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FDCH Political Transcripts

April 3, 2003 Thursday

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

LENGTH: 18750 words

COMMITTEE: HOUSE ARMED SERVICES TOTAL FORCE SUBCOMMITTEE

HEADLINE: CHAIRMAN HOLDS HEARING ON THE FY04 AUTHORIZATION FOR NAVAL TRANSFORMATION AND FUTURE CAPABILITIES

SPEAKER:
CHAIRMAN

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

BODY:

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE: SUBCOMMITTEE ON TOTAL FORCE
HOLDS A HEARING ON VIEWS FROM THE FIELD — PERSPECTIVES OF
MOBILIZED RESERVISTS

APRIL 3, 2003

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MCHUGH: Call the hearing to order. First of all, let me thank you all for being here, particularly our appreciation to the members of the panel, the brave men of our women of our armed services who have agreed to join us here this afternoon and share their perspectives. And to all of you, thank you so much for your service to your nation and for your service today to the House of Representatives. We deeply appreciate your sacrifice in joining us this afternoon.

Following Desert Storm in the early 1990s, American military strategy, shaped and supported by both legislative and executive branches of government, embraced a goal of increasing reliance on the reserve components. We've succeeded in achieving that goal beyond anyone's expectations, and in the process we have rewritten the meaning of the total force policy.

For example, reserve component support for peacetime military operations is now indispensable, having grown 12-fold to the annual equivalent of 33,000 active duty personnel. That's in peacetime operations. Reserve component personnel have gone from the old reality of providing minimal supports to the active components to the new reality of replacing them in many missions. The global war on terrorism, an open-ended commitment of U.S. military resources worldwide to eliminate terrorist threats and to actively defend the U.S. homeland, also has created a new set of realities.

One new reality is that over and above the pre-September 11 peacetime level of support by the reserve components, the Global War on Terrorism required at its peak that 85,500 reserve personnel be mobilized on short notice for active duty.

This level of mobilization reflected the fact that homeland defense and the threat of the employment of weapons of mass destruction generated thousands of unforeseen requirements for intelligence, special operating forces and anti-terrorism and force protection capabilities. Mobilization of National Guardsmen in some states reached numbers not seen since World War II.

Just prior to the mobilization of reservists for a possible conflict with Iraq, more than 56,000 reservists remained mobilized to support the Global War on Terrorism, and more than 19,500 reservists faced a second year of involuntary active duty.

At the level of the individual reservist who must balance family, employment and military requirements, the Global War on Terrorism has brought other new realities beyond short-notice mobilizations. Perhaps the most difficult one to deal with is the inability to predict when the next short notice, open-ended mobilization may come.

Now, on top of unprecedented levels of peacetime support by the reserve component, and in addition to the continuing, open-ended reserve component mobilizations for that war on terrorism comes the more traditional, but nevertheless demanding, implementation of the total force policy: To date, more than 210,000 reservists have been mobilized for the war with Iraq.

So this afternoon, the total force policy is being implemented in ways we never anticipated by those who articulated and implemented it some 30 years ago. Now, the implementation of that policy, with its substantial, unremitting, open-ended, three-way pull on the reserve components, presents extraordinary management and resource challenges for DOD and the military services and imposes significant stresses on the individual members of the reserve components, their employers and their families.

In this context, the subcommittee has several objectives for today's hearing. First, we'd like to better understand, based on the personal experiences of the witnesses and those people the witnesses know, the real meaning and implications of

the policy the nation has to put into effect, which requires, quote, "increased reliance on the reserve components," end quote. What price are the reservists paying as a result of that military service?

Secondly, we want to try to determine how well the total force policy is working and whether the active, National Guard and reserves are truly a seamless force or if there are rough edges or cracks and gaps in those seams, and if so, where they exist and how they might be reduced or eliminated.

Thirdly, we'd like to understand more about the impact that increased reliance on the reserve components is having on the reservists' families and, equally important, their employers.

And we also want to assess the ability of reservists to continue to serve, to pay the price, in an environment that is likely to become even more less predictable with regard to mobilizations and will certainly require many more reservists to serve far more often than the current minimum 38 training days a year.

Such insight will hopefully assist the subcommittee to more precisely consider actions that may be required as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004. And that is why we're here today, a very, very important hearing.

And before I have the honor of introducing our witnesses, I certainly want to take the opportunity to yield to the ranking member, the gentleman from Arkansas, the long-time member of this subcommittee and a long-time active participant in all matters involving the welfare, the morale of our troops, the gentleman, as I said, from Arkansas, Dr. Vic Snyder.

SNYDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for scheduling this hearing today. Let me second everything that you've said so far this afternoon.

I also wanted to extend my welcome to all of you, and I also want to explain these empty chairs. We are a subcommittee. We are in the full committee room. And so our committee's actually about 14 members, I think, and all these people they're on other subcommittees, but we moved here because of the TV camera this afternoon. But everybody on this committee and in the Congress is interested in what you have to say today and really forever because the Guard and Reserve forces are very, very important.

Let me just make a couple of points. First of all, like all of us, I think, in this town and throughout the country, we've been kind of glued to the television and seeing the news of what's going on in Iraq, and when somebody puts on that uniform and puts on that helmet after a while everybody starts looking the same. There was a picture, a woman I think this morning, didn't have her name in the newspaper, one of the papers that said, "A soldier rests sitting down." Well, everybody looks the same.

But the reality is everybody, every person is an individual family with individual needs, and all these laws and regulations and pay schedules and child care affects each family individually different and not always to the good. You all have your own stories to tell us, and that's why you're here today.

I also wanted to mention, Mr. Chairman, last week we received word that one of my former interns who went on to work for Senator Lincoln who was called up in the Marine Corps Reserve was wounded, Jason Smedley (ph), and he's doing well. We knew he was doing well because even with his broken fingers and shrapnel in his arms he was still able to send e-mail a few days later to let us know he was OK. But it brought home to all of us, I think in Arkansas, the very obvious fact that our Guard and Reserve forces are certainly in harm's way and are a tremendous part of what's going on overseas.

So welcome, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

MCHUGH: I thank the gentleman. I would be happy to yield to any other member of the subcommittee if they'd like to make a statement at this time.

The gentelady from California, Ms. Tauscher.

TAUSCHER: Mr. Chairman, I want to commend you and Ranking Member Snyder for having this hearing. Are any of you Californians by any chance? In the third row we had a Californian. Well, we have, as you know, tens of thousands of California reservists and guardsmen and women that have been called up.

And I just want to, on behalf of my 657,000 constituents back home in California, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your service, for the sacrifice that your families make, for the deep patriotism just show every day, whether

you're in your private life or in your uniform. So you are dear to us.

We all try here on this committee to do everything we can to not only provide you with the training and the readiness and the equipment but also the family support, particularly on this committee, led by the chairman to make sure that your families understand how deeply appreciative the American people.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman, for doing this. Please know that you're in our hearts and we really appreciate you taking the time to be here to help us understand better what these issues might be that we can help more. Thank you.

MCHUGH: Thank the gentlelady.

The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Schrock?

SCHROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief. I couldn't say it better than Ms. Tauscher said it, but we've had some pretty distinguished panels appear here, but when I walked in none of them matched this. This is where the rubber meets the road. These are the people who do the real hard work, and I congratulate you all.

I have a really keen interest in the Reserves. I was privileged to be an active duty naval officer for 24 years, but I now how important the Reserves were to the Navy when I was in. I was in Afghanistan a year ago today, arrived there a year ago today, and I saw the Air Force and the Army Reserves working with the active duty, and I didn't know the difference. They were absolutely doing the same jobs as the active duty guys, and they had a big sign that showed all the professions from which you come, and there were like 300 different professions, people in Afghanistan doing that duty, and I really appreciate what you do.

I have a renewed interest especially because I know the Navy is having some terrible problems with the Reserves, and I had the head of the Reserves, Vice Admiral Totushek, in my office this morning to talk about those issues, and I'm sure the same is true with the other services as well.

And I'm proud to have a son who is an ensign in the Navy Reserves, brand new, and my MLA is a brand new ensign in the Navy Reserves, so believe me, I'm going to hear about the Reserves a lot, and I can assure you we'll do everything we can to support you. Thanks.

MCHUGH: I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Hayes, gentleman from North Carolina.

HAYES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing today, and to my dear friend on my left hand here let me echo your remarks which are very, very accurate. The answers and the questions come from you all. We don't solve many things inside the vacuum that's known as the Beltway, so your time and effort to come here and help us, to help all our folks in uniform is very much appreciated, and you all do look like a fine group of folks.

MCHUGH: Thank the gentleman.

As you can tell, folks, you're in front of a very sympathetic and well-intended audience here today, and I certainly want to associate myself with the comments of my colleagues. We're in awe of your sacrifice, particularly in this time, and like my colleagues, I've had the opportunity to travel to many theaters, points of many missions and have seen and witnessed firsthand the incredible job that you good people do. And it simply is a component of our military strategy today that without you would totally limit our ability to do all the hard work that's out there in defense of freedom. So God bless you for that.

