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THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, and RELATED AGENCIES,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS,
AND RELATED AGENCIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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Introduction

Chairwoman Wasserman-Schultz, Ranking Member Carter, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Marine Corps' FY23 military construction budget request. Thanks to the strong support we have received from Congress, the Marine Corps continues to improve the quality and resiliency of our installations which are critical to our ability to train forces and maintain readiness.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the funding provided for the Marine Corps' Fiscal Year 22 military construction program. The over \$2B of total funding for these projects accelerates support for the Commandant's Force Design through projects like modernization of the electrical distribution grid at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Hawaii and aircraft maintenance facilities at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort and MCAS Miramar. The additional funding provided supports the quality life for our Marines by investing in unaccompanied housing projects at MCAS Yuma and MCB Hawaii. I am very grateful for Congress' interest in supporting these critical infrastructure projects that will enhance the Marine Corps' ability to fulfill its Title X obligations and meet the challenges presented by current and future threats.

Role of Installations

The Marine Corps 2030 Strategic Logistics Plan outlines the enterprise's strategy for configuring and enhancing future logistics capabilities to sustain the force in the 21st century in terms of four objectives: enabling global logistics awareness, diversifying distribution, improving sustainment, and optimizing installations for sustained operations. Optimizing our

installations is critical for achieving the objectives of this plan, and providing the logistics support that will ensure operational readiness for the future force.

Our installations play a key role in meeting the challenges that our nation faces. The Marine Corps' overseas installations are especially critical as advanced naval bases in support of naval and joint operations. This infrastructure must be properly maintained to prevent degradation of our capability to train and generate readiness for global employment to support our mission-essential tasks. The readiness of this infrastructure cannot just be measured in terms of the physical condition of our buildings but must also consider the optimal posture of the force around the globe and our resilience against the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. We must have resilient infrastructure, both in CONUS and abroad, to enable delivery of capabilities from across the service enterprise.

Resiliency efforts require hardened critical infrastructure to maintain support to the force across the competition continuum and before, during, and after deployment. Increasing the capability and capacity of our installations underpins our forward presence. In this new environment there is no sanctuary and our bases require modernization against future threats ranging from conventional kinetic attack to cybersecurity breaches to damage from extreme weather events.

FY23 MILCON Budget Request

To meet these challenges, the Marine Corps has requested over \$1.2B for military construction projects in FY23. This budget request supports the National Defense Strategy and long-term implementation of the Commandant's Infrastructure Reset Strategy. This year's request has a broad focus and includes projects that invest in:

- Life, health, and safety issues such as the Basilone Road realignment project at Camp Pendleton;
- Quality of life projects, including a barracks at Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan;
- Infrastructure support for new platforms and investments in utilities infrastructure; and
- Projects that support the Marine Corps' current and future presence in the Pacific.

On any given day, more than 22,000 Marines are forward-postured west of the International Date Line, and many are inside China's weapons engagement zone. In support of this posture, over half of the Marine Corps' FY23 military construction budget is focused on Pacific installations. Of these Pacific projects, four are on Guam totaling over \$381M. Although this is a \$149M decrease from FY22, there will be over \$1.5B in projects in execution on the island in FY23. Construction at MSB Camp Blaz is currently 13% complete, with 34 active projects. In spite of a few delayed starts due to last year's continuing resolution, this program is currently on track to comply with the international agreement. Funding modern and resilient infrastructure in the Pacific is critical, so that Marines are postured in a fighting stance for crisis response and campaigning.

Quality of Life

The quality of life of our Marines, Sailors, and their families, is integral to the readiness and effectiveness of our force, and the Marine Corps recognizes the critical importance of our child development centers, family housing, and unaccompanied housing portfolios. Construction on the new child development center at MCAS Miramar will be complete this summer, with three more projects planned in the Future Years Defense Program.

In its unaccompanied housing portfolio, the Marine Corps renovated 16 barracks in FY21 and is in the process of renovating 12 barracks in FY22; we anticipate renovating an additional 15 barracks in FY23 at a cost of \$110M. The renovations completed in FY21 to FY23 will positively impact approximately 4,000 Marines living in the barracks.

The Marine Corps' focus on family housing in FY21 included implementation of the four remaining provisions in the Tenant's Bill of Rights: universal lease, dispute resolution, 7-year maintenance summary, and rent withholding. The Marine Corps continues to work with its housing partners and the other Services to ensure that our housing is safe and meets the needs of our residents. The Marine Corps has requested over \$230M in family housing construction and operations in FY23, of which the largest investment will be \$162.3M for the construction of 116 family housing units in Guam.

Installations Resiliency Initiatives

The Marine Corps views installation resiliency through an operational readiness lens: resilient installations are the platforms that enable operational readiness. This resiliency rests in the ability to maintain reliable access to critical functions, such as an effective power grid, clean water distribution, and communications capabilities, as well as the ability to train and equip Marines, and care for Marines and their families. Understanding that training and operations must continue even when there are extreme weather events, the Marine Corps has undertaken several initiatives to ensure that installation resiliency requirements are understood and appropriately prioritized.

The Marine Corps is currently developing installation master plans that address the impacts of climate change, sea-level rise, and major weather events at our bases and stations. The

Marine Corps has also developed two new decision support tools to help make smart facility investment decisions. These tools focus investments on the most critical and significant assets and maintains the installations enterprise at a higher state of readiness.

Recent infrastructure investments have included projects that reduce reliance on fossil fuels and off-base energy grids. For example, Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany is the first Marine Corps Net Zero Installation: the base generated more power through green energy sources than it consumed in calendar year 2021, and provided 7.9 MWh back to the local grid. The transition to Net Zero has improved the resiliency of the base while reducing reliance on traditional energy sources and cutting back on greenhouse gas emissions.

Building on the success of the smart grid at MCAS Miramar, the Marine Corps has also invested in a microgrid at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. These microgrids can power mission essential functions for up to 21 days in the event of an energy blackout, ensuring continuity of operations and can provide a resource to local governments in the event of an emergency. The Marine Corps will use lessons learned from these projects to make smart, resilient investments both in CONUS and overseas. Continuing to invest in projects such as Net Zero initiatives and smart grids will place the Marine Corps on a trajectory to meet future requirements while withstanding disruptive weather events.

Finally, the Marine Corps is also investing in the modernization of its Organic Industrial Base (OIB). In 2019, the Marine Corps OIB Facilities Plan and the United States Senate Report on the Readiness of the Marine Corps OIB were developed. This 25-year plan provides the strategy to optimize existing facilities, construct new facilities, and improve workflow processes and productivity at the Marine Corps' two depot production plants and long-term equipment storage sites in Albany, Georgia, and Barstow, California; and at Marine Corps Support Facility

at Blount Island Command, Florida. To date, the Marine Corps has completed five projects; two are under construction, and one is planned to start construction in summer 2022.

Conclusion

The Marine Corps is undergoing a significant transition in how it is organized, trained, and equipped, to meet current and evolving threats from our adversaries. In addition to developing new operating concepts, increasing integration with the Navy, and modernizing the equipment we employ, the Marine Corps' installations infrastructure must also evolve. Our operational capabilities are adapting to meet threat changes, and we need to invest in the next generation installation infrastructure to match the Marine Corps' evolving capabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, and for your oversight, input, and support as we determine the infrastructure requirements that will best position the Marine Corps for mission accomplishment. I look forward to working with you to sustain our warfighting capability and the readiness of our power projection platforms.