

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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ON

IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATIONS AND A FULL YEAR

CONTINUING RESOLUTION ON THE DEPARTMENT OF

DEFENSE

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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Opening Remarks

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members of the Committee; I am honored to appear before you today, representing more than 460,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen in the Army and Air National Guard. The National Guard stands poised to fully implement its authorities, to execute its responsibilities, and to build upon its 376-year legacy as an operational force deeply engrained within the foundation of American strength and values. The Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen serving from throughout the nation, its communities, the states, territories and the District of Columbia contribute daily to our nation's overseas and domestic security objectives.

Sequestration Generally

As I stated in my remarks to this Committee last year, I believe sequestration will be devastating to the Department of Defense and the National Guard. Today's dynamic and difficult fiscal conditions require the Department of Defense to deliberately make tough choices and live within our means. The convergence of the potential March 1 and March 27 sequestrations and a Continuing Resolution reduces the Department's ability to make those choices and institutes debilitating across the board cuts. This, will no doubt have devastating impacts on our force as an operational reserve.

The National Guard

Today's fiscal environment requires that the Reserve Components be maintained as an operational force. This means the National Guard has to be trained, ready, and equipped to face the full spectrum of threats facing our nation. The investment made in today's National Guard, particularly since 9/11, has produced a proven operational force equally adept on the battle field and in performing our domestic response mission, often within hours of an emergency. It has also produced an agile and skilled force postured to embrace new missions outlined in the President's strategic defense vision.

The National Guard remains ready-every day, to expand the capacity of the President and our Governors to meet the needs of our people whether it is shaping the security environment, engaging across the world and within our communities, or bringing full-spectrum military power during times of critical need. National Guard forces today are deployed to Sinai, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and many hot spots around the world. Additionally, over the weekend National Guardsmen responded to the winter storm in the Northeast and are winding down Hurricane Sandy response activities.

The National Guard is committed to remaining an operational force for use both at home and abroad, but this unique budgetary environment threatens the investment made to build and preserve this capability.

While National Guardsmen provide a unique dual capability to State and Federal leaders at a lower cost than the Active Component, sequestration will erode the improvements in the National Guard's operational capability made since 9/11. The National Guard will be unable to properly address the training and equipping needed to sustain an operational force. Sequestration will harm the National Guard's ability to rapidly, robustly and competently expand the nation's full-spectrum military capability to defend vital national interests in the most affordable, lowest risk manner possible. This will result in a readiness crisis for our armed forces.

Specific Sequestration and Continuing Resolution Impacts

Within the National Guard the readiness crisis caused by sequestrations on March 1 and March 27 and a full year Continuing Resolution will have an immediate and lasting impact. Although National Guard war-fighters will continue to receive support, the ability to provide ready forces to respond to disasters in support of our nation's governors and to meet our federal obligations will be negatively impacted; simply our ability to protect and defend the Homeland will be significantly hindered. In addition to the statements made by the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force regarding the impact to the Total Force, four priority areas directly related to readiness of the National Guard will be severely impacted: Personnel; Equipment Maintenance; Facility Maintenance; and Training.

Personnel

Under sequestration, approximately 115,000 traditional National Guard forces will not receive their annual medical or dental examinations. This reduction in examinations will bring total force medical readiness down by 39 percent. Much of the investment made in medical readiness and the operational force as a whole since 9/11 will be lost. Within one year, readiness will be degraded to pre war levels.

The National Guard has a unique civilian workforce, distinctly different from the Active Component. Under sequestration, the civilian workforce faces potential furlough. These civilians, most of whom are also traditional members of the National Guard, support the maintenance and training of Soldiers and Airmen. On a day-to-day basis, Military Technicians and Civilian Employees support activities essential to the readiness and functioning of the largely part-time Citizen-Soldier force of the National Guard. This unique service provides the level of support and continuity necessary for the National Guard to support mobilizations, deployments, domestic operations, and maintain continuity of services for the National Guard members remaining in states during mobilizations and deployments. Furloughs of these essential personnel will further reduce the readiness of our people, equipment, facilities, and training.

Equipment

The Army will cancel or reduce depot level maintenance which includes the reset of equipment returning from deployment. The reset process ensures returning National Guard equipment is repaired and provides the maintenance needed to bring equipment back to Fully Mission Capable Status. Additionally, reductions in maintenance accounts will limit the availability of parts and labor to mitigate this issue. National Guard units will return to their States with equipment in a low state of readiness and it may not be available to the unit to support State authorities in response to tornados, floods, or wildfires, or a complex catastrophe.

Similarly, the Air National Guard may not have the equipment available to respond to a new contingency. The Air National Guard will have to “park” aircraft due to reduced funding for flying hours. Additional cuts in weapon systems sustainment will result in an Air National Guard fleet may be less able to respond on a short notice to domestic and overseas contingencies.

Facilities

The National Guard is located in over 3,000 communities across the country, and our readiness is dependent upon maintaining modern facilities. The numerous National Guard facilities are crucial for training a geographically disperse force. The Army National Guard will face a reduction in each Fiscal Year 2013 military construction project. Project

reductions will require a reduction in physical scope and cost additional dollars in planning and design in order to redesign to the reduced scope (lost scope impacts organizational parking, unit storage, and common space such as drill halls). Redesign will result in execution delays which, in turn, impact availability of facilities for training. Further, reductions in funding to maintain and repair existing facilities will result in inadequate resources to support Soldiers. Routine and preventative maintenance will suffer causing greater damage to the quality of National Guard facilities.

Sequestration will also directly impact contracts that are imbedded in our cooperative agreements with the states. The National Guard maybe unable to maintain all contracts that support facilities and provide members of the community with jobs in security, fire fighting, grounds keeping, custodial work, snow and ice removal, and building maintenance and repair. Cancelling or reducing these contracts will also cost the National Guard additional funds above those lost to sequestration as a result of penalties.

Training

Training will be impacted by the reduction of ready equipment and the personnel who support those training events. The lack of equipment and personnel will limit ground level training; battalion and brigade level training will only occur for deploying units, while all other units will only train at the platoon level. As the Active Army reduces or cancels full

spectrum training rotations, there will be fewer opportunities for total force training for members of the Army National Guard. The Army will cancel all Combat Training Center rotations and Division Warfighter Exercises except for training for deploying units. Fifteen Field Artillery classes will also be cancelled by the Army. Further reductions in Basic Combat Training will result in drastic reductions in the number of deployable Soldiers. Within the Air National Guard, the number of flight training missions will also be reduced as training flights are cancelled and as flying hours are allocated for priority missions. Under sequestration most flying units will be below acceptable readiness standards by the end of this fiscal year.

Closing Remarks

As the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, I want to thank you for your continued support of our Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen. We currently have the best trained, best equipped, best led, and most combat tested National Guard in our 376 year history. We see this force as essential not only to the Army and Air Force, but as the dual-use asset for our communities here at home.

Your support is needed more than ever today, to mitigate the impacts of Sequestration. Without Congressional action, these across the board cuts will impact the National Guard's ability to meet steady state demands and act as a strategic hedge for unforeseen world events. I look forward to your questions.