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Testimony before the National Commission on the Future of the Army 20 May 2015

Chairman General Ham, Vice Chairman Lamont and distinguished members of this Commission, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) is proud to represent the best trained, best equipped, best led and most experienced Army National Guard (ARNG) in history. The force also continues to be cost-effective, uniquely connected to the American people and the military's first responder in domestic emergencies. Just as important, the ARNG today has never been filled with Soldiers more eager to make a difference. They are ready and willing to answer America's call anytime and go anywhere they are needed.

These are attributes our Army and our nation need to leverage now more than ever. However, current policy and resourcing trends are putting America's wise investment in the ARNG at risk.

NGAUS urges the Commission to adopt the following five recommendations to fully leverage today's ARNG:

- i. Sustain the combat role of the ARNG as an integral part of our nation's first line of defense;
- ii. Sustain the personnel end strength of the ARNG;
- iii. Continue the operational employment of ARNG units in missions overseas to sustain a base of operational experience;
- iv. Assure the ARNG receives modern equipment in order to bolster interoperability with the active component (AC); and
- v. Shape Army leadership culture to assure that senior leaders have Total Force experience.

Beyond these five recommendations, moving our Army forward requires new thinking and innovation. It also requires cooperation among the components. This should not be us versus them, but rather about doing what is best for our Army and our nation. With this in mind, NGAUS believes the AC is at risk of becoming dangerously small. It is no secret that we have

disagreements with the leadership of our Army, but we are in lockstep on the perils of eroding personnel end strength in a world of increasing threats.

The ARNG has much to contribute to our Army of the future. It offers unique value and versatility. For less than 13 percent of the Army's budget, the force provides 39 percent of our Army's operational force.¹ The ARNG, however, is more than a war-fighting force. It also responds to domestic emergencies and builds global partnerships. With more than 2,600 armories and facilities across 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia, the ARNG also connects our Army to the American people.

It is our hope that this Commission will bridge some of the misunderstandings currently festering among the components of our Army and help foster the environment required to move forward. I believe all in this process share that desire and share our view that there are more issues that unite us than divide us. NGAUS is honored to be a part of this dialogue and discussion.

The Role of NGAUS in Representing the National Guard

NGAUS is the nation's oldest military association. It was created in 1878 to provide the National Guard with unified representation in Washington, D.C. In their first productive meeting after Reconstruction, militia officers from the North and South formed the Association to obtain better equipment and training by educating Congress on militia requirements. Much has changed in the last 137 years, but the NGAUS mission remains the same. While we often take up the fight for the quality of life for National Guardsmen, their families or Guard retirees, force readiness remains our No. 1 priority.

Today, NGAUS is recognized on Capitol Hill as one of the most powerful and respected associations in the nation's capital. This clout is largely the product of the National Guard's presence in every congressional district. No other component in our Army enjoys such visibility or connectivity. In fact, there are vast swaths of the country where the only Soldiers the American public or elected officials see are members of the ARNG.

The resulting relationships are at the heart of NGAUS success in helping transform the separate state militias of the late 1800s into a 21st-century fighting force with representation on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is upon this foundation that NGAUS makes the aforementioned recommendations further detailed below:

¹ Army National Guard, FY 2014 Annual Financial Report, 2

Recommendation 1: Sustain the combat role of the ARNG as an integral part of our nation's first line of defense.

The ARNG's combat role is codified in Section 102, Title 32, U.S. Code. It states, "In accordance with the traditional military policy of the United States, it is essential that the strength and organization of the Army National Guard [and the Air National Guard] as an integral part of the first line defenses of the United States be maintained and assured at all times." The critical phrase "first line defenses" is a clear statement of the long-standing, historically validated wisdom of preserving the role of the National Guard as a combat force in the defense of our nation.

This policy was affirmed in the historic 1993 Offsite Agreement. On Oct. 29, 1993, leaders of the Army, ARNG and Army Reserve (USAR) along with multiple associations, including NGAUS, met outside the Pentagon to determine the post-Cold War direction of our Army. A central theme of the resulting restructuring plan was an unequivocal statement by the secretary of defense, agreed to by Army leaders, that "the Army National Guard will be focused on a wartime combat mission and a peacetime domestic emergency mission."² ARNG force structure was strengthened in the areas of artillery, aviation, infantry, armor and Special Forces.

