



February 26, 2014

**The United States House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral resources
*Oversight Hearing: American Energy Jobs: Opportunities for Veterans***

**Opening Comments of Michael Nasche,
Veterans Outreach and Engagement Specialist**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Holt, Members of the Subcommittee, good morning. I am Mike Nasche, Veterans Outreach and Engagement Specialist for Baker Hughes Incorporated and Chairman of our Veterans Resource Group. I am also a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and currently serve as Sergeant, First Class in the U.S. Army reserves. I thank you for the great honor of appearing before you today.

Baker Hughes is a leading supplier of oilfield services, products, systems and technology to the worldwide oil, natural gas and geothermal industries. While we work in nearly 80 countries, approximately half of our more than 58,000 employees are based here in the United States, where we conduct the majority of our manufacturing, field services, and research and development.

As this Subcommittee is well aware, it is here in the United States that advanced exploration and production technologies have perhaps had their most dramatic effect in increasing oil and natural gas supplies. This growth brings tremendous job opportunities at a time when a large number of servicemen and women are leaving the military.

Our executive leadership has a vision—to make Baker Hughes the premier choice in oilfield services for transitioning military service members. It is my mission, and that of the entire Baker Hughes Military Recruiting Team, to make that happen, bringing the immense talents and work ethic of our men and women in uniform to bear on energy production, and welcoming our veterans home to meaningful, well-paid jobs.

This is my passion, because I've worn the boots of those veterans trying to find work.



I spent 15 months in Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, first as a Battle NCO at Brigade Headquarters and then largely in the field, on air assault missions, patrols and personal security detachments. I saw first-hand the resilience, adaptability and discipline that veterans are now bringing back to the oilfield.

After my deployment I transferred to the reserves, where I served on active duty training National Guard reservists deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. When I finally left active duty in 2012, I had a short window to find a job. My wife Sara's opinion was simple: "If you can't find a job in Texas, you aren't trying hard enough."

I did try hard, but it was tough. I only had a high school diploma. I had barely any experience in the private sector. Despite my decade of military service, on paper, to many employers, I was just a door-kicker with post-traumatic stress and a broken down body from the physical toll of being an Airborne Infantryman.

Fortunately, an HR Director at Baker Hughes—another veteran—saw through that. Despite the fact that I did not have the requisite degree, Baker Hughes hired me as a change management specialist, developing training programs. From there it was a short jump to the Military Recruiting Team.

Baker Hughes has long sought veterans for our field work, where the value of their experience is easily apparent. Mechanical assembly, field operations, machining, repair and maintenance and logistical coordination all fit within this category. We believe, however, that veterans are a great fit in far more positions, and we are expanding our outreach to match veterans to corporate and enterprise positions as well.

The Military Recruiting Team has developed a multi-pronged approach to recruiting. We reach out to current servicemen and women at military installations throughout the U.S., and to veterans by participating in military-specific job fairs. We also partner with several universities with high veteran populations, as well as state veteran workforce commissions.

In 2013 we conducted a total of 60 military recruiting events, with that face-to-face contact translating directly into 175 hires, with many more hires coming through traffic driven to our



recruiting website. Our intention is to more than double that number in 2014—essentially, to hire a veteran a day.

We believe it is important to continue that engagement beyond the hiring process, to maintain it as a consistent thread in our employees' experience. To that end, we have established a Veterans Resource Group to support veterans transitioning to Baker Hughes from active duty and connect them each other and with mentors within the company, creating a vibrant network for continuing professional and personal development. This program has been enormously popular since its launch in 2013--15 local chapters have already been established in Texas, Louisiana and Pennsylvania and many more are underway in places like Colorado, Oklahoma and North Dakota. It will come as no surprise to the Subcommittee that these chapters, once formed, turn their focus almost instantly to making a difference in the lives of other veterans.

We applaud the Subcommittee for shining a light on the opportunities available to veterans in the energy industry, and we are pleased to do our part. Thank you.