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## **Introduction**

Chairman Wilson, Representative Davis, Distinguished Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of America's Army. The United States Army is a values-based organization that exists to serve the American people, to defend the Nation, to protect vital national interests, and to fulfill national military responsibilities. After nearly 10 years at war, our Soldiers, Civilians, and Families are stretched and strained, yet still resilient. Their dedicated service and sacrifice are deserving of the very best services, programs, equipment, training, benefits, lifestyle, and leadership available. The Army has reached its objective end strength, which combines "Grow the Army" and Temporary End Strength Increase (TESI). Now the Army must prepare to drawdown this force in a deliberate and careful manner. Thank you for your steadfast commitment to ensuring that the needs of our Soldiers, their Families, and our Civilian workforce are met by supporting our personnel initiatives to ensure growth, sustainment and well being of our All-Volunteer Force.

## **Strategic Overview**

America's Army, our Soldiers, Families and Civilians are strained by nearly a decade of persistent conflict. More than 1.1 million Soldiers have deployed to combat, impacting not only the Soldiers, but their families as well. Additionally, Army Civilians shoulder a majority of the Generating Force mission, and 30,000 Civilians have deployed into harm's way. Despite this unprecedented operational tempo, the Army is on track to achieve a sustainable deployment tempo for our forces and restore balance to the Army beginning in FY12. We will continue to face multiple challenges on multiple fronts including an ever increasing non deployable population resulting from multiple deployments. This problem coupled with an inefficient disability system does not effectively support Army readiness, our Soldiers and their Families. We must continue to work a solution between the services, DoD and VA to streamline the disability system with improved coordination for health care, compensation, and benefits. We remain aware of the difficult economic conditions at home. These conditions will give greater impetus to our efforts to seek ways to improve efficiency and reduce overhead

expenditures that demonstrate wise stewardship of our taxpayers' dollars. With the continued support of the American people and Congress, we remain committed to the readiness, health and well being of our Soldiers, Civilians and Family members. As the Strength of the Nation, the American Soldier is the centerpiece of everything we do. Our efforts must remain focused on the preservation of our most precious resource, our people.

### **End Strength**

The congressionally approved growth of the Army was completed ahead of schedule in 2009. However, after a decade of persistent conflict, a number of other factors – non-deployable Soldiers, temporary requirements in various headquarters and transition teams, our wounded Warriors, and elimination of stop-loss – have impacted our ability to adequately man units for deployment. As a result, the Secretary of Defense approved an additional temporary end strength increase of 22,000 Soldiers, 7,000 of whom were integrated in early FY11. The Army will return to the congressionally approved active component end strength of 547,400 by the end of FY13.

As of January 2011, 577 Soldiers were affected by Stop Loss, a 95.6% reduction from the January 2009 baseline of 13,217. By the end of second quarter FY11, the Army will have no Soldiers under Stop Loss. TESI and the implementation of voluntary stabilization programs for each component made significant contributions to the elimination of Stop Loss, while minimizing the detrimental impact to unit readiness.

We continue to make significant progress in our efforts to restore balance. Increasing time between deployments for our Soldiers and building greater predictability for Soldiers and Families continues to be one of our key concerns. Despite the short term impact of the recent surge of troops to Afghanistan, we expect the ratio of Boots on Ground (BOG) time to Dwell time to improve as demand decreases. This will ease the constant pressures on our forces as they move through the rotational cycle of the Army Forces Generation (ARFORGEN) model.

## **Recruiting and Retention (Officer and Enlisted)**

Our Soldiers are the Army's most important resource, and our ability to meet the challenges of the current and future operational environment depends on our ability to sustain the All-Volunteer Force. The pace and demand of the operational environment over the last several years has caused us to focus on high-volume recruiting with an emphasis on quality benchmarks. The shift in the economy combined with our initiatives in marketing, advertising, and hard work of our recruiters has allowed us to be more selective. Despite the challenges of an Army engaged in two protracted conflicts, the Army exceeded its enlisted recruiting and retention missions for FY10 and is confident it will meet its goals for FY11. The Army National Guard reduced their accessions in FY10 to remain under the congressionally mandated end strength ceiling. The Army met its quality benchmarks for new recruits in FY10. The Army is expected to have enough Soldiers in the FY11 entry pool to achieve the entire FY11 recruiting mission before the end of March 2011. We are projected to build the FY12 entry pool to as much as 50% of the FY12 mission by the end of FY11. We will continue to monitor trends and make adjustments as required.

