

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

**MR. PATRICK K. HALLINAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERIES**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS' AFFAIRS AND
RELATED AGENCIES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

FIRST SESSION, 114TH CONGRESS

RELATED AGENCIES HEARING: ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

MARCH 18, 2015

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**STATEMENT BY MR. PATRICK K. HALLINAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERIES**

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Dent, Ranking Member Bishop and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on Arlington National Cemetery. We have worked diligently to extend and institutionalize the tremendous progress made since our last testimony before this subcommittee two years ago. We are setting industry standards for best practices, becoming a center of excellence, sharing our experiences and coordinating with other governmental agencies, helping ensure Arlington can serve our Active duty Service Members, Veterans, and their Families in the manner they have earned.

THE STATE OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Our primary objective is to continue to provide the final resting place for Active duty Service Members, Veterans, and their Families with dignity and honor while we maintain and sustain the existing infrastructure to prevent deferred maintenance requirements and expand Arlington National Cemetery to increase burial capacity. Over the past ten months, we have commemorated the rich history of the past 150 years since the first burial at Arlington National Cemetery. The team has identified and created industry-leading standards with auditable business practices and institutionalized them at Arlington National Cemetery. We have made additional improvements to our website and public facing applications design to enhance user experience and to provide interactive capabilities to the general public. We have

updated our master plan to detail the strategy for repairing and or replacing our aging infrastructure, and we have two significant projects underway to increase burial capacity at Arlington and extend the active life of the Cemetery.

Our team is dedicated to improving the Arlington experience for our visitors and perfecting our logistical and administrative best practices. We remain focused on our core mission – on behalf of the American people, lay to rest those who have served our Nation with dignity and honor, treating their Families with respect and compassion, and connecting guests to the rich tapestry of the Cemetery's living history, while maintaining these hallowed grounds befitting the sacrifice of all those who rest here. The pace of the requests for burials at Arlington National Cemetery remains at an all-time high, and our workforce is meeting the challenge.

CEMETERY EXPANSION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Army is committed to maintaining Arlington National Cemetery as the Nation's premier military cemetery and national shrine in perpetuity. We are also committed to keeping the cemetery active as long as possible to serve our Nation's Veterans and their Families. In line with those commitments, we continue to responsibly expand our capacity. After years of planning, in January 2014 we broke ground on our Millennium Project to expand the cemetery to the North. With the support of the US Army Corps of Engineers - Norfolk District, this important project is currently within budget and on schedule to be completed in 2016, and will provide the Cemetery and the Nation an additional 27,282 burial opportunities.

Likewise, we continue planning for expansion of the Cemetery to the South. In July 2014, again through the US Army Corps of Engineers – Norfolk District, we hired an Architect and Engineering firm to begin formal planning and design efforts for our intended “Southern Expansion.” This expansion will occur in the area formerly occupied by the Navy Annex. The Navy Annex is now demolished and the Army is negotiating the details of an appropriate transfer of land with Arlington County that will provide us the maximum contiguous burial space in this area. This project will appropriately honor and respect our Nation’s Veterans and ideally extend our first interment capacity out to the 2050’s.

The Cemetery staff continues to make progress repairing or replacing much of our outdated utility infrastructure. We continue to replace the waterlines throughout the Cemetery and we have repaired or plan to repair many of the Cemetery’s roads in the next year. Tied to the repair of the roads is the repair and update of our storm water drainage system to ensure that we are removing storm water in an efficient and environmentally appropriate manner.

Great strides are underway as we improve the infrastructure that supports our operational capabilities. In October 2014 we began renovations of our Welcome Center to modernize the visitor’s restrooms and to expand office spaces to improve the work environment for our employees. Additionally, planning and design efforts are well underway for the establishment of an ossuary called the Tomb of Remembrance. This critical project will allow us to provide the Nation with a dignified place to provide final disposition of cremated remains which may be comingled or unidentified. We expect to award the contract in July of this year and complete the project by early 2016. In

addition, we are focused on continuously improving the experience of each Family who arrives to inter their loved one. Redesigning and improving the manner in which we gather and escort our funeral processions is a critical goal for Fiscal Year 2015. A new Funeral Procession Queuing Area will make our funeral organization and lineup much more intuitive and easier to negotiate for the Veterans and Families we serve.

OPERATING IN THE CURRENT FISCAL ENVIRONMENT

The leadership at Arlington National Cemetery recognizes the current fiscal environment the government is operating in, and has made every effort to maintain, sustain and expand the cemetery within existing funding levels. The President's FY 2016 Budget recently increased Arlington's Budget Control Act (BCA) funding level from \$45.8M to \$70.8M, and this level of funding is adequate to maintain and sustain Arlington's Operating Budget into the foreseeable future, not including anticipated capital costs.

