



Chairman Charlie Dent

*Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2016 Budget Hearing – Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Related Agencies
March 18, 2015
Opening Statement As Prepared**

The Committee will come to order. I want to welcome all of you to today's hearing on the four related agencies that are funded through the Milcon/VA bill: The American Battle Monuments Commission; Arlington National Cemetery; The United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; and the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

I would now like to welcome our four witnesses. As I do, I would like to note the extraordinary public service represented here today. Each of our witnesses has served in the Armed Services, either in the Army or Marine Corps. All have chosen to continue to serve as civilians and have done so in remarkable fashion. In total, we have before us close to 160 years of exemplary service to our country. On behalf of this subcommittee, let me say that your dedication is truly appreciated.

- The Honorable Max Cleland was appointed Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission in June 2009.
- Mr. Patrick Hallinan has been the Executive Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program since June 2013. Prior to that he was the Superintendent at Arlington.
- Judge Bruce Kasold has been the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims since August 2010, and has served as a Judge on the Court of Appeals since 2003.
- Mr. Steve McManus assumed the role of Chief Operating Officer for the Armed Forces Retirement Home on September 25, 2011. He has been with that agency for 12 years.

Thank you all for being here today. Without objection, your written statements will be entered into the record. I would ask that you each briefly summarize your statements at this time. As at every hearing, we will observe the 5 minute rule.

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