

Testimony – Total Force

Good Morning, I am MG Hoyer, the Adjutant General of West Virginia. I am speaking in my capacity as West Virginia's senior military officer. I am not on active duty orders and no one in the Defense Department has seen, reviewed or approved my remarks.

My comments today are to reinforce the need to return to our Constitutional roots and a total force solution to the Army's role in our Nation's security.

In the complex, diverse threat and resource constrained environment it is imperative we leverage a total force solution.

The appropriate force mix allows us to maintain formations as a strategic hedge, leverage civilian skills, leverage assets for multiple missions to include support to civil authorities and create space for continuum of service beyond Active service.

My own state of West Virginia is a great example across our Nation's history of total force and how it works; from the 201st Field Artillery whose unit flag holds a battle streamer from 1775 and was a part of the formation of the Continental Army, to the Support Company, Second Battalion 19th Special Forces Group.

When the position of First Sergeant came open my Senior Enlisted Leader asked if we should open the advertisement up nationwide as we had done for all other leadership positions, since we are a multi-state battalion. My response was "Yes", and that we would open it up to our E8 Active Duty advisor. The active duty advisor was ultimately selected as best qualified. He is now serving as the Company First Sergeant and will be leveraging our State Tuition Reimbursement. We will be a better unit and he will be a better soldier by us breaking down those barriers and operating as a total force.

If the Commission wants to see how the Total Force concept can and should work; just look at Army Special Forces . There is one Regiment with 7 Groups, 2 of which are National Guard. My experience is the United States Army Special Forces Command, and the United Army Special Operations Command operates these units interchangeability, and also leverages the unique skills of each. For example, the commands are leveraging the civilian skills in the National Guard

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Groups, particularly law enforcement experience, to build partnership capacity and meet irregular warfare requirements.

There is no reason not to do this across the Force! Sampling 2 states, Louisiana and West Virginia, in the last 14 years have received 37 Meritorious Unit Commendations during OIF and OEF.

When properly resourced and executed, the Total Force Policy and the Abrams Doctrine serve our Nation's best interest and serve it well. On behalf of the 54 Adjutants General we ask that this be a key part of the Commission's recommendations and include the mechanisms to effectively implement the policies.