In FY10, with Congressional support, the Army spent \$4.4B on recruiting and retention. In FY11, the Army plans to spend \$4.4B to fund contracts written between FY07 and FY10 due to continued obligations of anniversary payments to Soldiers. Recently, incentive contracts have dropped dramatically for new accessions. Average recruiting bonuses dropped from over \$13K in FY09 to just under \$3K in FY11, and are only used to incentivize longer term enlistments in a small percentage of critical skills. These incentives are only used to ensure the success of the total Army recruiting and retention missions and to shape the force to meet specific grade and skill requirements. Our FY12 request of \$3.7B is based on a more favorable recruiting and retention environment with a high percentage of the budget dedicated to prior year payments. The amount budgeted for contractual payments is anticipated to decrease until FY15, when requirements will likely increase due to a stronger economy.

In FY10, the active Army experienced the highest percentage of high school diploma graduates since FY92 (increasing from 94.7% in FY09 to 98.3% in FY10). The Army met its skill-set needs, achieving over 99% Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) precision. We entered FY11 positioned for continued success, with 33,276 future Soldiers in the delayed entry pool. The last time the delayed entry pool topped 33,200 was in 1996.

The Army also has developed valuable new tools to screen non-high school graduates and other applicants for attributes indicating potential for success in a military career. Assessment tools such as the Army's Tailored Adaptive Personality Assessment System (TAPAS) offer the Army the option to consider high potential Soldiers regardless of their educational background. The TAPAS instrument enhances the selection of Soldiers regardless of their education credentials by screening out low motivated, high attrition risk applicants and provides a scoring of applicants to predict the likelihood of success as a Soldier. The TAPAS is under development by the Army but has already been used as a screening tool to evaluate and screen out a small number of low motivated CAT IV Army applicants. To date, more than 157,000 Army and Air Force applicants have been tested with the Army's TAPAS instrument and the Navy expects to begin to use the instrument with their recruits before the end of the second quarter of FY11.

Additionally, recruits scoring in the upper range (50-99%) on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) remain well above the DoD policy (DoDI 1145.01, September 20, 2005) on quality marks of 60%, and recruits who scored in the lower range (30% and below) on the AFQT decreased 0.7%. The Army collectively decreased the number of ineligibility waivers provided for enlistments and appointments by 4.20% from the previous fiscal year.

Despite our success in recruiting, the Army and the Nation face a silent epidemic with increased obesity and decreased graduation rates in certain parts of the country. Currently, less than one in four 17-24 year-olds are eligible, primarily due to physical and educational requirements. One in five youths fails to graduate high school.

Increased obesity rates among young people also allow fewer potential recruits eligible to serve. One in five youths, 12-19 years old, is currently overweight, compared to 1 in 20 in the 1960s. This trend is projected to grow to 1 in 4 by 2015.

The Army continues to retain Soldiers at tremendously high levels, while engaged in the longest period of conflict for our all volunteer force. The Army surpassed the total Army retention goal, each year, since 2002. Soldiers reenlist for three top reasons which include their current command climate, job satisfaction and the quality of life in the service. Additionally, retention rates within the within the last 12 months are slightly higher due to the current state of the economy.

In FY10, the Active Army reenlisted 68,105 Soldiers towards an annual mission of 60,000. Soldiers extending to complete deployments with their units represented 8,100 of the total. The Army Reserve reenlisted 10,921 Soldiers, exceeding their annual goals by 6%. The Army National Guard accomplished their mission as well by achieving 106% of their assigned mission; a total of 32,156 Soldiers.

During FY10 and into FY11, retention bonuses were carefully monitored and adjusted to ensure that the Army met its retention goals while remaining fiscally responsible. As we posture for future reductions in the size of our force, the Army is using lessons learned from past reductions to ensure that today's decisions maintain the viability of tomorrow's all volunteer force. Retention policies will emphasize retention of Soldiers with high potential coupled with appropriate force alignment and structure.

The Army's programs to recruit and retain both Officers and Enlisted Soldiers with critical skills have been effective. For Enlisted Soldiers, the Enlistment Bonus, the Selective Reenlistment Bonus, Critical Skills Retention Bonus (CSR), and the Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) are proven tools that remain effective for filling critical skills. The SLRP is especially effective in attracting high potential recruits who

have some college experience or plan to attend college after the Army. All bonuses are being used very selectively.

