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HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DEFENSE

STATEMENT OF
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SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
BEFORE THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON
DEFENSE

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Overview

Chairman Visclosky, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the United States Naval Academy (USNA). The Naval Academy's mission is to develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service. I am pleased to report to you today that USNA is succeeding in its mission, in no small part due to the support of Congress and this year's on-time appropriation, thanks to the hard work of the members and staff of this very subcommittee. Notably, in 2017 Forbes Magazine listed the Naval Academy as America's top public college, while in 2018 USNA ranked fourth, behind UC Berkeley, the University of Michigan, and the United States Military Academy. Highlights from the recently graduated Class of 2018:

- An overall graduation rate of 87.9%, well above the DoD requirement of 75%, the third highest in USNA history. Both male and female graduation rates exceeded 86% and for the first time in USNA history, the minority graduation rate exceeded the caucasian graduation rate. Furthermore, each of the major demographic groups (gender, race, ethnicity) graduated at rates exceeding 85%. I believe these statistics speak not only to the quality of USNA's incoming midshipmen, but also to the hard work of our faculty, staff and coaches, and the inclusive environment in which we work, educate and train.
- Varsity athletes graduated at a 90.2% rate, over 3% higher than non-varsity athletes, and one of the highest in the country – a testament to USNA's commitment to the full development of student-athletes.

- 76% of the Class of 2018's newly commissioned ensigns graduated with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) degrees, exceeding the Chief of Naval Operations' requirement of 65%.
- Within the Class of 2018, we had one Rhodes, one Marshall, one Knight Hennessey (Stanford), one Schwartzman, and 15 other prestigious scholarship winners.

The Naval Academy assesses these graduation trends as positive, and attributes them to the effective developmental programs and processes that stem from the initial admissions process and continue through the 47-month education and leadership development experience.

Admissions/Diversity

Building a diverse and successful Brigade of Midshipmen depends on an active strategic outreach program. By far, the largest factor that leads to candidate interest in the Naval Academy is exposure. Many qualified candidates nation-wide do not realize that the Military Service Academies are an available option or even appropriate for them until they see a family member or a friend from high school attend, or they meet a midshipman to whom they can relate. In 2018, USNA conducted more than 3,500 outreach events, reaching more than 50,000 students. The Naval Academy hosted numerous programs on campus as well, to include the Summer STEM program, targeting rising 9th-11th graders, accommodating 842 students in 2018 from a pool of 4,982 applicants that represented all 50 states and several U.S. territories. The Naval Academy Summer Seminar also continued to attract students from across the Nation with 7,469 applications received, from which 2,558 students attended. Summer Seminar promotional efforts were focused in underrepresented Congressional Districts to increase exposure and promote geographical diversity.

The results of USNA Admissions' outreach efforts have been very positive. In addition to drawing over 16,000 applications annually over the last ten years, USNA has sustained in excess of 3,000 fully qualified candidates per year since 2012, allowing for increased selectivity in attempting to admit the best and brightest to the Naval Academy. Additionally, the Naval Academy possesses the Nation's highest overall yield rate in the nation, with over 88% of candidates accepting their offers of appointment over the past two years. The Naval Academy's admissions efforts have resulted in entering freshmen classes of diverse geographical, cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and unusual life experiences and language fluency. The most recently admitted Class of 2022 included 28% female representation (the highest in Naval Academy history), 36.9% minority representation (the second highest in Naval Academy history), and the highest combined SAT/ACT scores in Naval Academy history. Other notable Class of 2022 statistics include: 69% of the Class was ranked in the top 10% of their high school graduating class, 11% were first generation American, 19% were students whose primary language in the home was not English, and 13% were first generation college students.

Academics

The Brigade of Midshipmen continues to be challenged by a robust academic curriculum, a liberal arts program with a strong emphasis on STEM disciplines and ethical leadership development. The 2018 U.S. News and World Report ranked the Naval Academy as the #5 Best Undergraduate Engineering Program, while Forbes Magazine ranked it as the #5 STEM school in the country. Among all four-year colleges and universities – public and private – that graduate at least 100 students per year and with at least 50% of those graduates majoring in a STEM field, the Naval Academy once again recorded the highest four-year graduation rate in the Nation. The Naval Academy has led the Nation in this ranking for six of the last seven years.

Much of this success is attributable to a strong student-body, an accomplished and devoted faculty, superb student resources, and an ever-increasing emphasis on project-based learning.

There is an increasing demand in the Navy and Marine Corps for officers with a robust understanding of cyber warfare, and the Naval Academy has adjusted its curriculum accordingly. All Naval Academy graduates successfully complete at least two cyber security courses, and in 2018, the Naval Academy graduated its third class of midshipmen with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Cyber Operations. This major has grown in interest with 46 members of the Class of 2019 majoring in the discipline, along with 66 juniors and 100 sophomores, making it the 5th most popular of 25 majors available. In July 2018, the Cyber Operations major (along with the recently introduced Nuclear Engineering major) was formally accredited, and stands today as one of only four of its kind in the nation. Starting in 2020, midshipmen majoring in Cyber Operations and related disciplines will be housed in the future Hopper Hall, funded through a 2016 MILCON appropriation, whose construction is well underway with the steel frame completed in November 2018.

