a detailed and objective evaluation system for all Marines that leverages our information technology to compare scored performance entries. It will provide leaders a broader and more detailed baseline from which to evaluate future potential, reinforcing our efforts to retain the best and most qualified Marines.

Incentive pays remain critical to our retention effort, allowing the Marine Corps to fill hard to retain positions, such as cyber security technicians, special operators, and counter intelligence specialists. Selective Reenlistment Bonuses allow us to shape our career force by targeting critical military occupational specialties (MOSs) and supporting lateral movement of Marines to these MOSs. For example, although the Marine Corps has sufficient qualified aviators in all deployable units, there are shortfalls in certain grades of fixed wing and tiltrotor aviators to fill all aviation billet requirements. As a result, the Marine Corps implemented an aviation bonus authority in FY18 to stabilize the population of critical-retention communities and facilitate the proper execution of all aviation staffing demands. We will continue to use this authority in a narrowly-tailored way in FY20 through expanded obligation periods and increased monetary packages. Overall, these incentive pays help us recruit and retain the best Marines, especially for critical skills. Retaining qualified Marines in these skills keeps your Marine Corps lethal and prepared to overmatch our adversaries. At only one percent of our Marine Corps personnel budget, these pays provide return on investment many times over.

DOPMA REFORM

Enacted in 1980, DOPMA has proven to be a predictable and equitable way to manage the appointment, promotion, separation, and retirement of our officers. It has given us the tools to manage a large force, maintain healthy personnel grade pyramids, and build Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) officers. Our current system is merit-based (board selected) and promotes the best, most fully qualified officers; this works well for us because our inventory is created and

maintained directly based upon structure (billet) requirements. The flexibility of the system allows the Marine Corps to design the ideal balance within the officer corps to respond to future requirements, stabilize the force, drawdown when required by Congress, and accurately program and budget the service military personnel account.

We appreciate the most recent officer management authorities that the Congress provided in the FY19 NDAA. They seek to help modernize how we manage our Marines with the goal of recruiting and retaining the highest quality talent. Increasingly, warfighting is becoming more sophisticated, technical, and complex. Cyber operations, information and electronic warfare, enhanced command and control, and intelligence, are examples of critical skills we will need for the future fight. We are in the process of implementing some of these authorities and are assessing the merits of others. Even if not immediately implemented, these new authorities give us tools to use in the always-unpredictable future to ensure that we continue to have the high-quality and types of Marines needed for the future fight.

One of the reforms we are in process of implementing is active component officer lineal list flexibility based on merit. We are currently improving our promotion board management systems to implement the merit reorder for most promotion boards scheduled to occur in 2019. We believe that allowing the promotion board the discretion to merit reorder up to 100 percent of the promotion list will reward high quality officers who demonstrate sustained superior performance. We believe it will prove a very real, no-cost method to reward talent. We thank Congress for this authority.

BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM (BRS)

Compensation is a vital factor in both recruiting and retention. The BRS is a significant change from the legacy retirement system, conferring a portable monetary benefit on the large majority of Marines who do not reach retirement eligibility. We remain concerned on the potential

changes to the retention behavior of the force, and will continue to closely monitor retention for impacts.

In 2018, approximately 142,000 Marines registered their choice to remain in the legacy retirement system or opt-in to BRS. Of the 142,000, approximately 93,000 Marines (65%) opted into the BRS. Also, approximately 21,000 new Marines were automatically enrolled upon entering the service in 2018. In total, 114,000 Marines are now covered by BRS and that number will continue to grow steadily as more Marines enter service. Further, while the primary opt-in period ended, there are Marines who were unable to register their retirement system decision due to special circumstances. They will be given more time to enroll into the BRS, resulting in additional growth in the total number of opt-in Marines.

CONCLUSION

The Marines of our Corps represent the individuals of our Nation who have stepped forward and sworn to defend and protect it. Through recruiting, training, education, and retention of men and women of character who take up our challenge to become one of "the Few and the Proud," we will enhance the quality of our Corps and our overall combat effectiveness. By ensuring that we take care of all Marines and their families, we fulfill our responsibility to keep faith with the honor, courage, and commitment they have so freely given.

Our individual Marines are our most precious asset. They are proud of what they do. They are proud of the "Eagle, Globe, and Anchor" and what it represents to our Nation. With your support, a vibrant Marine Corps will continue to meet our Nation's call.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today.

Lieutenant General Michael A. Rocco
Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs,
Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps

Lieutenant General Rocco received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from St. Johns University in New York and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in May 1983. After graduating from The Basic School in February 1984, he was meritoriously augmented and he reported to Naval Aviation Training Command, Pensacola, Florida, for flight training. Upon designation as a Naval Aviator in February 1986, Lieutenant General Rocco was assigned to HMLA-367 as an AH-1J pilot where he served in the Logistics Department.

He deployed to Okinawa, Japan, and was promoted to Captain in May 1988. He subsequently served in a variety of billets to include Training Officer, Flight Officer, NATOPS Officer, and Weapons and Tactics Instructor for Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 (HMLA).

In August 1990, HMLA-367 deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Lieutenant General Rocco was assigned as a Flight Leader and led over 40 combat missions. Upon his return in March 1991, he was assigned as the Director of Safety and Standardization for HMLA-367.

In August 1992, Lieutenant General Rocco reported to Amphibious Warfare School (AWS) in Quantico, Virginia. While at AWS, he received the Marine Corps Aviation Association Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Johnson Award, given to the outstanding aviation student. Upon graduation from AWS in May 1993, Lieutenant General Rocco reported to Fleet Marine Forces Europe for further assignment to the Royal Marine Exchange Program in Yeovilton, England. He deployed twice to Bardufoss, Norway, and made numerous deployments throughout Europe with the Royal Marines. Upon completion of the exchange tour, he was selected to attend the Naval Command and Staff Course at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, where he received a Master of Arts Degree in National Policy and Strategic Studies.

Graduating from the Naval War College in May 1996, Lieutenant General Rocco received orders to 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) and was assigned to HMLA-369. In February 1997, Lieutenant General Rocco was assigned as the Operations Officer of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164 (HMM) (Reinforced) and sailed with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU (SOC)) in August 1997.

Once back from deployment, Lieutenant General Rocco assumed the post of Executive Officer of HMLA-369. In February 1999, he assumed the post of Executive Officer of Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 303 (HMT). Later that same year, he was assigned to Headquarters 3d MAW, where he served as Staff Secretary for the Commanding General of 3d MAW. In June 2000, Lieutenant General Rocco was assigned as the Executive Officer of Marine Aircraft Group 39 (MAG). In March 2001, Lieutenant General Rocco assumed Command of HMLA-369 and after a successful deployment to Okinawa in support of the Unit Deployment Program, he relinquished command of the Gunfighters in January 2003.

