

**Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham (NM-01) Statement,  
House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense  
Member's Day Hearing, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Visclosky, and Members of the Defense Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about the Army's AN/PDR-75A Personal Dosimeter Radiac Set, which measures radiation exposure in order to reduce health risks for the brave men and women who put themselves in harm's way. This program is critical to the security, safety, and well-being of American service members who are exposed to radioactive weapon systems, devices, and material on a daily basis. It also ensures that we are prepared for a broad range of contingencies that could expose our soldiers to potentially high levels of radiation, including the use of a "dirty" bomb. Without accurate data, we will have no way of assessing and reducing radiation exposure health risks, including acute radiation sickness and cancer.

The AN/PDR-75A Radiac set replaces old, obsolete systems being used by the Army since the 1960s. The outdated systems could not measure the range of dose presented by current scenarios or provide a legal dose of record capability. The new system meets DOD standards and includes a personal dosimeter, which resembles a wristwatch that a soldier wears and a small, five pound reader that provides a legal record of radiation exposure for each soldier. This recorded information is kept as part of the soldier's medical record and provides a soldier with a comprehensive record of radiation exposure over his or her entire career. This detail is extremely helpful to both the soldier and the Department of Veterans Affairs once the soldier seeks medical care upon leaving the service, because cancer risk increases as one's total lifetime doses

increase. Recent news reports have highlighted current problems facing soldiers and veterans seeking treatment at the VA whose radiation exposure was not recorded or tracked. Unfortunately this spans across exposure at Pacific island nuclear test sites in the 1950's, in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, around the Fukushima nuclear disaster and via depleted Uranium use in current operations. These examples demonstrate that the need and application for these Radiac Sets is wide ranging. The AN/PDR-75A removes any doubt and provides a legal record of all exposure during a soldier's career of service to our nation.

The Army began purchasing new Radiac Sets in 2012 with procurement dollars, but due largely to budgetary constraints, decided to pause production and fielding until 2020. Prudently, the Army Reserve and Army National Guard used National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) funds to field Radiac sets to 100% of their soldiers and are 100% mission ready. Unfortunately, that is not the case with the Active Army, which has since placed the shortfall of Radiac Sets on its Unfunded Requirements List and remains only 50% mission ready.

The current Active Army shortfall stands at 2,323 AN/PDR-75A Radiac Sets (Personal Dosimeters), which places soldiers at risk. The Active Army needs an estimated \$26M over the next two years to complete fielding the newest, most capable systems to our nation's soldiers. One further point of consideration, the Army's proposed pause in production will have a profound negative impact on the industrial base for this critical piece of equipment. Shutting down and then restarting the production line increases future production costs, jeopardizes the development of state-of-the-art technology, and leads to the loss of a highly skilled and proficient workforce.

We cannot wait until 2020 to resume production of these critical items. Funding and fielding these items in FY18 improves Army readiness, stabilizes the industrial base, and most importantly protects the safety and welfare of our nation's soldiers. I thank the Committee for inviting me to appear here today and for your consideration of providing support and funding for this vital Army program in FY2018 and beyond.

Thank you.