The United States Military Academy (USMA) and ROTC both continue to offer pre-commissioning incentives. These consist of offering new officers their post, branch or graduate schooling. From FY06 through FY10, there were approximately 7,500 participants. These incentives have increased longevity by 40% for newly-commissioned, high-performing USMA and ROTC officers, and have improved the historical loss rates of recent years by adding three guaranteed years of active service to these officers' initial obligated service. This specific gain is based on rates for Army Competitive Category officers remaining on active duty after eight years of service from their commissioning date. The historical rate for continued service beyond the obligatory eight-year point is 47% of officers. The projected rates for year groups 2006-2010 who took the incentives cited are between 62% and 69% across all commissioning sources. In absolute terms we are retaining an additional 7,500 officers across these groups. When considering USMA alone, our improvements across this year group range from the historical average of 40% (beyond the eight year obligation) of West Point officers to between 54% and 59%. Again, in absolute terms we will retain an additional 1,700 West Point graduates through these initiatives.

The rapid growth of the Army over the past 10 years to meet the needs of a new modular and expeditionary force combined with the requirements of Overseas Contingency Operations in two combat theaters have resulted in an officer structure that is not optimally balanced to meet Army needs. Our accelerated growth of personnel to match the manning requirements of new unit designs has been very successful, but we are still working to achieve a balanced inventory of skills and grades for the force in steady state operating environment.

The Army's use of the CSRB for Captains contributed significantly to officer retention over the past several years. Retention rates within company grade officers, as well as Majors, allowed the Army to keep pace with officer requirements as we grew the force. Our under-accession in the mid 1990's officer year groups left the Army with too

few officers in these year groups to attain full manning strength at Major. Our adjustment of officer force structure combined with high retention and mandated end strength reductions will allow us to achieve full manning at Major grade much sooner than we originally predicted.

In response to adjustments to officer structure, the Army will balance modest reductions in officer accessions across all cohorts over the next four years. Both these actions will help to mitigate the effects of downsizing on the officers currently in career development at company grades. There will be opportunities to cross level skills in the active component, change components from active to reserve, and employ some company grade officers in field grade positions wherever there is potential for return on that investment. Involuntary separations will likely be used in force reductions; however, the Army is committed to utilizing voluntary or incentivized separations as available.

### **Individual Ready Reserve Mobilization**

The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) is a category of the Ready Reserve, and is composed of those members of the Ready Reserve who are not serving in Selected Reserve units or assignments, or in the Inactive National Guard. The availability of IRR Soldiers is important to the Army's mission of providing properly trained and equipped units of sufficient strength to meet contingency operations or mobilization requirements. Since September 11, 2001, approximately 538,000 Soldiers were members of the IRR. Of that total population 31,885 Soldiers were mobilized and a total of 12,524 Soldiers deployed to the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility after No Shows, Exemptions, and Early Release from Active Duty were factored. The Army applies specific screening criteria regarding involuntary mobilization of the IRR. These actions align with the January 2007 DOD policy on Utilization of the Total Force, the August 2008 DOD policy on Reserve Component Alert/Mobilization Decision Process Implementation, and take into account a Soldier's dwell time, Military Service Obligation (MSO), and previous deployments in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).

An effective IRR program is based on several factors, including the Soldiers' understanding of their obligations, access to benefits and support, and time to adjust personal affairs prior to mobilizations. In an ongoing effort to validate the readiness of the IRR, the Army continues to implement the IRR Muster program, and is piloting a new IRR affiliation program. Approximately five months after entering the IRR program, Soldiers will be ordered to muster duty. Afterward, Soldiers are required to muster each year they remain in the IRR. Through the muster program, the Army established a partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs to use VA medical centers as muster sites for the added opportunity of connecting Soldiers to VA services. During FY10, the Army spent approximately \$2.57M to muster 12,500 Soldiers, contributing to 2,100 Soldiers returning to Army Reserve formations. The Army plans to muster 14,000 IRR Soldiers at an estimated cost of \$3.01M in FY11 and expect to impact 2,500 Soldiers returning to Army Reserve Formations.

The IRR affiliation program affiliates a Soldier with a local Army Reserve unit (and will potentially include Army National Guard units). While there is no obligation for the IRR Soldier to engage with the unit, the potential benefit of established communication between the unit and the Soldier will enhance HRC's ability to maintain accountability and reliable contact information on IRR Soldiers. Advantages to IRR Soldiers include the opportunity to participate in unit drills for retirement points, SRP annually, and use the unit's support structure to assist the Soldier and Family as needed while in the IRR.