In February 2003, he deployed with MAG-39 Headquarters in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Upon returning from OIF, he attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C., and received a Master of Science Degree in National Resource Strategy. In June 2004, he was assigned to the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. In January 2007, he was transferred back to 3d MAW for refresher training and served as the Commanding Officer, MAG-39 from June 2007 to June 2009.

In August 2009, he was promoted to Brigadier General and served as the Deputy Director, J-3, U.S. European Command, Patch Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany, until July 2011. Lieutenant

General Rocco then served as the Director, Strategies and Plans Division, Plans, Policies, and Operations Directorate (PP&O), Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps in Washington, D.C. from July 2011 until June 2014. In June 2014, Lieutenant General Rocco assumed command of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, and remained in command until July 2016. From August to December 2016, he served as the Director, Manpower Plans and Policy Division, and from January to August of 2017, he served as the Director, Manpower Management Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. In August of 2017, Lieutenant General Rocco was promoted to his current rank and assumed the duties of his current position as the Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal with Gold Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with "V", Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with "V", Air Medal with numeral 2, Navy Commendation Medal, and Navy Achievement Medal with Gold Star.

He is married to Susan Rocco and they have three children, Michael, Matthew, and Mara.

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING

MAY 16, 2019

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. SPEIER

Mr. STEWART. The Department of Defense provides robust resources for military spouses through the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) program. These resources include access to no-cost certified masters-level career coaches available six days a week through Military OneSource. These coaches are experts at working with military spouses to best highlight their skill sets on resumes and address perceived gaps. The SECO program also provides access to the more than 400 companies and organizations of the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) who recognize the value of military spouses in the workplace and are committed to recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining military spouses. The SECO program is committed to continuing to educate companies regarding the true value of military spouses in the workplace. [See page 35.]

General SEAMANDS. The Army follows the Defense Health Agency-Procedural Instruction (DHA–PI) Number 6200.02, "Comprehensive Contraceptive Counseling and Access to the Full Range of Methods of Contraception," finalized 13 May 2019. This DHA–PI includes procedural guidance for access to comprehensive contraceptive counseling and the full range of contraceptive methods for pregnancy prevention, to include long term contraception and menstrual suppression for active duty Service members. Access is provided when feasible and medically appropriate, but at a minimum, annually during the Periodic Health Assessment (PHA), in support of initial officer and enlisted training, and during pre-deployment healthcare screenings. Currently in the Army, contraceptive counseling is provided at Entry into Service (i.e. Initial Entry Training), at pre-deployment/Soldier Readiness Processing Sites, and at PHA and well woman exams. The Army is piloting Walk-in Contraceptive Clinics at several military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) to include Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, NC and Keller Army Community Hospital at West Point, NY. In addition to counseling being provided at various points throughout the Soldier's healthcare delivery process, alternative educational routes are also provided such as the mobile application released in February 2019 called Decide + Be Ready: a Birth Control Decision Aid. Army programs at MTFs provide varying types of long- and short-acting reversible contraceptive methods. Most MTFs will dispense a minimum 180-day supply of maintenance medications, to include oral contraceptives, and provide the Soldier with information on how to enroll in the TRICARE Deployment Prescription Program to conveniently obtain refills. [See page 15.]

General SEAMANDS. Assisted Reproductive Services (ARS), such as In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), are available at certain Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) but costs are borne by the beneficiary including active duty service members (ADSMs) in most circumstances. Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Naval Hospital San Diego, San Antonio Military Medical Center, Madigan Army Medical Center, Tripler Army Medical Center, Womack Army Medical Center, and Wright Patterson Air Force base offer IVF. ARS is not covered under the TRICARE program. Under statutory authority ARS is available to certain categories of seriously ill or injured ADSMs and their lawful spouse at no-cost in both TRICARE and the MTFs listed above. Specifically, ADSMs with urogenital trauma who are unable to conceive naturally to have biologic children and ADSMs with a diagnosis of cancer and who will be undergoing gonadotoxic therapy such as radiation and/or chemotherapy. [See page 15.]

General SEAMANDS. Unfortunately, only 29 percent of America's youth qualify for service without a waiver. The most common reasons that applicants are denied the opportunity to join the Army are medical limitations (28 percent of the 29 percent) which includes both weight and mental health issues. Drug use is the next largest single disqualifier at 8 percent of the 29 percent. Most disqualified applicants are disqualified for a combination of reasons. [See page 28.]

General SEAMANDS. It is unfortunate that any employer would discriminate against a military spouse. In order to help spouses overcome this challenge, the Army published a policy for Home-Based Businesses (HBBs). This directive encourages senior commanders or delegates to approve requests for HBBs when they meet all local licensure and legal requirements, and to grant reciprocity for HBBs as

spouses move from one installation to another. Additionally, the Army issued policy authorizing the reimbursement of state licensure and certification costs for a spouse if the spouse is relocating because of a permanent change of station (PCS) for their Soldier sponsor. To further assist Army spouses in finding meaningful employment, the Army Community Service offers an Employment Readiness Program (ERP). The ERP offers up to date information on available employment opportunities, local market and job trends, education, and volunteer opportunities. The ERP coordinates with installation Civilian Personnel Offices, community agencies, Department of Defense contractors, local employers, and the DOD Military Spouse Employment Partnership. The Army also leverages the My Career Advancement Account Scholarship to connect eligible military spouses with education needed for portable job opportunities. Lastly, the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) recently furthered spouse employment opportunities. AFAP championed a change to OPM policy which authorizes an employee federal career tenure for three years of cumulative service. This is a change to the previous policy of consecutive service which was problematic for Army spouses. Additionally, with the help of Congress, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 removed the two-year PCS eligibility window to use noncompetitive appointment eligibility for military spouses. With this legislative change, a military spouse may now use the noncompetitive appointment any time during the duration of the of the Service member's assignment at a new duty station. Prior to this change, many spouses were not able to use this eligibility within the two-year window due to circumstances beyond their control. [See page 35.]

Admiral BURKE. Applicants for naval service can be declined the opportunity to enlist if they are disqualified for one or more reasons, which can be broken down into four broad categories:

1. Moral Character/Conduct: An applicant is considered ineligible for naval service if he or she has:

- any form of judicial restraint (bond, probation, imprisonment, or parole).
- been convicted of a felony. Persons convicted of felonies may request a waiver to permit their enlistment with the exception of those who have a state or federal conviction, or a finding of guilty in a juvenile adjudication, for a felony crime of rape, sexual abuse, sexual assault, incest, any other sexual offense, or when the disposition requires the person to register as a sex offender. Waivers are not automatic and approval is based on each individual case.
- been previously separated from the Military Services under conditions other than honorable or for the good of the Military Service concerned.
- exhibited antisocial behavior or other traits of character that may render the applicant unfit for service.
- received an unfavorable final determination by the Department of Defense Consolidated Adjudication Facility on a completed National Agency Check with Law and Credit (NACLC/Tier 3) or higher-level investigation during the accession process.
- been a trafficker (supplier) of illegal drugs.
- reservations about Military Service because of religious, moral, or ethical reasons.
- displayed behavior that is not consistent with military service.
- participated in any organization that espouses extremist/supremacist causes, attempts to create illegal discrimination or advocates use of force/violence against the U. S. Government.
- been convicted of a hate crime or received adverse adjudication resulting from a hate crime offense.
- ever tested positive for drugs on a Military Entrance Processing Station Drug and Alcohol Test.