The 1993 Offsite Agreement established that the ARNG core competencies would include combat and combat support and the USAR would divest its combat arms and provide primarily combat support and combat service support. As such, the ARNG has brigade combat teams (BCTs) designed to be interchangeable with those of the active-component (AC) Army.³

The wisdom of this "traditional military policy of the United States" has been repeatedly proven by history. In World War II, the National Guard provided 18 combat divisions, including the first divisions employed in the fight. Throughout the Cold War, the ARNG combat capability was a vital element of America's strategic deterrent. The choice to not deploy ARNG combat brigades during the Vietnam War was considered by many Army leaders a critical strategic mistake. The Army's choice not to deploy ARNG combat brigades in Operation Desert Storm was viewed by Congress as a failure of policy and addressed subsequently by numerous pieces of corrective legislation.

Following Desert Storm, the ARNG evolved into an operational force with combat formations deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo, the Sinai and elsewhere. In operations at home and abroad since 9/11, the ARNG's combat forces have been repeatedly and successfully employed in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. The ARNG has contributed more than a half-million mobilization actions since 9/11, enabling our Army to modularize while prosecuting two simultaneous

² Office of Assistance Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs, "Army Guard and Reserve Restructuring Planned," December 10, 1993.

³ Ibid.

wars. The result today is a battle-tested, operationally savvy, publicly-connected combat force that must be preserved.

Unfortunately, there are many across our nation unfamiliar with this recent history. As a result, National Guard leaders are often asked, “Why does a governor need Apaches, F-16s, tanks or artillery?” The answer is that no governor needs any of these items. Our nation, however, needs all of them and has for more than three centuries mustered its combat capacity heavily from the militia—now the National Guard. The ARNG is a reserve component of our Army. As stated in Section 10102, Title 10, U.S. Code, the purpose of each reserve component is “to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces” in times of war and national emergency. The ARNG provides these combat forces.

This is among the reasons why NGAUS seeks to halt the transfer all ARNG AH-64 attack helicopters to the AC. Our Army must restructure its aviation forces, but consolidating attack aviation in the AC undermines the ARNG’s role as the primary combat reserve of the Army. It also squanders some of the most experienced Apache aviators and maintenance personnel in our Army. Tragically, as some Army slide presentations admit, this plan, once complete, is irreversible.

One of the Congress’ charges to the Commission is to examine the Apache transfer plan. The plan is based on flawed deployment and cost assumptions and a lack of appreciation for strategic depth, the importance of combat reserves, and the irreplaceable skills and experience resident in the ARNG. Subsequent looks at the plan have failed to challenge those assumptions. NGAUS believes a rigorous examination of the plan will prompt the Commission to recommend its termination or significant revisions.

NGAUS also believes the Commission should look at the subject of “balance” across our Army. Leaders in all three components in recent years have often decried the lack of balance. The AC is without questions out of balance. It has too much combat capability and insufficient enabling capability, the combat support units that provide the transportation and logistical support critical to getting in and sustaining the fight. This requires the AC to use ARNG and USAR units in the initial phases of an overseas operation.

The AC should possess sufficient capabilities to operate without ARNG and USAR forces for the first 30 to 60 days of an operation. The solution is to shift enabling structure from the RC to the AC and move more combat structure to the ARNG, especially since, by the admission of Army leadership, about two-thirds of AC BCTs are not ready for a no-notice contingency. Such BCTs are in reserve, they cannot be employed early in a conflict, but the nation is paying them full-time.

Recommendation 2: Sustain the personnel end strength of the ARNG.

If the president's budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2016 is enacted, ARNG personnel end strength will drop to its lowest level since the Korean War, a time when the U.S. population was half of what it is today. This cut not only impacts the ability of the ARNG to contribute to overseas contingencies, it also impacts its capacity to respond to domestic emergencies and reduces our Army's connection to the American people.

