



**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES  
CURT WELDON, PENNSYLVANIA  
CHAIRMAN**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Opening Statement of Chairman Curt Weldon**

*Joint Readiness, Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee Hearing on Army and Marine Corps  
Reset Strategies for Ground Equipment and Rotorcraft*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – This afternoon the Readiness & Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittees meet in joint session to receive testimony on how the Army and Marine Corps plan to resource and implement their equipping strategies to repair, replace and recapitalize military equipment coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan -- a process referred to as “resetting the force.”

Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom have placed severe demands on ground and aviation equipment supporting our Army and Marine Corps forces. Some equipment has been destroyed or damaged. More significant is the much greater than planned consumption of equipment service life being caused by the harsh operating environment, deferred depot maintenance, and high operational tempo. Across the force, this is degrading readiness rates. However, given the harsh environmental conditions and high operational tempo, in some cases operational tempos eight times the normal peacetime rates, our brave men and women are to be commended for their skill and dedication in their near round-the clock efforts to maintain required operational readiness.

The Army and Marine Corps are now faced with the difficult task of resourcing an equipment reset plan while simultaneously meeting the continuing operational and fiscal demands of the Global War on Terror.

The Army has stated it requires an estimated \$13.7 billion in FY06 alone for equipment reset and will require at least additional \$10-\$13 billion per year after that if operations are maintained at

current levels. And this does not include the Army's additional equipment requirements as it reconfigures to a more modular, deployable force.

The Marine Corps has stated it requires an estimated \$11.7 billion to repair or replace ground and aviation equipment, noting that 40 percent of all of its ground equipment is in OIF and OEF.

The National Guard and Reserves have been and continue to be heavily used during OIF and OEF and they too will have to be reset.

Unfortunately, because operations are ongoing, equipment will continue to be destroyed and worn out so it is difficult to know what the final reset bill will be. Meanwhile weapon system acquisition costs continue to escalate, with program fieldings continuing to be delayed, and procurement quantities being reduced.

My understanding is that the reset financing plan is for the majority of reset costs to continue to be requested through supplementals. My concern in using supplementals to finance reset initiatives, is what happens when budget pressures cause the end to supplemental requests and the basic reset requirement is still not planned for in the future years defense program? Past experience is that programs we've spent billions of dollars developing, get cancelled to pay for the unplanned must pay requirement, with nothing or very little new combat capability getting fielded. It appears we have a huge challenge ahead of us. There have been a number of suggestions of how best to address the reset issue. What we hope to learn today from our witnesses is what they believe is the most effective, long term program for doing so.

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