2. Medical: Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) ensures individuals considered for appointment, enlistment, or induction into the Navy are:

- free of contagious diseases that may endanger the health of other personnel.
- free of medical conditions or physical disabilities that may reasonably be expected to require excessive time lost from duty for necessary treatment or hospitalization, or may result in separation from the Navy for medical unfitness.
- medically capable of satisfactorily completing required training and initial period of contracted service.
- medically adaptable to the military environment without geographical area limitations.
- medically capable of performing duties without aggravating existing physical disabilities or medical conditions.

NRC maintains a Medical Waivers Division focused on consideration of individual medical waivers.

3. Height/Weight and Body Composition: Excess body fat and/or the inability to pass the Navy's physical fitness assessment can be detrimental to health, safety, longevity, stamina, and detract from good military appearance. Applicants must be at least 57 inches in height, not to exceed 80. Male and female applicants are screened against height and weight standards. When the applicant exceeds maximum weight for height, and their abdominal circumference exceeds 39 inches (for males) or 35.5 inches (for females), body fat content is then determined. Body fat must not exceed DOD standards of 26 percent for males or 36 percent for females as prescribed in DODI 1308.3, DOD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs Procedures. Physical fitness, not an element of body composition, is evaluated at boot camp. Recruits are required to pass service physical fitness requirements before graduating Boot Camp.

4. Mental/Vocational Aptitude: Overall aptitude requirements for enlistment and induction are based on applicant scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) derived from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. Applicants must score a minimum 31 to meet minimum enlistment eligibility. Minimum of 50 AFQT for applicants with a General Educational Development certificate is required for enlistment purposes. [See page 28.]

Admiral BURKE. Military spouses are skilled, diverse and motivated with a strong work ethic. Employers who choose not to hire military spouses are ignoring an incredible talent pool of potential employees. The Department of Defense (DOD) has programs, like the Military Spouse Employment Partnership, that educate potential employers on the value of hiring military spouses and work with partner companies to increase employment opportunities for military spouses and, when possible, maintain those opportunities as they relocate. Our Navy Family Employment Readiness Program works with Navy spouses to identify and promote portable and sustainable career and employment opportunities, including small business ownership and entrepreneurship. In June, as authorized by Congress, we will announce Navy's program to reimburse spouses for relicensure fees up to five hundred dollars resulting from a state-to-state change of duty station. There is certainly more work to be done. DOD's Defense State Liaison Office continues to work with the various State legislatures to standardize policies, allow a waiver or grace period for the spouses' current licenses, and enact legislation that would enable military spouses to transfer their licenses through occupational licensure compacts when they transfer to a new State. We would certainly appreciate any support you could lend to that effort. [See page 35.]

General KELLY. The Air Force provides a once a week, group, contraceptive education and access clinic to all female trainees during basic training in addition to individual counseling about contraceptives during routine individual sick call appointments. These one-on-one appointments educate patients on birth control methods tailored to their individual questions and medical needs. At Military Treatment Facilities, all female beneficiaries receive regular contraceptive education as part of routine primary and women's health care, including annual preventive health assessments. Additional information about contraceptives is provided whenever requested by the beneficiary tailored to their individual needs. [See page 15.]

General KELLY. Assisted Reproduction Services (ARS), such as In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) are available as certain Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) but costs are borne by the beneficiary including active duty service members (ADSMs) in most circumstances. Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Naval Hospital San Diego, San Antonio Military Medical Center, Madigan Army Medical Center, Tripler Army Medical Center, Womack Army Medical Center, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base offer IVF. ARS is not covered under the TRICARE program. Under statutory authority ARS is available to certain categories of seriously ill or injured ADSMs and their lawful spouse at no-cost in both TRICARE and the MTFs listed above. Specifically, ADSMs with urogenital trauma who are unable to conceive naturally to have biological children and ADSMs with a diagnosis of cancer and who will be undergoing gonadotoxic therapy such as radiation and/or chemotherapy. [See page 15.]

General KELLY. The most common reasons people are disqualified for service are pre-existing medical conditions, law violations, inability to score the minimum on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test and drug usage. Our Service Secretary also retains authority to waive any of these accession standards to be able to enlist a uniquely qualified and talented individual who would fill a key position within the force. [See page 28.]

General KELLY. The Air Force is highly committed to ensuring we maximize opportunities for spousal employment. We well know the challenges that AF spouses face as they move to various locations within the United States and abroad. We have numerous programs that provide military spouses an advantage in seeking em-

ployment within the DOD and the Federal government. Our Military Spouse Preference (MSP) is intended to lessen the career interruption of spouses. It has been recently streamlined to increase our military spouses' flexibility to apply for jobs that better meet their needs and personal desires for employment. Since the Air Force transitioned to the new process, we have received an increase of 4,122 applicants, resulting in 281 military spouses being hired in the past five months. In the public sector, it is much more challenging as we do not have authority over public sector employment. However, the Air Force is deeply committed to helping our spouses secure employment. Our Airman and Family Readiness Centers offer employment assistance for spouses which includes goal setting, job search, resume and interview preparation, and career planning. Installations team with the local community on employment initiatives through job fair networks. We have also been reinforcing the ability of spouses to contribute immediately as well as removing barriers to employment. For example, the portability of occupational licenses across state lines is a challenge getting attention at the highest levels. The Secretary of the Air Force visited with members of National Governors Association, and together with other Military Service Secretaries signed a memorandum on 23 February 2018 to address licensure reciprocity for spouses. Also, as of May 2019, the Air Force has been reimbursing re-licensing/re-certification costs for up to $500 for spouses of military members resulting from a Permanent Change of Station. As of 16 September, this new program processed 89 claims for over $17K in support. With regard to potential "discrimination" by employers, it is something we hear about quite often. The Air Force would be supportive of some type of employment statute similar to protections provided to our Reserve and Guard members. In this case, rather than a guarantee of employment which is not feasible, there could be statutory language broadly prohibiting employers from discriminating against otherwise qualified spouses simply based on their affiliation to the military. Of note, with respect to the unique issues we face overseas, the Services have stood up a tri-Service working group (Army, Navy and Air Force), to investigate and build recommendations for change toward making it easier for spouses to find employment overseas. This effort is ongoing. We greatly appreciate the previous support of Congress and the continuing interest in supporting our military spouses. [See page 35.]

