



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Hearing National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve April 3, 2014 *Opening Statement As Prepared*

Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding and for holding this important hearing about the readiness of the National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve. Generals, welcome to the Appropriations Committee and thank you for spending time with us to discuss the challenges confronting these DOD components.

In the fast-changing world we live in today, there is no question that those who serve under our flag are doing so during a critical period in our history. As we've seen a nation's sovereign power come under siege in Ukraine over the past several weeks and tragedy once again unfold at Fort Hood, Texas just yesterday afternoon, we should be reminded that our country, our freedom and our way of life are not to be taken for granted. We should remain ever vigilant and take measured steps to protect the values we hold dear. Our thoughts and our prayers remain with those families and the entire community during this difficult time of need.

I therefore want to associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues in recognizing the fine service, dedication and sacrifice of the men and women that you are here representing today. The soldiers and airmen of the Guard and Reserve have time and again answered the call to serve in some of the most difficult conditions domestically and abroad. As this subcommittee has done in the past, we want to reaffirm our commitment to providing our Guardsmen and reservists with the tools, training, equipment and support necessary to carry out vital security missions whether they are stationed here in the U.S. or deployed around the world.

As our military transitions to a new focus after more than a decade at war, I understand that there will naturally be some changes to the structure of the force. The question we hope to answer in this Committee is, "Is the Department of Defense being strategic, efficient and properly aligning funding to mission requirements and results?" Undoubtedly, DOD is still reeling from the impacts of sequestration, and the choices we must make to fund our military within the Murray-Ryan budget caps are difficult. For this reason, I am eager to hear your plan to strike the delicate balance between our readiness, force structure and modernization during these difficult budgetary times.

Thank you for your service and for being with us today. I look forward to your testimony, and I yield back.

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