GLOBAL THREATS

The FY2016 Army Posture Statement asserts the velocity of instability around the world has increased and will not subside for the foreseeable future.⁴ NGAUS agrees. Uncertainty characterizes the global threat environment, and nobody can predict the next significant demand for forces. The United States faces a newly provocative Russia, an increasingly stronger China, a nuclear-armed North Korea, the Islamic State and other terrorist groups, drug cartels, and health issues, such as Ebola. NGAUS agrees with the Army on the necessity of robust land forces, but disagrees on the specific force mix. ARNG forces are capable and accessible to respond to almost any contingency, following an initial AC response. ARNG forces also can be maintained less expensively than their AC counterparts, which means greater reliance on the ARNG enables the Army to retain more personnel capacity.

HOMELAND THREATS

American lives and property at home have long been threatened by natural disasters, and that threat may be increased by climate change. And we cannot forget about the threat of manmade disasters. International and domestic terrorist groups have struck U.S. citizens and property and we face not a question of "if," but "when" they will strike again. There also has been a recent increase in civil unrest, such as the incidents in Ferguson, Mo., and Baltimore, Md.

Under the Stafford Act, it is the responsibility of state and local governments to respond when disaster strikes and state and local authorities routinely turn to the National Guard, the military's first responder, for help.⁵ Prior to 9/11, the average National Guard domestic operation was 1,001 man-days. Today, the average is 3,119 man-days. The number of man days per year has also more than doubled in the same timeframe, from 347,000 to 817,000.⁶

The National Guard is the only military force fully accessible and available to both state and federal leadership. Citizens, too, expect the National Guard to help them during emergencies. National Guard leaders have heard countless times from disaster victims in recent years that the mere sight of ARNG Soldiers or their vehicles is the sign that help has arrived, which bolsters faith in government.

⁴ Statement by Army Secretary John McHugh and Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno before Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, 11 March 2015, http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/rv5_downloads/aps/aps_2015.pdf.

⁵ Section 101, Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as Amended http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/stafford_act.pdf.

⁶ See National Guard Bureau Domestic Operations Wrap Up Briefings, Fiscal Year 2014.

Utilizing long-standing Emergency Management Assistance Compacts, states also borrow personnel and equipment from other states to ensure they have the right assets for a response. This enabled the National Guard to rapidly send nearly 50,000 personnel from all over the country to Louisiana and Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. National Guard personnel have also been used in a state status for special events that require additional security, like the Presidential Inauguration and athletic events. In all, the National Guard provides 96 percent of all military support to civilian authorities. In FY2014, the ARNG provided more than 385,000 man-days in domestic response.⁷ With thousands of National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, readiness centers and wings spread across the United States, being there on the front lines with personnel, supplies and equipment, protecting and enhancing ARNG facilities anchors an immediate domestic response.

CONNECTING WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The ARNG serves an invaluable role in connecting the Army to America and winning the support of the American people to support our national defense. ARNG members live and work in their communities and provide the American people a direct link to our military forces. Our armories can be found in hometowns all across the nation. This direct and highly visible connection makes the sacrifice and service more recognizable and real to civilians in communities. After more than a decade of war, America cannot lose sight of what it means to serve, and the ARNG acts as that reminder.

With less than 1 percent of the population serving in today's U.S. Armed Forces, scholars, journalists and other opinion leaders in and out of uniform have lamented a growing divide between America's warfighters and those for whom they fight.⁸ This has significant implications for how the nation develops, funds and executes its defense and national security strategies. A 2007 RAND study found, "there is a potential for a civil-military gap to undermine military effectiveness by reducing support for defense budgets, increasing the difficulties of recruiting high-quality people to join the military and dwindling public support for using military force."⁹

The ARNG helps bridge this civilian-military divide. It has a presence in 2,600 communities throughout every state, territory and the District of Columbia. Guardsmen live and work in nearly every Zip code across the country. This presence not only helps secure the support of the American people to employ military force when necessary, it also helps secure the public support for defense budgets that provide the personnel and equipment requirement for such

⁷ Army National Guard, FY 2014 Annual Financial Report, 8

⁸ See for example, Defense Secretary Robert Gates lecture at Duke University, "All-Volunteer Force," 29 September 2010 <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1508>; James Fallows, "The Tragedy of the American Military," *The Atlantic*, January/February 2015 <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/12/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/>; Peter D. Feaver and Richard Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Divide and American National Security*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2001.