General ROCCO. Chairwoman Speier—thank you for the question. Navy Medicine is responsible for providing our Marines—and their families—with health care services. As such, the following information from the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery is provided in response to your specific question on in vitro fertilization: Reproductive endocrinology services, or assisted reproductive technology, encompasses a wide range of treatments to include ovulation induction, egg retrieval, sperm retrieval and semen analysis, embryology, intrauterine insemination, freezing of sperm and eggs (cryopreservation), in vitro fertilization (IVF) and embryo transfer. These services, such as In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), are covered for seriously ill or injured active duty service members who have suffered urogenital trauma, or are seriously ill, and are unable to procreate naturally. Current TRICARE policy allows for up to three completed IVF cycles and no more than six IVF cycles being initiated. The costs of cryopreservation and storage of embryos is covered for up to 3 years. Service members who may be electively seeking reproductive endocrinology services, or who have a diagnosis of infertility that is not due to injury or illness, are able to access these services through a referral from their provider at several Military Treatment Facilities. Within the Navy, REI services are offered at Naval Medical Center San Diego and Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. The scope of REI services available depends upon what contracts are available locally with facilities that offer cryopreservation and storage, the availability of embryology laboratories, and whether a reproductive endocrinologist is assigned at that location. These services are available to service members as well as all other TRICARE eligible beneficiaries. The costs for required embryology laboratory services, and any other service that is not provided by the MTF, are borne by the beneficiary. [See page 15.]

General ROCCO. Screening is a continual process from the initial meeting with a recruiter through graduation from MOS school. Screening compares an applicant's mental, moral, medical, and physical qualifications against the enlistment criteria. Areas that are screened include:

a. Age: 17–28

b. Citizenship: must be native born, naturalized, dual citizen, alien who is a lawful permanent resident, non-immigrant alien, other nationals.

c. Education: the Commandant of the Marine Corps requires 95% of all enlisted applicants to have an equivalent to a traditional high school graduation.

d. Drug and alcohol involvement: screened to the extent of their drug, alcohol, or other substance involvement.

e. Mental aptitude: mentally tested to determine if they meet the aptitude standards established for enlistment and determine appropriate MOS assignments.

f. Physical aptitude: required to meet specific physical standards.

g. Moral conduct: screened to prevent enlistment of those with social habits that may be a threat to unit morale and cohesiveness, or may become serious disciplinary problems in the Marine Corps.

h. Prior service: provide prior service Marines who possess critical skills in a designated MOS an opportunity to resume their career in the Marine Corps. Marines who have separated and wish to rejoin the service shall meet the same standards as initial accessions are required to pass.

i. Body art (tattoos) or body ornamentation (piercings/gauges): must comply with established uniform regulations. [See page 28.]

General ROCCO. The Marine Corps is working to improve and promote spouse employment. We not aware that spousal discrimination when seeking employment in communities surrounding military bases is an issue. Further, if this is an issue we would likely be prohibited from pursuing legal action to combat it as this is separate from the Marine Corps and not within the organization's jurisdiction. [See page 35.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. KELLY

General SEAMANDS. We have transformed our human capital systems and established strong data governance to protect personally identifiable information and leverage emerging big data technology to ensure we acquire, develop, employ, and retain the right Soldier for the right job at the right time over time. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G1 (G1) and the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA (M&RA)) are part of the Army Data Board and Army Analytics Board that determine highest payoff for data investments, translate strategic questions into data projects, and harmonize disparate analytics management efforts. The G1 and ASA (M&RA) use a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Our G1 analysts examine enlisted and officer separations by category and existing exit surveys to inform recruiting and retention decisions. The Army Talent Management Task Force (TMTF) and Army Research Institute (ARI) are developing a new exit and retention survey to collect more detailed responses. The Army's Integrated Personnel and Pay System (IPPS–A), our on-line system to provide integrated personnel, pay, and talent management capabilities in a single system to all Army components incorporates audit trails of all transactions, encrypts data, requires electronic signatures, and incorporates additional military and industry-standard cyber protection measures. The Army Analytics Group's Person-event Data Environment (PDE) is an enterprise platform for integrating data across the human capital enterprise—linking analyst, data, and tools to solve human capital problems and ensure human subject protection regulations and privacy rules are followed and auditable. This creates a secure and protected space for analysts to conduct studies and to test new analytic tools and algorithms, to include predictive analytics to provide valuable insights on human capital to the Army. [See page 16.]

Admiral BURKE. Through the collection of data into an Authoritative Data Environment (ADE), Navy is establishing analytical capabilities that will better allow MyNavy HR to evaluate Sailor behavior, more accurately and efficiently assign talent, better design and account for compensation packages, and generate a system that affords greater flexibility, permeability, and Sailor choice. This capability is a critical element of the Navy's Sailor 2025 program, which is designed to modernize personnel management along with training policies and systems to more efficiently identify, recruit, and train talented people and manage the force while improving warfighting readiness. In addition to traditional exit surveys, we have developed career milestone surveys for Sailors choosing to stay Navy. Since 2014, we have conducted both exit and milestone surveys, both of which focus heavily on retention factors and primary influencers to stay or leave the Navy. The milestone survey is offered to enlisted sailors 18 months prior to their Soft End Active Obligated Service (SEAOS) and 15 months prior to the Mandatory Service Requirement date for officers. The exit survey is offered 6 months prior to SEAOS for enlisted sailors and 6 months prior to Estimated Date of Leaving Navy for officers. The data for both surveys is stored in the Navy's personnel system from which we generate quarterly reports. Through the collection of data into an Authoritative Data Environment (ADE), Navy is establishing analytical capabilities that will better allow MyNavy HR to evaluate Sailor behavior, more accurately and efficiently assign talent, better design and account for compensation packages, and generate a system that affords greater flexibility, permeability, and Sailor choice. This capability is a critical ele-

