

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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ON

CONSEQUENCES TO THE MILITARY OF A CONTINUING RESOLUTION

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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

INTRODUCTION

Today, our Army remains globally engaged to help secure our nation's interests in the face of a wide range of challenges. We continue to build partner capacity in Iraq as we destroy ISIS. We are training, advising, and assisting the Afghan National Defense Security Forces. In Europe, we are actively deterring Russian aggression and reassuring allies. In the Pacific Rim, we are sustaining regional stability and deterring aggression on the Korean peninsula. We are engaging our partners in Africa, and throughout North and South America, improving stability and security. Our Army is protecting important national security objectives in every region of the world, and plays a key role in every major contingency plan. In fact, almost 50% of Combatant Commander annual demand is met by Army capabilities and over 60% of Combatant Commander emergent demand is filled with Army capabilities. Today, over 80% of U.S. military forces in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan are U.S. Army soldiers. Ground Forces remain the most globally committed U.S. military force with over 180,000 U.S. Army Soldiers – Active, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve – committed to COCOM missions in over 140 countries worldwide. Meeting these demands requires your Army to be trained, ready and modernized. Moreover, investments made by Russia, China, and other challengers have exposed areas where we no longer retain the overmatch our nation has come to expect.

Conducting current operations, sustaining current readiness, and making progress towards a more modern, capable, and lethal future Army requires predictable and consistent funding at levels commensurate with the current and contingency operating plans. The lack of Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations resulting in a year-long continuing resolution, and no supplemental increase in funding for the remainder of FY 17, would result in significant negative impacts to current and future readiness and a reversal of progress towards reducing an already high military risk. Additionally, a return to arbitrary budget caps set by the Budget Control Act (BCA) in Fiscal Year 2018 will reverse gains we have made to improve readiness, risking a hollow Army lacking sufficient funding to man, train, equip, house, and modernize the force. We simply cannot sustain readiness or build the Army our Nation needs in the future if we continue

to rely on continuing resolutions and return to BCA caps in FY 18 instead of full-year defense appropriations bills.

In the last two years we have made steady progress in our core warfighting skills across multiple types of units, but we have much work to do to achieve full spectrum readiness necessary to meet the demands of our national military strategy and the Defense Planning Guidance. In short, we need to sustain the capability to fight and win against potential near-peer adversaries. Advances by our adversaries are real and the cumulative effect of persistent and destructive budget instability is increasing risk not only to the Army but to the Nation and could result in unnecessary U.S. military casualties on a future battlefield. Readiness to prevent or if necessary to fight and win wars is very expensive but the cost of preparation is always far less than the cost and pain of regret.

FISCAL YEAR 2017

Readiness is the Army's number one priority. Our current readiness funding requirement as submitted in the amended FY 17 President's Budget is \$3 billion above the Fiscal Year 2016 operations and maintenance enacted funding levels.

Our planning efforts for the FY 17 Request for Additional Appropriations centered on filling critical gaps in readiness, armor, air defense, artillery, aviation, and training resource gaps. We projected this funding would result in a doubling of Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) – from three to six – at the highest levels of readiness. If forced to operate under a year-long CR, this will not happen, and Army current readiness and efforts to close critical capability gaps would be severely impacted.

Funding under a CR will result in a dramatic decrease of all training, except aviation training, starts in May of this year and by 15 July will include a shutdown of critical homestation collective training for five Army BCTs preparing to deploy to Combat Training Centers (CTC), as well as the possible cancellation of one BCT CTC rotation. Concurrently, all efforts to increase Army end strength to 1,018K, an increase of 28,000 Soldiers across all components – as authorized in the FY 17 National Defense Authorization Act – will also cease. The cumulative effect of training shortfalls

combined with personnel constraints will result in an Army less ready to meet the current requirements of combatant commanders and limit our ability to assure allies and deter adversaries now and in the future.

Procurement efforts currently on hold will remain on hold, preventing the Army from immediately addressing known shortfalls and gaps in combat systems and munitions, electronic warfare and cyber programs, air and missile defense capabilities, long range fires, protection, and mobility programs, and other modernization efforts critical to maintaining, and in some cases, re-gaining overmatch.

Planned FY 17 production rate increases for current funding lines will cause operational delays in procurement and research across the Army and to specific initiatives, such as the European Reassurance Initiative – critical to deterrence in Europe. The programs most affected include ammunition, air and missile defense capabilities, and protection and mobility programs.

The resulting net effect of a year-long CR means a further degradation of Army readiness in both the current and future fiscal years, and no progress toward reducing the risk in modernization. In short, a year-long CR and a return to BCA funding risks deploying forces that are not fully ready for combat. We must never allow that to happen.

FY 2018

The return of funding caps under the Budget Control Act will reverse efforts to restore prior end strength cuts and improve Army readiness, and will cause the Army to further mortgage future readiness especially in our modernization accounts. Army force structure – our capacity, or size – will almost certainly contract to free the resources necessary to ensure near-term operational readiness to meet the demands of combatant commanders and fulfill war plan requirements. This significantly risks a return to a hollow Army. Mandated end strength without commensurate funding will mean only a select few units will be ready for combat. Turbulence associated with decreasing force structure caused by deactivating units will further hurt the readiness of remaining units. Training will continue to slow, as units will lack the funds, spare parts

for combat systems, and personnel to conduct critical combat training. Modernizing already deficient key infrastructure and facilities essential for training, mobilizing, and deploying forces will also be severely impacted.

The current battlefield is already very lethal, and the future battlefield will likely prove far more lethal than anything we have recently experienced. Continuing resolutions – paired with a return to BCA funding caps – will force the Army to defer and cancel modernization efforts across both our air and ground fleets that address immediate capability gaps and build our future Army. The continued recapitalization and modernization of forty to fifty year old equipment in the face of overmatch and increasing challenges from our adversaries places our Army at increasing risk on the future battlefield against near peer threats. Our adversaries have studied us and are rapidly leveraging available technology while the Army has yet to fully recover from the effects of sequestration in 2013. Time is not our ally. A return to the BCA caps would hamstring the Army's ability to build and maintain readiness at appropriate levels required by the Defense Planning Guidance and result in a multi-decade negative impact on our future Army due to a lack of modernization.

CONCLUSION

Sustaining the high levels of performance our Army has demonstrated in the face of increasing challenges requires consistent, long term, balanced, and predictable funding. Without it, the Army must fully fund current readiness at the expense of all else, including future readiness, facilities modernization, maintenance, and building the future Army. A year-long Continuing Resolution and a return to BCA funding caps will result in a U.S. Army that is out-ranged, out-gunned and outdated against potential adversaries.

We request the support of Congress to predictably fund the Army at balanced and sufficient levels to meet current demands and build a more capable, modern, ready force that is prepared to meet future contingencies.