

**REMARKS FOR  
THE HONORABLE SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.  
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY  
402 CANNON HOB  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2015 @ 12:00 PM**

Thank you to the members of the National Commission on the Future of the Army for your service to this commission, to the Army, and to our nation. Also, thank you to my colleagues in attendance, especially Congressman Waltz / Congressman Pallazzo for your warm introduction.

As we have a number of Members looking to speak regarding the future of the Army, I will get right down to the subject of the commission.

As the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, the continued impact of sequestration and budget cuts is of great importance to me. As the congressman of Fort Benning and two other military bases in Georgia, the future of our armed forces and the military family also weighs heavily upon me and my constituents.

First and foremost, the Army—be it active forces, guard units, or the Reserve—should not be reduced solely because of budgetary concerns. Requirements for our national security should be the critical factors, and our national security should not be held hostage by imposed fiscal inaction.

Now, we all know our country is facing serious budgetary challenges, but it is the duty of Congress to ensure adequate funding of our armed forces. Yet given the state of the world today, reductions to the Army could prove risky to our forces abroad, as well as to training and readiness of our forces here at home.

Judging by where we are today, the warning is a day late and dollar short.

And so, as the Army looks to draw down its forces, I believe the specific numbers should not be balanced on the back of on any one component of the Army. To ensure proper balance, reductions and allocation should be equitable across active Army, National Guard, and Reserves, having due regard for the roles they might play as essential elements of our “total fighting force.” All efforts should be made to make the

National Guard and Army Reserves look and perform seamlessly as the active component of the Army.

National Guard and Reserve units have been actively fighting and supporting the war effort since 2001. Their training, equipment, and preparation have been instrumental in our success, and if we lose capabilities in the National Guard or Army Reserves, we lose our capacity to respond effectively and expediently wherever the need arises.

Regarding the transfer of Apache helicopters from the National Guard to active-duty Army, I believe the shifting of resources will be of the detriment of the National Guard, as once the helicopters are gone, the experience of the pilots and those that maintain the Apache systems will disappear with the fleet of AH-64 Apache helicopters.

The National Guard's training and readiness cannot afford to be impacted, as we must ensure the Guard remains ready to support active-duty units at a moment's notice.

Lastly, as we continue to work through sequestration and constrained defense budgets, we must ensure that our obligations to military families are met.

We cannot forget – military service is about people. How we care for service members and their families determine the success of the most professional all volunteer force this world has ever seen, now and into the future.

While these issues are very serious please be assured that I will do everything I can to make sure the Army has the necessary resources to support its mission and its people.

Thank you for your time.