ment of the Navy's Sailor 2025 program, which is designed to modernize personnel management along with training policies and systems to more efficiently identify, recruit, and train talented people and manage the force while improving warfighting readiness. In addition to traditional exit surveys, we have developed career milestone surveys for Sailors choosing to stay Navy. Since 2014, we have conducted both exit and milestone surveys, both of which focus heavily on retention factors and primary influencers to stay or leave the Navy. The milestone survey is offered to enlisted sailors 18 months prior to their Soft End Active Obligated Service (SEAOS) and 15 months prior to the Mandatory Service Requirement date for officers. The exit survey is offered 6 months prior to SEAOS for enlisted sailors and 6 months prior to Estimated Date of Leaving Navy for officers. The data for both surveys is stored in the Navy's personnel system from which we generate quarterly reports. Navy also conducts two large Navy wide surveys bi-annually: the Personnel and Professional Choice survey and the Health of Force (HoF) survey. Navy survey specialists analyze the data from the HoF survey and provide senior leaders with additional information such as retention, command climate, and satisfaction with Navy employment. Lastly, in addition to these four large surveys, we conduct many smaller pulse surveys in coordination with, and at the Commanding Officer's discretion. Topics focus on policy changes or program specific issues. Most recently, throughout our personnel system transformation and as part of our ongoing Sailor 2025 efforts, we developed fleet integration teams, which hold focus groups with Sailors, spouses, and family groups. As an example, last year, over a two month period, our fleet integration teams traveled across the fleet to better understand the pain points associated with PCS moves. These direct conversations resulted in 16 independent solutions, two of which we are about to put into motion (CAC-less MyPCS Mobile enabled website and Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) pilot program). These are just two examples of how our team is evolving into an innovative, agile, and responsive team, providing unparalleled service to our Sailors, their families, and the Fleet. We will continue to apply cutting edge human resource management practices and technology to become a customer-experience driven organization that demonstrates, through action, that we value our Sailors and their families. Our Transformation and Sailor 2025 efforts continue to be vital in achieving this goal. As part of our Transformation effort, we are collapsing and integrating as much of our data, economic data, and other pertinent data into our ADE. Once fully integrated and populated, the ADE will provide our analysts with a 'single source of truth' data repository coupled with the latest accredited Machine Learning software and algorithms, enabling them to better inform and identify why our sailors stay or leave and who are the most talented. [See page 16.]

General KELLY. The Air Force conducts Exit and Retention surveys with the purpose of assessing factors influencing an Airman's decision to remain in the Air Force. Surveys have been conducted since 1989 and are governed by AFI 38–501, Air Force Survey Program. a) The Exit Survey is conducted on a continuous basis when members are separating from the military. b) The Retention Survey is conducted every two years with the most recent completed in 2017. The 2019 Retention Survey is currently underway. Retention surveys are administered to Air Force enlisted (E1–E9) and officers (O1–O6), and are representative of the Air Force Total Force (RegAF, AF Reserve, & Air National Guard). Questions are geared toward the member's experience throughout his/her Air Force career. Data is collected and analyzed to provide information on member's satisfaction throughout their career, which includes current job, assignment and location. Information is also obtained concerning the member's plans on staying past their current commitment, and intentions for staying at least until retirement eligibility. The AF also uses survey results to inform critical skills retention bonus and quality of life policies. The 2017 Retention Survey revealed that the Top 10 reasons (RegAF) Airmen remained in the Air Force were as follows:

Officers:	Enlisted
1. Retirement Programs	1. Education Benefits
2. Job Satisfaction	2. Retirement Programs
3. Patriotism/ Desire to Serve	3. Job Security
4. Overall Compensation & Benefits	4. Overall Compensation & Benefits
5. Ability to Contribute to the Mission	5. Job Satisfaction
6. Job Security	6. Medical Related Influences
7. Education Benefits	7. Patriotism/ Desire to Serve
8. Opportunities to Command/Lead	8. Choice of Job Assignment/Location
9. Choice of Job Assignment/Location	9. Ability to Contribute to the Mission
10. Relationship with Unit Personnel	10. Financial Reasons

[See page 16.]

General ROCCO. Retaining Marines whose past service and future potential continues to make the Corps stronger is one of our highest priorities. As the Marine Corps manages our force, we work to retain the very best available Marines capable of fulfilling our leadership and operational needs. This is accomplished through a targeted retention campaign that includes competitive career designation process for officers and a thorough evaluation process for enlisted Marines, both of which are designed to measure, analyze, and compare our Marines' performance and accomplishments. Using historical data on retention coupled with the present manpower requirements, we calculate required retention goals. We utilize historical data on retention behavior to focus our incentive pay programs. This allows the Marine Corps to maintain healthy military occupational specialties and fill hard to retain positions, such as cyber security technicians, special operators, and counter intelligence specialists as well as increase the inventory stability of the aviation officer population. In addition, we are now collecting data on multiple aspects of military service that will shape future retention policies and programs: Surveys: The Marine Corps has developed a survey program designed to investigate not only why Marines leave but why they stay and why they join. The Exit and Milestone Longitudinal Survey (EMLS) consists of three specific surveys, (1) Entry, (2) Milestone (reenlistment, career designation, and promotion), and (3) Exit. Fiscal Year 2018 was the first full year of data collection. In approximately three years, we anticipate we will achieve a representative sample to make data-driven policy decisions. Artificial Intelligence: The Marine Corps has an Artificial Intelligence Line of Operation with the desired end state of accurately predicting attrition, performance, behaviors, and attitudes and consider these predictions as additive factors in not only retention but recruitment, talent management, and increasing lethality. Our first Line of Effort is underway with the Tailored Adaptive Personality Assessment System (TAPAS) pilot study. This initiative will inform and guide future Lines of Effort, thus reinforcing our efforts to retain the best and most qualified Marines. [See page 16.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MRS. DAVIS

Mr. STEWART. As of April 30, 2019, over 615,000 Service members are enrolled in the Blended Retirement System (BRS). Of this total number, about 475,000 are Active Component (AC) members and about 140,000 are in the Reserve Component (RC). This means nearly 40 percent of the AC is participating in BRS, either because they opted-in or were automatically enrolled, while about 20 percent of the RC is participating in BRS (also via opt-ins or automatic enrollment). These numbers and percentages will continue to increase as all new entrants are brought in under BRS. The Department has consistently emphasized that opting into BRS was a personal decision to be made by each individual member without influence, targets, or goals. The Department provided significant training and made extensive resources and financial counseling available to both AC and RC members. This ensured that all Service members had access to the necessary tools to make a well-informed decision. The lower participation rate among RC members can be explained by several possibilities that may have influenced their opt-in decisions, but it is impossible to make a generalized conclusion about the individual choices made by each eligible member. The most significant impact was that the criteria to opt-in was much broader for RC members. Because RC members could have any length of service as long as they had fewer than the equivalent of 12 active years (i.e., fewer than 4,320 retirement points), many RC members, though technically eligible to opt-in, were actually far along in their careers, and in many cases, already retirement eligible under the legacy system. As a percentage, those for whom BRS would

have been an attractive option was lessened by this larger pool. Also, some RC members may have been less inclined to opt into BRS because they already have defined contribution plans (i.e., 401k-style plans) through their civilian employers and were less incentivized by the potential for matching contributions and portability of the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). AC members, on the other hand, did not previously have any option for contributing to a 401k-style retirement plan that offered matching contributions, so were likely more inclined to see this as an attractive incentive, both for its flexibility and portability. We know that AC and RC members tend to view retirement as an incentive differently. AC members tend to have more clarity about their personal preferences for long-term service, meaning the portable benefits of BRS would have been more appealing to those active members who are confident they will leave service prior to serving a full 20 years. Receipt of military retired pay for RC members is often more distant and can be perceived less significantly as part of an individual's total retirement plan when compared to AC members. As such, RC members may have felt there was less risk from choosing to stay in the legacy plan even if they are not certain they ultimately serve for 20 years. Given these differences, it is not totally surprising that greater percentages of AC members than RC members made the decision to opt into BRS. Despite the differing opt-in rates among AC and RC members, we are confident that all of our members were educated and made informed choices based on their own personal situations. [See page 26.]