⁹ Thomas S. Szayna, Kevin F. McCarthy, et al, "The Civil-Military Gap in the United States: Does It Exist, Why, and Does It Matter?" RAND, 2007 http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG379.pdf, xiii.

employment. We cannot continue to have the best and most capable military without the support, trust and understanding of the American people.

While the strength of the ARNG is its traditional part-time Soldiers, who balance civilian careers with their military commitments, the ARNG's full-time support plays a critical role in maintaining force readiness. Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers and our federal technicians help assure the maximum value of available training time for a unit by accomplishing needed preparatory administration, training, maintenance, logistics and recruiting. They also keep ARNG readiness centers open and functioning between drill weekends.

If, however, the sustainment of ARNG end strength is impossible, and the nation is forced to accept difficult reductions in the size of its ARNG, the Commission should strongly recommend that our Army embrace a collaborative and cooperative approach to such reductions. The recent one-sided conversation and confrontational tone will not take America to a good place on this topic. The previously mentioned 1993 Offsite Agreement was an important historical precedent of AC and ARNG leaders working cooperatively to make difficult downsizing decisions. At the top of the agreement was a reduction of ARNG end strength from a 1993 authorized level of 422,700 down to a 1999 authorized level of 367,000 personnel. ARNG leaders agreed to this cut in exchange for needed force structure reforms. In addition, association leaders agreed not to advocate for higher end-strength numbers than the levels agreed to by the offsite group.¹⁰

RETAINING CAPABILITY IN A TIME OF AUSTERITY

The United States will continue to face budget challenges for the foreseeable future. Even as our nation strives to achieve fiscal balance, the number of threats and challenges our nation faces here and overseas will likely not diminish. And while many parts of government spending remain contentious, the desire to maintain a capable, modernized and well-equipped military endures as an area of bipartisan coalescence. This is even more true if we look at the investments made in the ARNG. Since 9/11, the ARNG, with the considerable help of Army leaders and Congress, has transitioned from a Cold War-era strategic reserve to a fully operational force, reducing both the strain on the AC and on the Department of Defense (DoD) budget.

Study after study confirms that the RC is a cost-effective way to retain critical capability. According to DoD's own study, RC members, on average, cost only 15 percent of their AC counterparts. When on active duty, the costs of RC members are still only 80 to 95 percent of their AC counterparts. The same study also presented data indicating ARNG BCTs, the most complex force structure in our Army, cost about one-quarter of the cost to maintain comparable AC units.¹¹

¹⁰ Memorandum for the Record, "AC-RC Leaders Offsite Agreement of 29 October 1993," Department of Army, 10 November 1993.

¹¹ Department of Defense, "Unit Cost and Readiness for the Active and Reserve Components of the Armed Forces," Office of the Secretary of Defense, 20 December 2013, 3.

In one of the most comprehensive recent examinations of personnel cost, the Reserve Forces Policy Board found that RC members can be maintained for less than one-third of their AC counterparts. The per-capita cost ranges from 22 to 32 percent of their AC counterparts' per-capita costs, depending on which cost elements are included.¹²

The cost-savings are not only due to fewer days of pay, but also lower medical costs, lower retirement expenditures, significantly lower training costs, almost no cost for moving families and household goods to new duty stations, and reduced entitlements, such as food and housing allowances, base housing, commissaries, and childcare facilities.¹³

Recommendation 3: Continue the operational employment of ARNG units in overseas missions to sustain a base of operational experience.

NGAUS asks the Commission to recommend the Army move to a deliberate policy of using RC forces to meet known predictable overseas-mission requirements. In addition, in order to fully leverage these forces, the Commission should recommend that DoD rescind or revise its 2007 memorandum on mobilization-to-dwell time ratios for the ARNG and USAR. The policies outlined in the memo served RC forces well during the height of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but now they hinder planning and deprive the nation of valuable combat experience.

