



SOLANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Thomas A. Ferrara, Sheriff-Coroner

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NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY

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General Ham, members of the Commission and distinguished guests, thank you very much for this opportunity to speak today. My name is Gary Elliott, and I am the Undersheriff of Solano County. The Solano County Sheriff's Office is a medium sized law enforcement agency located in the San Francisco Bay Area, with over 529 full time employees including 125 sworn deputy sheriffs, 250 correctional officers, and a host of other public safety professionals.

I came here today on behalf of my boss, Sheriff Tom Ferrara, to express our support for the citizen-soldiers that we "loan" the Army (and its sister services) on a regular basis. Currently, my organization has 10 employees serving in some military reserve capacity or another. This list includes me, as I am also, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Elliott, Commander of the 1st Battalion (MP) of the 223rd Regimental Training Institute, California Army National Guard.

As a senior law enforcement official in California, I can tell you that without question the return on investment that a Sheriff's Office gets from members of the National Guard and Reserve far outweigh the inconvenience of those employees when they are deployed. This sentiment is shared amongst my colleagues in Sheriff's Offices across the great state of California. I know this because I asked them for their input prior to

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coming here today.

While it should be noted that in some of the smaller agencies, losing a trained sheriff's employee can temporarily have a significant impact on their staffing levels, most if not all of the feedback I received from my colleagues stated that military reservists and veteran's in general possessed the type of work ethic, bearing and discipline that fit naturally into our paramilitary organizations.

If I may quote a couple of my colleagues: Sacramento County Undersheriff Jaime Lewis wrote me the following: "reservists... make great employees. Their exposure to the rigors of military training, and understanding of the need for discipline and of the chain of command dove tail nicely into the law enforcement profession. Additionally, I find these employees to be selfless and willing to mentor those with less experience."

Captain Don Bradley of the San Benito County Sheriff's Office and Chief Deputy at Santa Cruz County before that writes: "The individuals I have worked with personally... have a skill set that takes years to replicate in the civilian world and in some cases is not attainable. I worked just about every special team we had in Santa Cruz to include SWAT, Crowd Control and Patrol Active Shooter Response Deployment. Individuals with former or current military experience generally excel during special teams assignment, and it all starts with the warrior mentality. They are... well disciplined, respond to clearly articulated objectives, and execute the mission thoroughly and accurately. In short, in an emergency, they are a gift."

Needless to say, I personally believe that the citizen-soldier is a value added to the organization and the law enforcement community. I have personally been activated as a National Guard Soldier seven times during my 27 years with the Sheriff's Office. Three

of those activations were at the request of the California Governor in response to fires, riots and floods, and four of those activations were at the request of the President during Operations Uphold Democracy, Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom, as well as my officer basic course.

When Sheriff Ferrara selected me to be his Undersheriff nearly three years ago, he told me that one of the qualities that set me apart was my leadership ability. In my view, my experiences as a National Guard Soldier have contributed significantly in developing those leadership qualities.

Thank you,

GARY ELLIOTT

Undersheriff

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