

**Testimony of  
The Honorable Don Young (AK-AL)  
Before the  
House Armed Services Committee  
Hearing: National Defense Priorities from Members for the FY 2014 National  
Defense Authorization Act  
2118 Rayburn HOB  
May 8, 2013**

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished colleagues of the House Armed Services Committee, thank you for holding this hearing.

Alaska is a proud state and it is a proud military state. Not only is Alaska home to the largest per capita population of veterans in the country, it is also home to significant force structure for both the Air Force and Army. In Alaska, we appreciate our servicemembers as much as any community in the country. As their lone Representative in the House, I felt it was important for me to share my thoughts on several matters that pertain to Alaskan force structure. Since I have a lot of issues to discuss today, I will keep my remarks brief for each issue. My staff will be happy to follow up and provide additional information on all of these issues, if needed.

Cost-Effectiveness and the Shift to the Pacific:

Understanding that these are tough budget times and significant force structure changes are needed, I would ask the Committee to require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on all large Asia-Pacific and Arctic-oriented bases which analyzes the possibility of co-locating Department of Defense (DoD) tenants on these installations. This co-location would help make these bases more cost-efficient as we shift our strategic focus towards the Pacific. Additionally, I would ask the Committee to ask the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to issue a similar report on potential federal and state government tenants on Asia-Pacific and Arctic-oriented bases, rather than in leased space, in order to leverage available infrastructure and force protection measures on military bases, any of which could be used to help reduce the operating costs of some of these installations.

Training in Alaska:

Alaska's provides our Armed Forces with unparalleled training opportunities. From Red Flag-Alaska to Northern Edge, Alaska's unique space, topography, and location provide both large and small scale joint training, which our modern fighting force needs to succeed on the battlefield. The Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) is a gem among all of our nation's ranges. It supports both multi-national and U.S.-only training and has the capability of providing an uncluttered electromagnetic training environment. With 65,000 square miles of available air space, which is over five times as large as Nellis Range in Nevada, Alaska's JPARC is becoming more and more critical as the speed of war increases. Additionally, where other training areas have to deal with urban encroachment, Alaska's JPARC is expanding. As the Administration asks for increased funding for our nation's training ranges, I ask the committee to consider applying those

resources to ranges of the future like the JPARC, which support the Administration's focus on the Pacific Rim in its National Military Strategy.

#### Pre-Placement of Force Structure at Ft. Wainwright and Arctic Training:

Given the nearly 2,500 square miles of land space and 1.5 million acres of maneuver land in the JPARC, I would ask the committee to strongly think about the pre-positioning mobility, and instrumented land warfare equipment at bases like Fort Wainwright for "force on force" training. This would allow the Army to take advantage of the mountainous terrain, cold weather, and long periods of daylight to allow them to train for places like Afghanistan and/or a variety of arctic environments. This pre-positioning of legacy army systems would also reduce the cost of training in Alaska as units would not have to incur the expense of shipping all of their equipment to the state. Arctic training is especially important as the arctic begins to open up to commerce and resource development. The U.S. is an arctic nation, as are other countries in which we have conducted combat operations in our history. Thus, we must be able to project power into the arctic environment.

#### Northern and Southern Air Bridges in the Pacific:

The Northern and Southern Pacific Air Bridges are critical to our shift in focus to the Pacific Theater. These Air Bridges are at the core of our power-projection and rapid-response capabilities. I ask the Committee to work with the Secretary of the Air Force to produce report that analyzes the capacity of these two Air Bridges and include, within that report, the advantages of adding additional manpower and/or KC-135 or KC-46 airframes to these Air Bridges.

#### Gray Eagle Basing in the Asia Pacific

Recently, the Army finished its Gray Eagle initial operational and testing and evaluation (IOT&E), which demonstrated the effectiveness of the Gray Eagle platform. As the Committee works with the Army on Gray Eagle Basing, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to Interior Alaska as a strong option for the Gray Eagle in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. When one considers the importance that the Air Force placed on including Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) operations in their JPARC EIS, the Military Operations in Urban Terrain range in the JPARC, which the Army uses for training, accessibility to the range, and unencumbered air space, and the sheer abundance of range space in the JPARC, Interior Alaska is an ideal spot for the Gray Eagle.

#### C-23 (Sherpa):

In the FY2013 Defense Authorization, I know the Committee advocated on retaining the remaining C-23s at the current level. I also know that C-23 provision did not become law. As the C-23 drawdown continues, I ask the committee to look for a solution for Alaska's C-23s. Given many of the short runways in our rural areas, the C-23 fills a very specialized role that cannot be filled by any other airframe.

#### F-35 OCONUS Basing:

Eielson Air Force Base has been noted by many Air Force officials as being particularly suited for the F-35A. As the Committee works with the Air Force on OCONUS Basing

Review for the F-35A, I ask that the Committee note the airspace, range capability and joint warfare training/operations uniquely available in Alaska. I also ask that the Committee secure a firm schedule for F-35A OCONUS Basing. Force posture and deterrence is about positioning. In other words, if you want to maintain a credible threat and provide deterrence, you have to be as close to that threat as policy allows. In my testimony I have included a distance chart that shows Alaska's central and highly strategic position to possible hotspots in Asia, Europe, and the Arctic.

Innovative IED Lane:

Lastly, I'd like to draw the Committee's attention to an interesting piece of Alaskan ingenuity. Recently, two former EOD members decided to construct a realistic IED Lane at JBER in Anchorage. They use this training lane to supplement existing IED training. In a very realistic environment, this lane specifically trains soldiers to identify of numerous types IEDs and the different method in which these IEDs are employed. I encourage the Committee to visit this IED Lane and to consider how best to deploy similar lanes across this country, especially given the very low cost of construction for this IED Lane.

I would like to thank the Chairman, Ranking Member, and other Committee Members for listening to my testimony. Once again, I look forward to working with all of you on these issues.

The following table depicts distances between possible hotspots, Fairbanks and other force locations. The geographic North Pole represents the need to plan for addressing the evolving tension over Arctic resources and possible opening of a northern sea passage between Europe and Asia. As can be seen, *Fairbanks* is closer than installations with **red bolded distances** and nearly as close as those shown in **blue bold font**.

Location	Beijing, China	Pyongyang, North Korea	Seoul, South Korea	Vladivostok, Russia	Serveromorsk, Russia	Geographic North Pole
<i>Fairbanks, AK</i>	<i>3,918</i>	<i>3,717</i>	<i>3,798</i>	<i>3,292</i>	<i>3,199</i>	<i>1,747</i>
Anderson AFB, Guam	2,507	2,121	2,000	2,190	<b>5,881</b>	<b>5,281</b>
Camp Pendleton, CA	<b>6,323</b>	<b>6,020</b>	<b>6,068</b>	<b>5,577</b>	<b>5,211</b>	<b>3,924</b>
Cocos Islands, Australia	<b>3,813</b>	<b>3,995</b>	<b>3,920</b>	<b>4,427</b>	<b>6,393</b>	<b>7,052</b>
Darwin, Australia	<b>3,726</b>	<b>3,568</b>	<b>3,443</b>	<b>3,841</b>	<b>7,222</b>	<b>7,068</b>
Hickam AFB, HI	<b>5,062</b>	<b>4,599</b>	<b>4,576</b>	<b>4,233</b>	<b>6,180</b>	<b>4,750</b>

