

Opening Statement
Honorable Michael Turner
Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserve Component Hearing

March 19, 2013

Today the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee meets to receive an assessment of the modernization needs, and the equipping and sustainment challenges of the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, and Air Force Reserve.

Right now the Pentagon is facing cuts levied by Secretary Gates and President Obama, the Budget Control Act of 2011 and its attached sequester, which I opposed, and the constraints of continuing resolutions.

Given the current budget uncertainty we face, and the long term impacts of sequestration to modernization, we believe it necessary to obtain the current views of National Guard and Reserve Component senior leaders.

We welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses:

- **Lieutenant General William Ingram [IN-grem] Jr., Director, Army National Guard**
- **Lieutenant General Stanley Clarke, Director, Air National Guard**
- **Lieutenant General Jeffrey Talley, Chief, U.S. Army Reserve**
- **Lieutenant General James Jackson, Chief, U.S. Air Force Reserve**

The Department has made progress in providing much needed funding to equip the National Guard and Reserve Components, to enhance its role as an operational reserve.

The major issue will be sustaining this funding given the acute national economic challenges we currently face.

Congress has not hesitated in trying to address the equipment readiness needs we have noted in many Guard and Reserve units over the years.

National Guard and Reserve Component procurement from fiscal year 2003 to fiscal year 2012 has totaled approximately \$60.9 billion, averaging almost \$6.7 billion per year.

Since 2003, Congress has authorized a total of approximately \$9.2 billion in additional funding above the President's budget requests in a separate, distinct National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account.

This funding has enjoyed sustained bipartisan support both on this committee and throughout Congress.

We are now faced with the significant challenge of determining the adequacy of reserve force budgets and equipment status during a time of severe fiscal austerity.

The questions we are now being forced to ask are can we afford to equip and sustain the National Guard and Reserve Components as an operational force? And, what is the risk of not doing so?

The Guard and Reserve Components have proven to be an invaluable asset during Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

These past 12 years have justified the need for an operational Reserve Component force that must be adequately manned, trained, and equipped, rather than the cold war model of a “strategic reserve”.

The National Guard also has a dual role responsibility and has to be mission ready to rapidly respond to local, state, and federal emergencies.

The guard and reserve units in my district and the State of Ohio have played an invaluable role in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as humanitarian missions here in the United States.

The 445th Air Lift Wing at Wright Patterson Air Force Base provides strategic transport of personnel and equipment as well as aeromedical evacuation capabilities to the warfighter. Air national guard units at Springfield, Rickenbacker and Mansfield as well as the 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Columbus, have all been very active in supporting the warfighter over the past decade of war.

Without these units our country would not be able to sustain the all-volunteer force.

I am concerned that these current budgetary challenges, to include 10 years of arbitrary across-the-board cuts resulting from sequestration, will have negative impacts on the current operational status of the Guard and Reserve.