General SEAMANDS. As of April 30, 2019, over 243,000 soldiers are enrolled in the Blended Retirement System (BRS). Of this total number, about 155,000 are Active Component (AC) soldiers and about 88,000 are in the Army Reserve or National Guard. This means nearly 33 percent of the AC is participating in BRS, either because they opted-in or were automatically enrolled, while about 20 percent of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard soldiers are participating in BRS (also via opt-ins or automatic enrollment). These numbers and percentages will continue to increase as all new entrants are brought in under BRS. BRS is a personal decision made by each individual member without influence, targets, or goals. The Army provided significant training and made extensive resources and financial counseling available to both AC and RC members. We believe all Soldiers had the necessary tools to make an informed decision. The slightly lower participation rate among the RC could be attributable to several broad reasons. For example, some RC members may have been less inclined to opt into BRS because they already have defined contribution plans (i.e., 401k plans) through their civilian employers and were less incentivized by the potential for matching contributions and portability of the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The AC members, on the other hand, did not previously have any option for contributing to a 401k-style retirement plan that offered matching contributions, so were likely more inclined to see this as an attractive incentive, both for its flexibility and portability. [See page 26.]

Admiral BURKE. At the end of the opt-in window of December 31, 2018, approximately 11 percent of Navy Reserve Component (RC) members eligible to opt-in to the Blended Retirement System (BRS) chose to enroll in BRS compared to approximately 31 percent of eligible Active Component (AC) members. This lower (RC) opt-in was fully expected for several reasons. BRS is more attractive to Sailors with low years of service. Since most RC members have prior active service, members with low years of service are a relatively small percentage of the RC. Additionally, most RC members join the reserves because they want to continue their naval service career, so BRS was generally less attractive to them. RC members are also more likely to have a defined contribution plan (401k) through their civilian employer and it is likely the Thrift Savings Plan matching contribution offered by BRS was less attractive. While there is some disparity in opt-in rates between AC and RC members, all were trained on their options and had access to the resources needed to make the best decision for them based on their personal situation. [See page 26.]

General KELLY. The Blended Retirement System (BRS) achieves its goal of providing a portable retirement benefit by reducing the legacy pension. Therefore, the closer a member gets to reaching 20 years of service, and qualifying for retired pay, the more advantageous it is for the member to remain in the legacy retirement system. Eligibility to opt-in to BRS is based on 12 years of service. For members of the regular component, this is a straightforward number of years. For members in the Reserve component (Guard and Reserve), this 12 years of service is based on participation points used to determine retired pay. The qualification threshold is based on 360 points per year times 12 years which is 4,320. While Regular Component members must serve for 20 years to qualify for retired pay, Reserve component members must serve 20 "good" years. Minimum participation to have a "good year" is to earn 50 points. Therefore, it is mathematically possible for a member of the Reserve Component to be retirement eligible with 20 good years and 1,000 points.

The result of basing eligibility on 4,320 points is that almost all members of the Reserve Component were eligible. We should expect as members get closer to reaching 20 years of service (good years), they will be less likely to opt-in to BRS and a large proportion of the eligible members in the Reserve Component had more than 12 good years toward retirement. Additionally, many members in the Reserve Component are already in the civilian workforce, so the portability feature of BRS is not as significant. These factors account for the difference in opt-in rates between the Regular and Reserve Components. The opt-in rates were:

Regular Component: 29.8%
Air Force Reserve: 11.5%
Air National Guard: 11.5%

[See page 26.]

General ROCCO. As of 30 April 2019, 81,417 active component and 16,539 reserve Component Marines elected to enroll in the Blended Retirement System. [See page 26.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BERGMAN

Mr. STEWART. We estimate the cost, per individual, from the day they walk in the door until we get them through boot camp to be around $34,000. This data point is a DOD average and does not include the cost of skill training—just recruiting and basic military training. [See page 28.]

General SEAMANDS. The average cost in fiscal year 2018 of training a Regular Army (RA) recruit from the time the individual walks into a recruiting center until the recruit reaches their first duty station was $68.2K. This includes enlistment bonuses, recruit pay, recruiter operations and support, entrance processing costs, training operations and support costs. If marketing costs are included, the average cost of a RA recruit was $72.3K. The actual cost of a recruit varies depending on the Military Occupation Specialty (MOS), incentives, and bonuses. [See page 28.]

Admiral BURKE. The first two phases of the Force Development supply chain consist of talent acquisition/onboarding and initial recruit training. It costs the Navy on average a total of $32,795 per recruit from initial recruitment to Recruit Training Command's (RTC) Basic Military Training course graduation. In fiscal year 2018, it cost an average of $15,616 per recruit for talent acquisition/onboarding, which included Marketing and Advertising, locating and screening applicants, collecting documentation, transporting applicants to Recruiting Stations, Military Entrance Processing Stations and RTC. In fiscal year 2018, it cost an average of $11,829 per recruit for RTC. This included military and civilian staff salaries, student pay, and allowances. Base operating support functions like facility operations and maintenance, force protection, vehicle operations and maintenance, and fire and emergency services, cost an additional $5,350 per recruit graduate. [See page 28.]

General KELLY. The average cost to recruit and train an Airman through BMT in 2018 was $36,006. [See page 28.]

General ROCCO. The Total Military Personnel Appropriation cost estimate is $9,186.00 per Marine. This estimate is based on 13 weeks of training for the E–1 population.

Line Item Details:
- Base Pay = $4,206.00
  - RPA = $1,195.00
  - FICA = $322.00
  - Clothing = $1,136.00
  - Food = $696.00
  - PCS = $1,356.00
- Personnel Structure (Instructors): $275
- *FY18 recruiting mission was 36,891

[See page 28.]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. HAALAND

Mr. STEWART. The JROTC program is not a recruiting tool for the military. Although some JROTC students may enlist directly from high school or several years after high school, the Department of Defense does not track how many JROTC students enter the military. It also does not maintain any demographic data on JROTC participants' precisely because it is not a recruitment tool. The JROTC program provides a sense of accomplishment and teaches students valuable lessons in citizenship, service to the United States, and personal responsibility. It does not condition young people for life in the military, notably the participants are below the age for

recruitment, but it does help prepare young people for the challenges each will face as they grow into adulthood. Enrollment in the JROTC program is voluntary and any high school student may participate regardless of gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation as long as they can meet the physical fitness standards and academic responsibilities. [See page 29.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

MAY 16, 2019

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. SPEIER

Ms. SPEIER. The FY19 NDAA included DOPMA reforms that give the services broader leeway and discretion in managing officers and their career paths. How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms? How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps?