EXPERIENCE

Keeping the ARNG operational ensures that our nation does not lose the invaluable experience and skills gained since 9/11. More than half of current ARNG personnel have combat experience.¹⁴ Rather than risk losing these capabilities earned via significant blood and treasure, it makes fiscal and strategic sense to continue to employ the ARNG operationally. Not only does it preserve experience in the RC, it also reduces the operations tempo on the shrinking AC thereby allowing first-in forces to focus on emerging threats and operations as well as preserves the all-volunteer force.¹⁵

OPERATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

The AC should focus more on the “fight tonight” missions and be less engaged in known and predictable missions. The ARNG has a long history of successful employment in established missions, such as Bosnia, Kosovo and the Sinai. The nation should leverage this demonstrated

¹² Reserve Forces Policy Board, “Eliminating Major Gaps in DOD Data on the Fully-Burdened and Life-Cycle Cost of Military Personnel: Cost Elements Should be Mandated by Policy,” 7 January 2013, 5.

¹³ Ibid., 5-6.

¹⁴ National Guard Bureau, “2016 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement,” <http://www.nationalguard.mil/portals/31/Documents/PostureStatements/2016%20National%20Guard%20Bureau%20Posture%20Statement.pdf>, 9.

¹⁵ Reserve Forces Policy Board, “Reserve Component Use, Balance, Cost and Savings: A Response to Questions from the Secretary of Defense” 11 February 2014 <http://rfpb.defense.gov/Portals/67/Documents/Reports/Annual%20Report/Final%20Signed%20Report%20with%20Slides.pdf>, 11.

capability going forward. In contrast, the AC, in which the nation has invested so much, should be laser-focused on answering the president's no-notice call to project American force anywhere around the globe. They have unparalleled capability. This should be its focus. The Commission should make this recommendation strongly.

Fortunately, the nation has multiple options for the continued operational employment of its ARNG around the world. First, there is mobilization. At present, ARNG Soldiers can be and are ordered to involuntary duty pursuant to the president's Declaration of National Emergency, following the attacks upon our country on 9/11. So long as this declaration remains in effect, DoD has full access to RC forces for related operations.

Even after the termination of the Declaration of National Emergency, RC forces may be ordered to extended involuntary active duty under Presidential Reserve Call-up Authority, such as was used early in the Balkan operation. However, the Army appears reluctant to use this available RC mobilization tool in future planning. Congress has never denied a request to access the RC.

Thanks to new authority provided by Congress in 2012, the Secretary of the Army also may mobilize ARNG forces under Section 12304b, Title 10, U.S. Code, for missions which are planned and budgeted in advance. This new authority opens up opportunities for continued operational deployment of the ARNG. Unfortunately, it is underutilized. For the last few years, DoD has requested slightly more than 1,000 man years of funding for use of this authority. True demand, however, could be significantly higher. The Commission should examine this point and recommend our Army make more robust use of this authority and budget accordingly.

Overseas Duty Training could also be utilized. DoD policy allows the ARNG to deploy overseas for training, which frequently simultaneously achieves operational objectives. These missions have included security-cooperation exercises, humanitarian assistance, and other productive endeavors around the world. These missions are primarily funded through ARNG training accounts. DoD could and should make more aggressive use of this tool, and the Commission should recommend officials do so.

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) also provides excellent overseas training opportunities. This program features 68 partnerships with 74 nations across every combatant command. In addition to offering training, SPP fosters enduring military-to-military relationships that have built additional force capacity. Over the last 10 years, 28 SPP partner countries have deployed forces to Iraq and/or Afghanistan. The Commission should recommend expansion, greater utilization and more funding for SPP.

RESCINDING CURRENT MOBILIZATION POLICY

NGAUS believes the mobilization guidance DoD uses in planning scenarios prevents forward-thinking on how the RC can and should be employed. ARNG Soldiers fully expect

and want to serve in the homeland and overseas, and NGAUS believes current mobilization policy stifles not only their use but innovation.¹⁶

Current DoD guidance provides for a deployment-to-dwell ratio of 1:2 for the AC and a mobilization-to-dwell policy of 1:5 for the ARNG.¹⁷ NGAUS acknowledges these policies were created with the input of the RC leaders, family members and the nation's governors. However, they were developed at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, after post-invasion operations had concluded and a rotational policy was needed to sustain the all-volunteer Force for subsequent operations in those countries.

