

**Statement of the Honorable John Garamendi
Chairman, Readiness Subcommittee
“U.S. Transportation Command and Maritime Administration:
State of the Mobility Enterprise”**

March 7, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Wittman. I greatly appreciate the continued collaboration between our subcommittees on the vital issues we will address in this hearing.

And thank you, General Lyons and Admiral Buzby, for appearing before us today.

I look forward to discussing how TRANSCOM and MARAD are poised to meet the mobility and logistical demands of a major contingency. Those who are new to these issues may be surprised by the degree to which this enterprise requires significant collaboration within and outside the Department of Defense, particularly with the commercial sector. I am eager to learn more about how TRANSCOM and MARAD are navigating their key relationships with the military departments and the industrial base.

Moreover, General Lyons and Admiral Buzby, I encourage a frank discussion of the challenges of resourcing the mobility enterprise – a crucial, but too often overlooked, pillar of our preparedness for war. Our ability to take the

fight to the enemy is predicated on the proper functioning of the aircraft and vessels needed to move our troops overseas. And yet, I am concerned that the Services continue to prioritize investments in combat power without sufficient regard to the required logistics or mobility assets. As our witnesses are keenly aware, advanced platforms and technologies will have little opportunity to matter if we lack the ability to project and sustain combat power. It is critical that we have a robust strategy for recapitalizing our aging sealift fleet, in particular, and I would like to understand how the committee could further assist in this effort.

Another transportation issue of great importance is TRANSCOM's personal property program. We've seen an alarming spike in customer dissatisfaction over the last few move seasons, and the Readiness subcommittee has been focused on pressing TRANSCOM to identify and remediate the problems that have caused unacceptable move delays and damage to household goods. I understand that TRANSCOM is considering contracting a single move manager to run this program. Many of my colleagues are hearing concerns from military families and small businesses about this transition. General Lyons, I look forward to hearing how you believe this new construct will address the program's current shortcomings and your assessment of the potential impact to the moving industry.

I know our witnesses share many of my concerns and are working hard to address them. I look forward to your testimony.

Proposed Questions

1. Our Ready Reserve Force ships are, on average, 44.5 years old. Could you describe the plan for refurbishing and replacing the ships in this aging fleet? How will we ensure that American shipyards play a leading role in these efforts?
2. Do you anticipate that a sufficient number of mariners would be available to support a large-scale mobilization of six months or more?
3. Please describe how TRANSCOM's proposed transition to a single move manager for the household goods program would increase accountability, improve customer service, and expand the pool of moving companies willing to work with DoD. In developing and moving forward with the contract award, how do you plan to keep industry and military families informed and incorporate their recommendations and concerns? Is there a risk that the move manager could privilege movers with which it has

preexisting relationships and shut other small moving companies out of the DoD relocation business?