Mr. STEWART. First, on behalf of the Department and the Military Services, I thank Congress for implementing the most significant changes to DOPMA/ROPMA in a generation. In a historically competitive job market, our charge of commissioning and retaining our nation's top talent remains challenging. The seven major officer corps talent management authorities provided in the FY19 NDAA have all been implemented through DOD policies. The Military Services have already begun using these authorities. Several communities across the Services have raised or removed the upper age limitations, as authorized by section 501. We will continue to use this authority, in conjunction with the authority granted in section 502, to commission officers with experience at higher pay grades, particularly to offer more competitive rank and compensation to individuals with critical skill sets to meet Service needs. Additionally, the incentives authorized in sections 503 and 504 have been met with enthusiasm, both by the Services and by Service members. Through standardizing the temporary promotion opportunity for officers, the Military Services are better able to quickly fill critical skill sets and provide retention incentives for highly talented officers. Likewise, the Services' newly authorized ability to reorder promotion lists based on merit has quickly proven to be a popular method to reward superior performance with the incentive of earlier promotion, without additional tax-payer burden. The remaining authorities granted in sections 505, 506, and 507 challenge the DOPMA premise of "up or out," with "up and stay," when appropriate. As highlighted in the Department's recent report to Congress on the alternate promotion authority, this authorization gives the Services incredible flexibility for targeted retention and promotion of talented officers. The challenge in immediate execution of this authority is the need to reasonably observe the effects of implementing the other officer management modernization changes from the FY19 NDAA. In aggregate, these provisions enable the Department to attract and retain a diversity of talent and experience to continually evolve the officer corps and meet the demands of our ever-changing geo-political landscape.

Ms. SPEIER. The FY19 NDAA included DOPMA reforms that give the services broader leeway and discretion in managing officers and their career paths. How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms? How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps?

General SEAMANDS. *How are each of the Services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms?* Talent Management is a top priority for the Secretary and the Chief of Staff of the Army. The Army established a Talent Management Task Force to modernize the Officer Personnel System from an Industrial-Age model to an Information-Age system.

How have the Services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? The Army is aggressively identifying the best use of these authorities. Our approach is to develop small-scale pilots to gather data and then implement policies that integrate lessons learned from these pilots. To date, the Army has already leveraged seven of the authorities for pilots or Army-wide policy implementation. Using the direct commissioning authority, the Army's Cyber Branch has commissioned seven officers. Four of the officers have completed training and are currently serving with Army Cyber units. While it has not yet been exercised, the Army has integrated the repeal of the 20 Year Time-In-Service requirement by age 62 with the new direct commis-

sioning policy that gives the Army greater access to civilian talent. For brevet promotions, the Army will pilot temporary promotions with the summer 2020 assignment cycle (officers who move in summer 2020). Starting with 200 critical positions, select officers will be temporarily promoted to the next grade. The Army plans to implement the 770 positions authorized in the 2019 NDAA over the next year. The Army will implement merit promotions with the active component O–4 promotion board that convenes in July 2019, and will continue this with subsequent promotion boards. The Army is on track to allow officers to opt out of promotion boards in fiscal year 2020. Once approved, this policy would allow officers to request to opt-out for promotion consideration twice per grade. If the officer's request is approved, the officer could not compete for promotion until the following year. DOD promotions policy was revised in March 2019 to specifically instruct members of promotion boards to "not consider an officer's previous decision to opt out of a promotion board" with prejudice. Next, the Army is currently identifying officers with critical skills matched against forecasted critical shortages for up to 40 years of active service. Once those officers and shortages are identified, we will institutionalize selective continuation boards to retain Army talent beyond the traditional mandatory retirement date limits to meet Army requirements. Lastly, an Army Directive to improve this Federal Recognition process is currently being staffed. Once approved, this would allow the Secretary of the Army to adjust the date of rank of Army National Guard officers who faced a delay, not attributable to the action (or inaction) of the officer(s) in receiving Federal recognition to the next higher grade. Once approved, the directive ensures timely Federal recognition and provides for retroactive pay due to delays in the system. Brevet appointments will terminate when the officer is no longer serving in a critical position or the officer is promoted to the appropriate permanent grade. While officers are in a brevet status, they will receive pay and allowances commensurate with the higher temporary rank.

What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? To date, the new Direct Commissioning policy has been approved, assigning the Deputy Chief of Staff, G–1, as the proponent for the policy and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs as responsible for policy oversight. The directive implementing opt out of a promotion board authority is expected to be signed shortly, as well as several other policy change directives. Once approved, policy instructions will be provided on how to implement the policy. The Secretary of the Army is the approval authority for many of the new authorities due to the impact of larger processes such as appointments and promotions that are then confirmed by the Senate.

What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? Application of these authorities is guided by the principle that we need the right officer in the right assignment at the right time, over time. The flexibilities that these authorities provide allow us to build readiness and retain talent.

How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps? The Army Talent Management Task Force is working to modernize the Army's personnel system from a data-poor, industrial-age system to a data-rich, information-age system that captures an officer's talents—knowledge, skills, and behaviors. It is also creating a regimen of assessments to help each officer develop their talents and to help the Army better inform the selection of its future strategic leaders. Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army (IPPS–A) will be a cornerstone to successfully identify and optimize talent. Through the authorities granted in the 2019 NDAA, the Army is demonstrating value in a broader diversity and experience by creating this system with a granular view of talent. The Army can now offer increased flexibility in career paths to permit officers to develop this talent. The new authorities allow us to recognize that each officer has unique talents, qualifications, and aspirations. We have the flexibility to address and optimize each.

Ms. SPEIER. The FY19 NDAA included DOPMA reforms that give the services broader leeway and discretion in managing officers and their career paths. How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms? How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps?

Admiral BURKE. *How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms?* Our process of conceptualizing these reforms began as a review several years ago of the existing Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) provisions to identify modifications that permit greater officer management flexibility to compete for civilian talent and cultivate, retain and reward in-service talent. Navy's

DOPMA reform proposals, along with those of the other Services conceptualized under similar processes, were vetted during working group meetings under Department of Defense (DOD) stewardship.

How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? We immediately began development of programs to implement officer personnel management reforms enacted in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, including:

- expanded constructive service credit to recruit civilian candidates with education, leadership, and experience credentials for leadership roles in cyber and engineering fields.
- expanded spot promotion opportunity for captains with post-command executive leadership and commanders with operational command executive leadership. First board scheduled to convene July 25, 2019.
- expanded continuation to retain certain control grade officers with targeted skills in aviation, intelligence, acquisition corps, and as attachés beyond the traditional statutory limits. First board scheduled to convene in September 2019.
- relaxed the requirement that original appointments be granted only to individuals able to complete 20 years commissioned service by age 62.
- current execution of merit re-order promotion authority to incentivize top performers across all active officer communities. Promotions boards are authorized to recommend up to 15 percent of selectees for merit reorder. Merit reordered officers will be promoted in the first promotion increment. Additionally, we plan to exercise promotion deferment authority beginning with the fiscal year 2021 promotion board cycle to afford greater flexibility for top performing officers whose competitiveness might otherwise suffer due to participation in career-broadening and education opportunities

What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? The following officer personnel management instructions issued by the Secretary of the Navy concerning promotions, temporary spot promotions, and continuation have been updated to include implementation guidance for expanded continuation, merit reorder and promotion deferment.