Section 12302, Title 10, U.S. Code, provides that RC members may be called up for active duty by the president for two years.¹⁸ In the case of unplanned contingencies, the National Guard has been and continues to be, in the words of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) chief, "All In." Beyond the current DoD guidance, the ARNG has committed to more frequent rotational use, up to the maximum limits of presidential or congressional authorities, when required to meet the needs of any national emergency.¹⁹

The next conflict may not reflect the conditions under which current policies were created. The ARNG places more importance on predictability of deployment than mobilization-to-dwell ratios; however, neither should prevent utilization of the ARNG in the event of a no-notice, major contingency.

The use of current DoD guidance distorted the evaluation of the ARNG's alternative Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI) proposal. Indeed, the Government Accountability Office found the Army "did not evaluate how the proposals would have performed under modified scenarios that varied the rate at which units would deploy into a major combat operation, or the duration of the major combat operation."²⁰ NGB officials have stated for the record that for planning purposes ARNG units would follow a policy of two years of dwell time for each year mobilized during unplanned combat operations.

The law establishing the Commission requires it to scrutinize the policy assumptions underlying the size and force mixture of the Army. This particular policy assumption—that the United States will continue in a state of perpetual war with high levels of rotational employment of the RC—fundamentally skews the planning of forces over the long term.

In sum, the Commission should recommend DoD utilize all authorities under the law rather than outdated policies to guide deployment force mix.

¹⁶ See, for example, the Reserve Forces Policy Board, "Observations on the Defense Manpower Data Center's Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Personnel," March 2014.

¹⁷ For a copy of the guidance, see <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/123512p.pdf>.

¹⁸ For a direct link to the language, please see <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/12302>.

¹⁹ See memorandum from Chief of the National Guard Bureau for the Chief of Staff of the Army, dated 31 May 2013.

²⁰ Government Accountability Office, "Force Structure: Army's Analyses of Aviation Alternatives," 27 April 2015 <http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/669857.pdf>, 4.

Recommendation 4: Assure the ARNG receives modern equipment in order to bolster interoperability with the AC.

The ARNG has never been better equipped, but it is still at risk of becoming a generation behind on several major systems. ARNG leaders fear that without modern equipment, some units may not be able to meet theater requirements for deployment and become operationally irrelevant. The lack of modern equipment also adversely impacts the ability of the ARNG to carry out its state mission. Older equipment is less efficient, more expensive to operate, and more difficult to maintain. However, continued modest investment in ARNG equipment will ensure that our Soldiers are properly equipped.

The ARNG continues to align itself to support the Army's full-spectrum of operations by focusing on equipment modernization, which improves equipment interoperability within the ARNG and across our Army. With more emphasis on the right AC/RC mix to meet the multitude of missions placed on our Army, it is becoming more crucial than ever to ensure multiple-component units can function together without equipment barriers that potentially could render an operation or critical training event impossible to conduct.

Modernization and interoperability efforts remain key priorities in the ARNG equipping strategy. The risk that the ARNG will be unable to meet mission requirements will rise if modernization is allowed to wane. Interoperability of equipment between the ARNG, the Joint Force, and civilian authorities remains critical for the National Guard to provide Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) and combat readiness.

Many strides have been made to bring the ARNG to the same equipment standards as its active-component counterpart. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs FY2016 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report notes that the ARNG of 2015 "is manned, trained, equipped, and experienced at historically high levels." The FY2016 President's Budget request provides an Army investment of approximately \$1.9 billion in base funding for ARNG equipment, which does not include National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account funding.

Despite these significant investments in procurement over the past decade, the ARNG continues to encounter significant shortcoming in its equipment modernization. For more than 30 years, Congress has recognized the shortcomings in procurement for the RC and attempted to bridge this gap through NGREA. The FY 2016 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report notes that the ARNG faces an equipment shortage of \$27.4 billion when authorized substitutes are included in the calculation.