Let me introduce our panelists today before we get to their actual comments, and I'll read them as they're presented. I believe they're aligned as they are seated. First, Master Sergeant Gary L. Beaver, from the Virginia Army National Guard; Sergeant First Class Steven Davis, United States Army Reserve; Petty Officer Robert Lehman, Naval Research; Gunnery Sergeant Nancy Jean Koehler, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve; Master Sergeant Paul Needham, Arkansas Air National Guard, Staff Sergeant Johnathan Stallings, North Carolina Air National Guard and Master Sergeant Kevin R. Smith, U.S. Air Force Reserve. Again, welcome.

For the edification of those in the room here today, we did not require, as is the usual case for the witnesses, to prepare statements. Some have. In any event, those that have I would ask unanimous consent that those statements be entered into the record in their entirety. Hearing no objection, so ordered.

So, folks, all we would like to do is to provide you with an opportunity to make any opening comments as you may

deem appropriate and after that to have a discussion about the jobs that you have, the roles and the missions that you fill and how we might be able to provide hopefully the added assistance and direction that might be necessary to allow you to do if it's possible even a more effective job.

And so with our word of appreciation as a final closure, I would happily yield to Sergeant Gary Beaver for his comments. Sergeant? Master Sergeant, I should say.

BEAVER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that introduction. Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to report to you my experiences...

MCHUGH: Sergeant, forgive me for interrupting you but could you close that a little closer, because it's working like a politician — not very well. Thank you.

BEAVER: Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to report to you're my experiences in the Virginia Army National Guard. I am the team sergeant of Operational Detachment Alpha 2084. My unit was activated for Operation Enduring Freedom for a one-year period beginning January 3, 2002. We were deployed to Afghanistan from May until October.

While in Afghanistan, our unit conducted numerous types of combat operations. We set up fire bases, we conducted reconnaissance missions and vehicular patrols across the deserts and mountains of southern and central Afghanistan.

Our unit, Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, was responsible for the capture and detention of Taliban and al Qaida operatives and the capture of weapons and munitions. My team was comprised of soldiers who are police officers, an attorney, a small business owner, a firefighter EMT and college students.

My perspective is from that of a relatively small unit activation — about 80 soldiers. Also, teams from our unit are accustomed to overseas deployment so our soldiers generally know how to prepare without a log guidance. Most of the men in our unit are experienced special forces soldiers who already have overseas deployments while previously on active duty.

My men were eager to get on with fighting the war on terrorism. However, our time on active duty was characterized by a lot of wasted opportunities. From January to April, we were assigned support tasks at Fort Bragg such as funeral details and training new Green Berets.

My team was frustrated that we were not instead training and equipping for our upcoming combat tour. We could not understand why a National Guard unit was activated to cover routine support tasks which the active Army should already have covered. Also, we could have activated, trained up and deployed directly to Afghanistan from our home station in Virginia, as we are used to doing and like active duty units do.

Finally, we were not fully equipped for the missions we would soon be tasked with. We were lacking in vehicles, some weapons systems, optics, global positioning systems and radios. Although we did get some of the gear we needed before we deployed, we did not have much time to train with it.

The pay my soldiers received from their civilian employer while activated ranged from full pay for some to zero pay for others. My employer, the Fairfax County Police Department, has had 11 activated police officers for Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. Fairfax County supports its activated reservists by supplementing their pay when they make less in the military. I will continue to serve in our unit even if we get called up again. I feel really a call to do these missions out of a sense of patriotism.

Also, there is a stop loss on special forces soldiers right now. Some quality soldiers were so unhappy with the way we were mobilized and deployed that they have chosen to leave our unit or retire. A very experienced NCO told me plainly that if we were paid fairly and on time, he would stay in the unit. Otherwise he was leaving. Two of the seven special forces groups are National Guard. National Guard special forces teams conducted many of the combat missions which have resulted in a relatively stable Afghanistan.

Regarding normal drill weekends, some members of our unit drive for hours or even fly in without compensation for travel expenses. Our hazardous duty pays are prorated when we drill and come late when we're activated. I question why our soldiers get \$20 jump pay per month when active duty soldiers get \$150 a month. The risks are the same, the qualifications are the same, we fall from the same airplanes, in the same parachutes.

When I was deployed, I left behind my wife and two children. We are fortunate to live near a major installation

which has a commissary and a TRICARE office. She was able to use these benefits, but others who live far from major installations did not have nor understood the assistance this provides.