Sufficient funding exists to pay salaries, fund annual contracts, supplies, training and travel in order to maintain the current operating level at Arlington National Cemetery. The additional \$25M in funding for infrastructure revitalization and sustainment is also sufficient to continue restoring facilities and infrastructure to the level befitting the Nation's Premier National Shrine. Arlington National Cemetery with the assistance of this committee has funded \$60M of the initial \$75M in the backlog of infrastructure revitalization projects identified in the 2010/11 timeframe. In January 2015, we recently completed a 10-year Capital Investment Strategy and provided a copy to this committee. The strategy identifies how Arlington National

Cemetery will gradually shift funding from replacing or restoring infrastructure to sustaining our existing facilities to prevent the development of future backlog of repair and maintenance projects.

Increasing capacity at the Cemetery has been underway since FY11 with the first of three expansion projects, Columbarium Court #9, built on already existing Arlington National Cemetery property and increasing Arlington's above ground interment through 2024, was dedicated on May 9, 2013. The next phase of the Arlington National Cemetery expansion program, the Millennium Project which was funded in FY13 at \$81.8M, is well underway and is on track to be completed in FY16; on time and within budget, extending Arlington's first interment capacity through 2035. Planning and design of the third, and final phase, of the cemetery expansion has begun for the Southern Expansion (formerly referred to as the Navy Annex), which will extend first interments through the 2050s. However, without enacted funding, Arlington cannot move forward with the final phase of this expansion effort. Projected construction is estimated to begin in the FY 18 timeframe at an estimated cost of around \$300M. Funding for this project has not yet been identified and Arlington National Cemetery faces a challenge in resourcing this requirement as current Congressional language prevents the Department of Defense from using its funding for this requirement and Arlington National Cemetery's Budget Control Act level of funding is well short of the amount required.

FUNDING UNCERTAINTY

As with most Federal organizations, Arlington is facing fiscal uncertainties ranging from furloughs during government shutdowns to funding unforeseen

emergencies. Prior to FY13, ANC was funded with no-year or x-year funds which enabled us to remain open during government-wide furloughs and the ability to fund emergency-like requirements, such as water main breaks or collapsing roads. There is approximately \$7M remaining in previous no-year funds and we expect that funding to be exhausted by the end of FY16. Arlington National Cemetery's Cemeterial Expenses, Army account is contained in Title III of the Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill and is the only user of this account. A future furlough or funding emergency could jeopardize our ability to remain open and operational in order to support our Active Duty Service Members, Veterans and Families or to address an unanticipated emergency exceeding our available funding. In order to ensure operational continuity, it would be more operational efficient if our budget returned to no-year funding, as it was before FY13, which is also consistent with American Battle Monuments Commission funding; another small account in the Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriation providing cemeterial support to our Nation's Veterans.

Throughout my tenure, Arlington has remained resolute to scrupulously use every dollar our Nation provided. Our meticulous efforts reconciling prior year accounts resulted in Arlington recovering over \$33M, benefitting Arlington across all aspects of our mission and demonstrating our fiscal stewardship. Both Columbarium Court #9 and our improved Information Technology Enterprise Architecture were fully funded by prior year recoveries. For burial operations, these recoveries allowed us to purchase proper turf-friendly equipment; minimizing the impact of older, heavier equipment on the Cemetery grounds and helping our