Physical Mission

The Naval Academy strives to provide exemplary programs of athletic competition and physical challenge that foster decisive leadership, teamwork, character, a passion for “winning,” and to promote lifelong physical fitness. The Brigade of Midshipmen continues to excel in physical mission achievement. Despite physical fitness standards that far exceed Navy-wide standards, the Naval Academy's five-year average attrition attributable to physical readiness is less than 0.6% per class.

With 33 varsity sports, the third most of any college or university in the Nation, approximately 30% of the Brigade benefits from the challenges of these intercollegiate competitions. This past academic year, Navy's varsity sports teams won 68% of their head-to-head competitions...an all-time USNA record. Additionally, with the majority of the Naval Academy's varsity sports competing in the Patriot League, Navy won the Presidents' Cup, awarded to the member institution with the highest cumulative sports point total for their league standings in men's and women's sports, for the fifth consecutive year. The "will to win" is an important attribute for all Naval Academy graduates.

Infrastructure

While the campus evolves with the construction of Hopper Hall, the Naval Academy is challenged with maintaining the remainder of its infrastructure, much of it well over 100 years old. Stemming from highly pressurized budgets as a result of the 2013 sequestration, the Department of the Navy has taken risk by underfunding capital investments and installation operations to fund other critical warfighting, readiness, and modernization requirements. In 2016, after two years of significantly reduced infrastructure funding levels and resultant increase in deferred maintenance, the Naval Academy formally highlighted these challenges and associated risks to Navy leadership, which prompted sustainment and recapitalization funding relief. The Naval Audit Service's report of June 2018 validated the challenges and risks the Naval Academy identified as part of its annual Risk and Opportunity Assessment. While there were no inaccuracies with the Naval Audit Service's report, it should be noted that the Naval Academy is fully meeting its mission while providing a safe and supportive environment for midshipmen to develop as future commissioned officers of our Navy and Marine Corps team.

Since 2016, the Naval Academy has experienced increased levels of sustainment, readiness, and modernization funding for infrastructure. Rickover Hall, the primary academic facility for engineering disciplines, is currently undergoing a major renovation that will vastly improve the learning environment and alleviate associated accreditation concerns. Three other buildings are either undergoing or are funded to undergo significant maintenance efforts that will address leaks highlighted in the Naval Audit Service report. Additionally, the Navy has committed to dedicating renovation and modernization funding in the future (starting in 2020), which the Naval Academy has earmarked to address issues in Nimitz Library and elsewhere across the campus.

While I am concerned with the ability to maintain this national historic landmark, I and the Naval Academy leadership are committed to ensuring that the safety, security and quality of the working, learning and living environment for our faculty, staff, coaches, and most importantly, the Brigade of Midshipmen, is sustained well into the future.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program

The Naval Academy also continues to face challenges with Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault. The 2018 Service Academy Gender Relations (SAGR) survey, taken by the Brigade of Midshipmen in April of 2018, indicates that the prevalence of unwanted sexual contact experienced by Naval Academy female midshipmen trended upward slightly when compared to rates measured in 2016. Given our extensive Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, this is certainly not the result we were striving to achieve. I have been at the helm of this institution for almost five years. I, and the rest of the Naval Academy leadership team, have actively sought out professional advice from the experts, both inside and outside the

Department, on the best strategies and tactics to employ to reduce this scourge within our student body. We have made some productive improvements, but *we must do better*.

Based on the results of past SAGR surveys, assistance from experts in the field, best practices of other colleges and universities, and feedback from the Brigade of Midshipmen, we have recently implemented several changes to our prevention program that we hope will provide improved results. Our strategies and tactics going forward focus on continuing our pre-admission screening process, revisions to our training and education program, several new initiatives to promote responsible alcohol choices, and a continued emphasis on holding perpetrators appropriately accountable. We feel more responsible than ever not only to ensure that every member of the Brigade of Midshipmen can flourish in an environment of dignity and respect, but to prepare them to better lead sailors and marines in the fleet that come directly from that society we are entrusted to protect.

Conclusion

Established by Congress in 1845, the Naval Academy has developed into a four-year, total immersion program designed to instill professional, physical, and academic excellence required to develop leaders of character for careers in the Naval Service. This program is designed to produce graduates nurtured in the basic core values and traditions of the Naval Service. The very nature of the Naval Academy affords every midshipman the opportunity to develop character and employ leadership skills in an environment designed to be a leadership laboratory.

The Naval Academy produces approximately one-third of the Navy's Unrestricted Line Officers every year – a critical mass. And as Admiral Larson, the only two-time Naval Academy Superintendent often said, “if we at the Naval Academy do our job right, we can be the custodian

of the core values of the Navy. We can set a standard for professionalism, for honor, for integrity. If we do it right, our graduates go out to the fleet and lead by example.”

I would offer that the Naval Academy is in fact, doing it right. Approximately 95% of our graduates remain in service past their initial 5-year commitment, 55% past 10 years, and approximately one-third past 20 years. Naval Academy graduates often excel at all levels of command, rising to the top of the Navy’s leadership, as evidenced by seven of the Navy’s eight current four-star admirals starting their careers as Naval Academy midshipmen.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the United States Naval Academy. While I know many esteemed leaders in Congress often visit the Naval Academy to meet with their constituents, I want to be sure this Subcommittee understands they are invited to visit our campus at any time. We would be happy and honored to support you or your staff for a tour and visit and/or lunch with midshipmen, as your schedules permit. I look forward to your questions.