My family also had a strong community to help them cope with the day-to-day activities. At the time, there was little support provided by the Guard for families. Our soldiers tend to live in a wide radius; therefore, it was difficult for the families to support each other. This was a first-time experience for many of the families. I know some soldiers whose families had medical and financial issues which added stress to their deployment.

Nothing can replace the year I spent away from my family, but they're proud of me and will support me on further deployments. I and the men of ODA 2084 stand ready for our next mission. I'll be glad to answer any of your questions, sir.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much, Master Sergeant; we're proud of you too.

Sergeant First Class Steven Davis. Sergeant, thank you for being here.

DAVIS: Mr. Chairman, members of the distinguished subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity for me to be here today and participate on this panel. My name is Sergeant First Class Davis. I am a military policeman with the Army Reserves. I have been serving in the United States Army for 15 years. Eight of those years were active, and the past seven have been in the Reserves.

I currently serve for the 4249th Military Port Security Company, military police, in Pocahontas, Iowa. I've been mobilized once in the seven years that I have served in that company, and that came on September 23 of 2001 for Operation Mobil Eagle.

In my experience with both the regular Army and the Army Reserves, I believe that the two are very much integrated. I had positive contacts when I was an active duty soldier with the reservists, and I have had positive contacts as a reservist with the active duty soldiers.

DAVIS: Most recently, during our deployment to Sunny Point, North Carolina, we were directly assigned to the 597 Transportation Group, falls under MTMC, the Military Transportation Mobilization Command. From the moment we arrived there we felt as though we belonged there. I remember during a welcome meeting, Colonel Hyder (ph), the commander of the 597th, made it very clear to everyone in our room that we were all going to be treated equal and as any other soldier that's on that installation. The command emphasis there set the tone for our stay.

We were able to work together cohesively and we had a very high morale. Our military police integrated very well with the Department of Defense existing force flawlessly.

As for the question, did the recent deployment change or affect the reservists' intention to continue to serve, I believe the deployment made our unit stronger and even more willing. From month to month, we ask ourselves are we really needed? Why are we doing this? When September 11 happened our questions were answered. Yes, we were needed, and, yes, we were important.

On September 12, we had 24 soldiers, myself included, volunteer to go on a security mission to an unknown place. The very next day, on September 13, we left for Beaumont, Texas. Ten days later, my unit was mobilized and they joined us in North Carolina where we continued to serve our year tour of duty. When that year was up and we were told that we were going home, we were told the New York unit was going to replace us but they didn't have enough people to complete the mission themselves.

Immediately, 22 of our soldiers rose their hand and volunteered to stay with the New York unit. Not for three months, not for six months, they volunteered to stay a second year, a full year. Some of the soldiers were married, some of them were college students. Why did they stay when they didn't have to? If I had to guess, I would say it's because they knew they had a job to do, and they weren't going to leave until it was done.

The one problem that we did encounter during our deployment was medical benefits. The Army did a great job of providing the coverage and informing the soldiers of how the medical coverage is supposed to work. However, our family members who are back home in a four-state area didn't have the opportunity to receive that guidance on how the medical coverage is supposed to work.

This created many headaches for the soldiers as they talked to their families back home. They tried to deal with the problems long distance over the phone, and it created problems for them. I believe a local representative in our area,

our four-state area, would help our family members be able to have someone to go to to be able to have their questions answered.

Let me conclude by saying I don't believe that anyone likes the idea that the world has changed, and we don't look forward to being deployed nor do we want to be deployed. But the question is if we were asked to do so, would we? Yes, we would.

We all know that as an Army Reserve soldier that our families and civilian employers pay the price as well as we do. My wife is very loving and understanding. She supports me and what I believe in. I'd like to thank her now for that.

(APPLAUSE)

I know that she feels the same patriotism and loyalty to our great country as I do. When I would call home late at night and apologize for the Army taking me away so long, she could only say to me, "I wish the whole world knew what kind of soldiers were protecting us." That would motivate me to drive on and continue my mission.

I'm a police officer in my civilian job. I work in a small town in Webster City, 8,000 people, north of the capitol of Des Moines. We only have 15 officers to start with, so when they take me away it does make it difficult for my bosses. However, the department throughout all that has been supportive through my entire mobilization. Let me give you an example.

I got home after a one-year mobilization in September of 2001. I just asked to go to ANOC, a leadership school required for my promotion. They allowed me that time off. While I was in ANOC, I called them and asked them four days off so I could attend this very briefing. Their response to me was, "We'll take care of it somehow. Many people are facing this problem so we will too. We'll get through it."