### **Quality of Life**

The strength of our Army is tied to the strength of Army Families. We must provide our Army the best possible care, support and services by establishing a cohesive holistic Army-wide strategy to synchronize and integrate programs, processes and governance. One of the programs to accomplish this is the Army Family Covenant.

The Covenant institutionalizes the Army's commitment to provide Soldiers and Families a quality of life commensurate with the quality of service they provide to our

Nation. The Army Family Covenant incorporates programs designed to build strength and resilience in our Families. These services and programs help mitigate stress from multiple deployments and frequent military moves.

The Covenant focuses on the following: standardizing Soldier and Family programs; increasing access to and quality of health care; improving Soldier and Family housing; ensuring excellence in our schools and, youth and child care services; expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members; improving Soldier quality of life in recreation, travel, and the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) program; and improving relationships with local communities and marketplaces. From FY07 to FY10, the Army more than doubled its investment in Family programs. These various programs are intended to provide a broad spectrum of support and include important programs as Mobilization and Deployment Readiness, Family Advocacy, New Parent Support, Army Spouse Employment Partnership, Survivor Outreach Services, Family Assistance Centers (ARNG), Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, Army Reserve Teen Panel, Army Affiliated Child Care & Youth Programs and Core Community Recreation Programs and Services.

### **Civilian Personnel and Workforce Development**

Department of the Army Civilian employees provide vital support to Soldiers and Families in this era of persistent conflict. They share responsibility for mission accomplishment by delivering combat support and combat service support – at home and abroad. Civilians comprise 23% of the Army force, yet are 60% of the generating force. This generating force performs support missions of training, supplying and engineering the force. Today, the Army Civilian Corps has over 311,000 appropriated fund employees with 4,130 currently serving in harm's way in the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

Since September 11, 2001, we increased the civilian workforce in military functions from 222,000 to 286,654 (plus 24,694 Civil Works) due to overseas contingency operations, Defense Health Program increases, Family and Soldier

Support initiatives, acquisition workforce growth, in-sourcing functions performed by contractors, military technician increases, and Military-to-Civilian conversions. In FY09, the Army saved significant resources by in-sourcing 949 contractor positions to Army Civilian positions. As of February 1, 2011, 7,736 Civilian positions were filled by in-sourcing, overall.

Approximately 25,000 Army civilian positions are affected by BRAC 2005. We expect a large number of transfers and some separations to occur between now and September 2011. In FY 2010 over 3,200 employees relocated with their positions; 1,920 employees were eligible for some type of retirement and chose to retire; 680 employees were placed in positions via the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP); and 800 employees left their positions because they applied and were selected for positions within the DoD or other federal agencies. For those employees who are being displaced or separated as a result of BRAC, Army offers an outplacement service program to assist them in their transition to other jobs either within the federal service or to the private sector.

The Department of the Army implemented a Civilian Workforce Transformation plan that will invigorate development of the Civilian Workforce by addressing critical issues of structure, accession, development, retention and succession planning to ease the transition from one generation to the next. Examples of the Army's initiatives in the area of Civilian Workforce Transformation include:

- Structure. Introduction of an enterprise-based, requirements-driven, civilian structure that will better support all phases on the Civilian Human Capital Life-cycle.
- Acquire. An accessions program for all new Army Civilians provided through acculturation training, program evaluation and adjustments tailored to requirements.
- Develop. Progressive, sequential functional/leadership development training for Civilians consistent with Army values.
- Distribute. Central selection and placement of high performing Civilians against required Army Enterprise Positions.
- Sustain. Fully integrated IT structures that support Army Career Tracker and Civilian Development Programs.

By the end of FY11, the Army will document and promulgate a reformed Civilian hiring process, and will implement a comprehensive executive competency-based leadership development program. By second quarter FY11 the path and resource requirements for 100% of the workforce will be covered by professional career program management. Additionally, by first quarter FY12, the Army will initiate education, training, and an experiential development program for its enterprise leadership cohort. The Army will also fully deploy a competency-based management system for SES talent acquisition, development and succession planning.

The Civilian Workforce Transformation will provide Civilian employees with a defined "roadmap" for success with training and development opportunities to assist achievement of career goals. It will provide Commanders the right workforce with the right skills to meet current and future mission needs. It will provide the Army a predictable and rational method to articulate requirements and make decisions about resourcing in a fluid environment. It will provide the Nation with the investment in human capital required to effectively manage the Institutional Army.