- Department of the Navy Commissioned Officer Promotion Program, Secretary of the Navy Instruction (SECNAVINST) 1420.3 of March 28, 2019
- Temporary Spot Promotion of Officers, SECNAVINST 1421.3L of March 12, 2018
- Continuation on Active Duty of Regular Commissioned Officers and Reserve Officers on the Reserve Active Status List in the Navy and Marine Corps, SECNAVINST 1920.7C of January 22, 2019

The following officer accession program authorizations have been updated and provided to our Recruiting Command and individual officer recruiters to implement the expanded constructive service credit authorizations enacted in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2019.

- Active Component Cyber Warfare Engineer Officers
- Active Component Engineering Duty Officers
- Reserve Component Cryptologic Warfare Officers
- Reserve Component Information Professional Officers

What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? We are modernizing our personnel policies and programs to give Sailors more control and ownership over their careers, as well as allow the Navy to adapt to economic changes and corresponding effects on the recruiting market and retention. Our transformation personnel initiatives are designed to continue to recruit and retain the very best talent, empower commanding officers, increase transparency and flexibility, provide better tools to Sailors and leadership, and give Sailors more choices. This will allow us to reward and encourage superior performance with increased options and authorities in managing talent.

How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps? First, the authorities from John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 allow Navy to find talent from a wide breadth of backgrounds and cast a wider net of talent, which inherently increases the diversity of experience. Before, if the Navy was looking for a senior officer with certain skill sets, the only option was to grow one from a 20–30 year career. Now, we are able to retain officers with specific skillsets and experience beyond statutory limits to keep required knowledge or commission an outside candidate with the same specific skillsets up to the paygrade of O–6 provided they meet the education, leadership, and qualifications. Second, the increased flexibility in career paths we have put into place promotes diversity by acknowledging there are many paths to a successful career. The authorities put into place increase an officer's ability to serve while balancing their professional, educational,

and family goals. By having a multitude of pathways to success, Navy increases the appeal of a career to officers with different goals, thereby increasing the talent pool and retention. These authorities allow us to fill coveted positions with the best and brightest that the Navy has to offer.

Ms. SPEIER. The FY19 NDAA included DOPMA reforms that give the services broader leeway and discretion in managing officers and their career paths. How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms? How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps?

General KELLY. The Air Force appreciates the expanded authorities and is focusing our execution of them to help drive deliberate development of our officers to meet current and future requirements across our diverse mission sets and functional communities. We have used constructive credit to recruit officers in very competitive cyber career fields. As part of our work in revamping our officer promotion process we are working to incorporate order of merit promotion sequencing, temporary promotions, and alternative promotion authority. The last two are being incorporated with our work to redefine our officer competitive category structure in order to provide increased developmental agility. The DOPMA reforms are currently being developed into policy for consideration and execution, understanding that each effort is closely linked to one another, and must not be implemented disparate of one another. The authorities afford the ability to flexibly manage when officers meet promotion eligibility windows, promoting the best qualified officers at the right career point along their unique development paths, matching the right officers to the right requirements at the right time in order to meet institutional requirements, while also fostering a more diverse officer pool. We think this is key in order for us to develop and deliver the right mix of officers we need to satisfy the diverse mission sets tasked to the AF as part of the National Defense Strategy.

Ms. SPEIER. The FY19 NDAA included DOPMA reforms that give the services broader leeway and discretion in managing officers and their career paths. How are each of the services and DOD conceptualizing these reforms? How have the services and DOD begun to use the authorities included? What instructions and authorities have been given to personnel officials at which levels? What values underlie the application of these authorities to managing officer corps? How are the new authorities being used to promote diversity, diversity of experience, and career flexibility within the various officer corps?

General ROCCO. The Marine Corps appreciates and is leveraging the officer personnel management authorities granted in the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (FY19NDAA). They seek to help modernize how we manage our Marines with the goal of recruiting and retaining the highest quality talent. Of the authorities available, the Marine Corps has implemented lineal list flexibility (merit-based promotion list reorder), is exploring opt out methods, and is in the final administrative stages of making the Career Intermission Program (CIP) permanent (anticipated completion in November of 2019). The Marine Corps' Fiscal Year 2021 Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel Promotion Boards executed merit reorder with up to 100 percent of the promotion list eligible for merit reorder. We anticipate that this authority will benefit the most competitive officers selected for promotion as those officers may be moved to the top of the promotion list. The authorities allows the Marine Corps the flexibility to design the ideal balance within the officer corps to respond to future requirements, stabilize the force, drawdown when required by Congress, and accurately program and budget the service military personnel account. Also, the Marine Corps is planning to offer a new opt out of consideration for promotion option for the FY2022 promotion boards. These policies are anticipated to positively impact officer continuation rates by offering individual officers career flexibility from the legacy up or out promotion system. The underlying goal of utilizing these reforms is to create career flexibilities and ultimately, to retain the highest quality Marines. We want to continue to recruit and retain the best men and women of our Nation with diverse experiences, advanced education, and valuable critical skills to increase our readiness and lethality—so that we continue to be ready when the Nation is least ready.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. CISNEROS

Mr. CISNEROS. A recent report from Mission Readiness, an organization of retired admirals and generals, states that 71 percent of young Americans aged 17–24 are

not eligible for military service, often due to poor health and fitness or lack of education. How is the Department handling the decreasing pool of eligible recruits? Do the services need to revisit eligibility standards? What can DOD do to increase the pool of eligible recruits?

Mr. STEWART. The report cited is accurate. Nearly 71 percent of young Americans aged 17–24 are not eligible for military service, often owing to poor health and fitness or lack of education. These issues impact more than just military recruiting and are being addressed by states and the federal government. In light of these and other changes, the Department continuously reviews the eligibility standards for Military Service. Adjustments to these standards are made based on findings in the medical community or based on the broad acceptance of new social norms. While these issues limit the pool of eligible youth, there are a sufficient number of high-quality, qualified youth that are eligible to serve. The challenge for the Military Services is how best to reach these youth and overcome misperceptions or inaccurate information regarding what it means to serve. Today, there are fewer veterans to tell their positive stories. When combined with the constant messaging from numerous wounded warrior veteran support programs, our ability to communicate positive messages about Military Service is even more challenging. To expand the pool of high-quality, qualified youth who are willing to serve, the Department and the Military Services must consistently share the positive message of what it means to serve in a way that reaches today's youth.

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