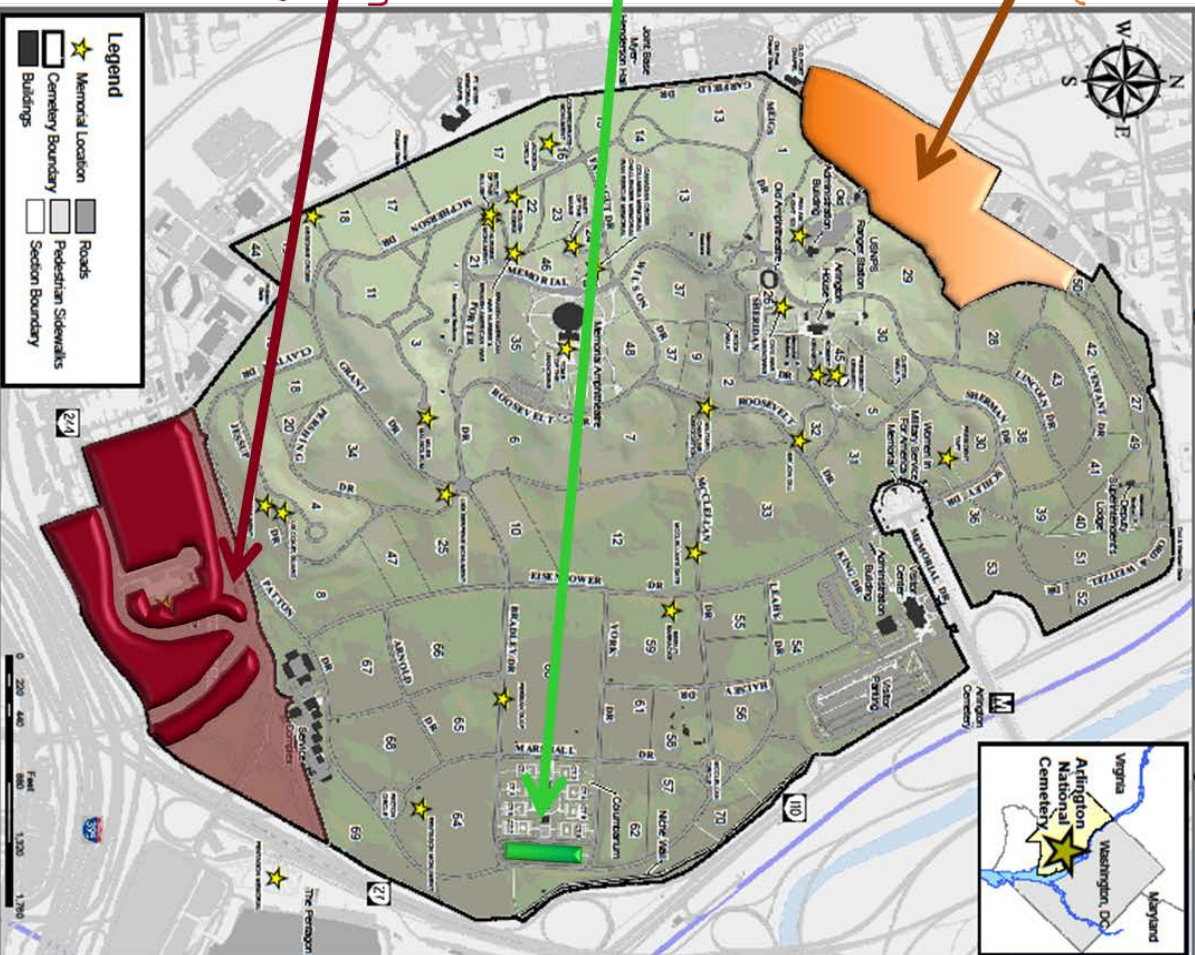
workforce meet the exacting burial industry standards. Returning Arlington National Cemetery's budget to no-year funding will ensure we have the flexibility and predictability to address fiscal uncertainties in order to maintain Arlington National Cemetery as a National Shrine and to provide services to our Nation's Active Duty Service Members, Veterans, their Families, and the American public.

Conclusion

Under the proactive support and leadership of the Secretary of the Army, through diligent efforts, adherence to established policies, repeatable processes, embedded technologies, and institutionalized standards, Arlington will sustain the sacred trust of the American people. In conjunction with the Military District of Washington and all our military service partners, the military service chaplains and the Arlington Ladies, along with the dedicated staff at Arlington National Cemetery, we can assure the Nation of this: Every burial service at Arlington National Cemetery will continue to be conducted with the honor and dignity our service members have earned, and their Families will be treated with respect and compassion.

We appreciate the support of the subcommittee and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Arlington National Cemetery



Burial Capacity

2012

- Niche: 2016
- In-Ground: 2025

Columbarium 9

(2013)

- Extended Capacity to: Niche: 2024
- In-Ground: 2025

Millennium Project

(estimated 2017)

- Extends capacity to: Niche: ~2037
- In-Ground: ~2035

Southern Expansion

(estimated 2021)

- Extends capacity to: Niche & In-Ground: mid 2050's

Expansion Plans

Millennium Project,

- 27 acres
- 27,282 New spaces

- 27,282 burial opportunities
- \$81.7 mil appropriated in FY13
- Construction began Dec 2013
- Est. completion in May 2016
- in-ground spaces = 10,882
- Niche Spaces = 16,400

Columbarium

- Court 9,
- 20,292 niches

- Construction began Jan 2012;
- Dedicated May 9, 2013

Southern Expansion

37 acres

- 3 parcels of land transferred to Dept of the Army on 1 Jan 2012
- \$18.4 million appropriated in FY13 for planning & design
- Planning Ongoing

Total: 624 acres
(not including Southern Expansion)

As of 29 Dec 2014
Master saved on Share Port/Engineering