### **Army Military Equal Opportunity Policy**

The Army is the leader in Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) policy and practice. Commanders at all levels are responsible for sustaining positive MEO climates within their organizations, enhancing Army Readiness. To remain relevant within the ever-changing environment in which we operate, the Army is revising its MEO policy by integrating and institutionalizing equal opportunity goals, objectives and training practices. This effort will strengthen the foundation of the Army's Human Capital Strategy. Since FY09, the Army has invested \$3.2M to include \$0.8M in FY11, and expects to invest another \$2.0M in FY12 for MEO personnel services support, database and survey systems, outreach support, and training contracts for implementation.

## **Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention**

The Army's goal is to eliminate sexual assault and harassment by creating a climate that respects the dignity of every Soldier. The Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program reinforces the Army's commitment to eliminate incidents of sexual harassment and assault. This will be accomplished through a comprehensive policy that centers on awareness and prevention; training and education; victim advocacy; and response, reporting, accountability and program assessment. The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army remain personally involved and reinforce to all Soldiers and leaders the importance of preventing sexual assault and harassment.

The Army launched a comprehensive sexual assault prevention strategy that requires leaders to establish a positive command climate where sexual assault is clearly not acceptable. The strategy further encourages Soldiers to execute peer-to-peer intervention personally, and to not tolerate behavior that could lead to sexual assault.

This strategy consists of four integrated phases and extends through calendar year 2016 as we work to be the nation's leader in sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention.

Phase I (Committed Army Leadership) provides training on best practices and allows commands the opportunity to develop prevention plans to support the Army strategy.

Phase II (Army-wide Conviction) includes educating Soldiers to understand their moral responsibility to intervene and stop sexual assault and harassment. This phase has been delivered to installations worldwide.

Phase III, which the Army is now focused on, is dedicated to "Achieving Cultural Change" and fosters an environment free from sexual harassment and sexual assault.

The final phase is "Sustainment, Refinement and Sharing." Here, the prevention program continues to grow while motivating national partners to support our efforts to

change generally accepted negative social behaviors. The end state is the total elimination of the crime of sexual assault.

A key component of I.A.M. Strong is a comprehensive effort to improve the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases. The Army formally investigates every allegation of sexual assault reported through an unrestricted report. Although this practice may contribute to a seemingly high number of investigations, more importantly, it demonstrates the Army's commitment to eradicate this crime within its ranks.

The Army enhanced its investigation and prosecution capabilities by hiring 30 additional special investigators and adding 15 special prosecutors; and hired 33 of 35 additional lab examiners at the U.S Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory which supports all of DoD and the military Services in processing forensic evidence.

During FY10, the Army conducted trial advocacy training for approximately 500-600 Judge Advocates responsible for the prosecution and defense of sexual assault cases. This training is delivered to Judge Advocates in the United States and in deployed environments. During FY 11, the Army's Office of the Judge Advocate General (OTJAG) will execute 38 training programs with emphasis on the prosecution of sexual assault cases.

The Army has approximately 774 collateral duty personnel serving as Deployable Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) in brigades and higher and approximately 17,000 collateral duty personnel serving as unit victim advocates in battalions and below. In addition, the Army has 38 full-time civilian SARC and 171 collateral duty civilian installation victim advocates.

### **Suicide Prevention Program**

The loss of any Soldier is a tragedy, particularly when it could have been prevented. There were 156 suicides by active-duty Soldiers during 2010, a slight decrease from 162 suicides in 2009. However, there were 147 suicides by Non-Active Duty members of the Army Reserve and National Guard. This represents an increase of

80 suicides over the 2009 report. The surveillance, detection and intervention systems that we use to monitor the Active Duty force have limited abilities to assist our Soldier/Citizens - who are not full-time and reside in civilian communities away from their units. Approximately 50 percent of these ARNG and USAR suicide deaths have no deployment history.

The Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention (HP/RR/SP) Report 2010 is the foundation for a systemic effort to address suicide. This report has identified critical gaps throughout the system that resulted in increased high risk behavior and adverse outcomes. Additionally, partnering with national mental health professionals refines and improves our programs, including the Army Study to Assess Risk and Resilience in Service members (Army STARRS). This is the largest study of suicide and mental health among military personnel ever undertaken.

Leaders across the Army are using all of these efforts to improve the health of the force, decrease high risk behavior and stem the rate of suicides. Only through increased vigilance and attention to each Soldier will this problem within our ranks cease to exist.

### **Army Substance Abuse Program**

The Nation's persistent conflict has created symptoms of stress for our Soldiers, including an increase in alcohol and drug abuse. The Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) is a commander's program that uses prevention, education, deterrence, detection, and rehabilitation, to reduce and eliminate alcohol and drug abuse. It is based on the expectations of readiness and personal responsibility.