The report further notes that Army officials conflate "the terms 'modern' and 'most modern' into an aggregate grade of 'modern.'" This has led Army officials to decide that "old, but good enough can be reported as modernized." Consequently the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs has expressed concern that the "significant inventory

of good enough equipment will suppress the demand signal to keep [the reserve components] truly modern and compatible.”²¹

Despite these shortcomings, ARNG equipment modernization has made substantial progress. In 2011, Equipment On-Hand (EOH), which depicts equipment items at the unit available for mission accomplishment, was at 77 percent. At the end of FY2014, total EOH was up to 93 percent. Critical Dual Use (those Army items determined critical to the support of homeland defense and DSCA missions) EOH was 94 percent at the end of FY2014, an increase from 65 percent in 2006.²²

The investment to maintain an operational force when compared to the strategic reserve the nation had prior to 9/11 is quite modest. However, that investment has more than paid for itself in added responsiveness, flexibility, and readiness resident in a reserve component where 84 percent of the personnel serve in a traditional part-time status.

Recommendation 5: Shape the Army leadership to assure that senior leaders have Total Force experience.

The RC provides more than half of our Army's strength, yet the senior leadership of our Army is almost exclusively AC members who spend entire careers with little to no exposure to either the ARNG or USAR. This results in leaders without familiarity or understanding of the unique attributes, challenges or culture of more than half of their force. This breeds parochialism and false perceptions, like ones that are at the heart of current tensions among the components of our Army.

First, on several occasions the Army Chief of Staff (CSA) has made public statements reflecting a disrespectful if not disparaging opinion of the value of the ARNG. Many of our members were insulted by these statements. This is not the tone our nation's senior military leaders should be expressing in public.²³ If you lost a ARNG Soldier in battle, whether a child or spouse, how would you feel if the leader of our Army likened the ARNG to a junior-varsity team? The National Guard Memorial Museum has the names etched on the wall of more than 700 brave ARNG Soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the conflicts since 9/11.

Second, this problem has most recently manifested itself in the formulation and implementation of the ARI. Neither the decision nor the implementation was done in anything like a collaborative dialogue. National Guard leaders perceived the removal of attack aviation as a direct assault on the combat role of the ARNG, which we value so highly and has served our nation so well. This is another example in which lack of RC experience led Army leaders

²¹ Department of Defense, “National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report for Fiscal Year 2016,” March 2015 <http://ra.defense.gov/Portals/56/Documents/mf/NGRER%20FY2016.pdf>, 1-4, 1-5.

²² Ibid., 1-8, 1-9.

²³ See comments at the National Press Club, 7 January 2014 http://www.press.org/sites/default/files/20140107_odierno.pdf from General Raymond Odierno and at the American Enterprise Institute, 29 July 2013 http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/-odierno-event-transcript_141205664594.pdf.

to disregard National Guard input in the process. ARNG combat experience also was ignored. At no time did Army senior leaders make any effort to bridge these gaps.

Now our members are concerned that the President's Budget for FY2016 is merely a reflection of this continued tone-deaf leadership to the unique skills and capabilities inherent in the ARNG. The Army leadership proposes a reduction in the size of the ARNG far deeper than the reduction in the AC when compared to the size of those components in 2001 prior to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This lack of RC experience among senior leaders in our Army creates bias and fosters distrust in the relationship between the AC and the ARNG. We urge the Commission to make recommendations to address this problem. First, by law or policy, some RC experience should be made a prerequisite for promotion of Army general officers or senior leadership positions. Second, the Commission should recommend that Army leaders make a deliberate effort to improve AC-RC dialogue at all levels. U.S. Army Forces Command has a highly valuable unit partnership initiative which is an important step in the right direction. The philosophy behind that approach should be mirrored at the Department of the Army (DA). AC leaders from the CSA down should make more frequent visits to their RC units. At present there are virtually none.

Third and finally, the Commission should recommend command leadership exchanges and cross- component service opportunities between AC and RC units. The Commission should also recommend a mechanism to transform the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., to be more of a Total Force institution, training and commissioning officers with the full appreciation of and preparation for service in all components of our Army.