In March 2010, the Army conducted a counselor requirements analysis based on each installation's average daily client census with a ratio of 1 counselor: 30 patients. Patient caseload was as high as 60/counselor at some installations. The 1:30 ratio is an accepted ratio based on literature and counselor input. Applying this ratio yielded a requirement of 562 counselors assuming a 20% growth in number of patients.

An Army priority in this area includes the hiring of more counselors. There is a finite pool of qualified substance abuse counselors nationwide and the Army is competing with private industry, the Veteran's Administration and state and local governments. The Army currently has hired 319 of the 562 counselors needed. The Army is increasing the use of recruiting, relocation, and student loan reimbursement incentives to attract more qualified candidates, and are developing a ASAP Counselor Internship Program which will allow students with Masters degrees to work in a supervised internship for up to two years as they attain their licenses and substance abuse counselor certifications.

The Confidential Alcohol Treatment and Education Program (CATEP), began in July 2009 and offers confidential alcohol treatment to qualified Soldiers. For these Soldiers, the chain of command is not informed of the Soldiers enrollment as was previously customary. This pilot program was initially offered at Fort Lewis, Fort Richardson, and Schofield Barracks. An initial assessment was conducted in March 2010, and the Secretary of the Army directed that the pilot be expanded to include Forts Carson, Riley and Leonard Wood. The initial assessment showed moderate success in attracting Soldiers and placed more career NCOs and younger officers into treatment. Soldiers who participated in CATEP were very positive about the opportunity to take care of their issues without commander knowledge and were more motivated as patients. Some Soldiers informed their commanders about their enrollment and these commanders had a high acceptance of the program. The program will be assessed again during March and April 2011 and a decision will be made by the Secretary regarding expansion of the confidential treatment and education to the remainder of the Army. To date 632 Soldiers sought CATEP treatment and 432 were/are enrolled.

### **Women in the Army**

On 13 Jan 94, the Secretary of Defense issued the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule. The rule remains in effect today and prohibits the assignment of women to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground.

The Army's current assignment policy (Army Regulation 600-13, 27 Mar 92) allows women to serve in any officer or enlisted specialty or position except in those specialties, positions, or units (battalion size or smaller) which are assigned a routine mission to engage in direct combat, or which collocate routinely with units assigned a direct combat mission.

On March 2, 2010, in the context of a changing operational environment, with emerging requirements and missions, the Army initiated a routine cyclic review of its assignment policy for female Soldiers. The purpose of the review was to assess the current Army policy alignment with DoD policy. The Army recently completed the "assessment" phase of the cyclic review and will submit results and recommendations to Army Senior Leadership for decision. If approved, the Secretary of Defense will be the final authority to implement these changes. Congress will be notified prior to any implementation.

Women in the Army have and continue to serve this Nation with honor and distinction in the roles, positions, units, and specialties in which they are allowed to serve. They are vital to the readiness and success of the Army, Department of Defense and the Nation. The Army will continue to honor this service, and move forward as required to meet the needs of the Nation and of the Total Force.

### **Congressional Assistance**

As the Army prepares for reductions in the force, we will need appropriate legislative authorities to drawdown accurately and appropriately. Reformation of the physical disability system will require continued dialogue and possibly statutory change to provide our service members the transition they deserve. Once the economic environment improves, the Army will need to make greater use of incentives, and will need Congressional help to do so. The continued support of Congress for competitive military benefits and compensation, along with incentives and bonuses for Soldiers and their Families and for the civilian workforce are critical in helping the Army be the employer of choice.

## Conclusion

We have invested a tremendous amount of resources and deliberate planning to preserve the all volunteer force. We must maintain vigilance to protect these investitures for the future of the force. We need these initiatives now and into the future to sustain the quality of life of our force. While we begin to transform to a smaller Army, we remain dedicated to improving readiness, building resilience and rebalancing the force by FY12. The well-being and balance of our Force are absolutely dependent upon your tremendous support. The Army is proud of the high caliber men and women whose willingness to serve, is a credit to this great nation. To conclude, I wish to thank all of you for your continued support, which has been vital in sustaining our All-volunteer Army through an unprecedented period of continuous combat operations. With your support, we will continue to work toward restoring balance and sustaining the high quality of our Army for the duration of the current fight, and into the foreseeable future. Chairman Wilson, and members of the sub-committee, I thank you again for your generous and unwavering support of our outstanding Soldiers, Civilian Professionals, and their Families.