Again, I thank you for allowing me to be a part of this panel, and I can answer any questions at this time.

MCHUGH: Thank you, Sergeant. And I know all the panelist members feel as I do that not only do we owe a great debt of gratitude to you as the members in uniform but to the families too. They pay a great sacrifice, and they should know we recognize that and deeply appreciate their contribution and all that they do to allow you to serve. So thank you to the families.

Next would be Petty Officer Robert Lehman, Naval Reserve. Petty Officer?

LEHMAN: Thank you. I first want to thank the subcommittee and especially the chairman for giving me the opportunity to discuss my mobilization experience in the days following 9-11 in support of Operation Mobil Eagle.

I want to first express how I as well as my family was supported in this process. Along with having existing loan percentage rates reduced, assets were properly protected, compensation was routed without any unusual delay and health care was provided for my family.

Some might say that certain aspects of the mobilization process seems slow, but you have to realize that one in a position like mine who watched their country attacked feels a sense of helplessness and is eager to right a wrong. It is with this sense of urgency to help that the anxiety to do so was so imminent that waiting 20, 30 or even 60 minutes to enroll in a TRICARE program, for example, seemed like days.

After being mobilized, I reported to Naval Station Mayport to augment their security force. Upon reporting, the other mobilized reservists and I were quickly advised of our mission, objectives, goals and more importantly what we needed to do to accomplish these goals.

Approximately 70 percent of us mobilized reservists at Naval Station Mayport that were utilized in augmenting in its security force were professional police officers like myself in their civilian occupations. We were asked to document and provide for our command a list of special skills we possessed regarding our civilian employment. This would be important in utilizing the right man for the right task.

The time was taken to look at us as individuals in such a short and swift amount of time. This impressive undertaking made for an important transition that would eventually bring the existing security force which had only included a handful of active duty personnel into a solid security force which the Navy could be proud of.

In order to better protect the harbor and ships, the recognition that a water-borne security unit need exist. I would eventually be assigned to this unit. In its early stages, we patrolled the harbor in a single-engine boat while being armed

with a nine-millimeter pistol. Winter proved cold as we possessed the inadequate clothing for the season.

As a battle group prepared for deployment I recall one night being at the mouth of the harbor basin knowing that I was the harbor's first line of defense. I recall saying to myself, is this as far as we've come since Pearl Harbor? As scary as this may sound, it was not long since the right safety measures, manpower and equipment were put in place. You see even though I may have not known at the time, until the resources were made available it had been assessed that I possessed the knowledge and skills to have properly reacted in the instance a problem had occurred.

Having the lack of resources was fortunately overshadowed by the ability by the command to use the existing resources responsibly. I eventually became a section leader of six active duty sailors, four of which were fresh from boot camp and master at arms school. Another was an active duty master at arms second class who recently cross-rated over from being a hull technician. Another active duty was that of a quartermaster second class.

As a reservist I had the concern that animosity may exist between — that I would be a leader of active duty personnel. Fortunately, it was nothing more than that — a concern. Knowing that a limited amount of experience in force protection existed within my unit, I knew it was important to create a solid working relationship in a very short period of time since the threat of terrorism existed and may have seen almost imminent following the days of 9-11.

Preparing for a threat almost seemed overwhelming at times; however, we routinely shared with our life's experiences with each other which helped us in enhancing our job performances. We constantly communicated with one another and trained together in our down time. We were concerned with more than simply getting the job done, but how the job got down was also important.

Our hard work proved to pay off. Although the safety of the harbor and the ships were never compromised, unauthorized boats entering the harbor were routinely intercepted in a safe and swift manner. Our record for safety overshadowed others and was outstanding. Our performance was constantly recognized.

Since I have concluded my duty, I discovered that my QM2 had enrolled in his off-time in a civilian police academy. My MA2 had become the section leader himself, and the four seamen, one of which had been promoted to third class petty officer, all are doing remarkably well.

I have been called and written being told that my influence and leadership attributed to much of their successes. Whatever the case may be, I attribute their success to three things: Honor, courage and commitment, the Navy's core values. Without them, my job in this situation would have been a much greater task.

I cannot begin to describe what these three words mean in sailor's life. We promote them through our actions, they help us solve problems, protect lives and ultimately provide for a safer nation.

As I conclude, I want to thank the committee again for this opportunity in expressing myself. In regards to my experience within this most auspicious setting. God bless and God speed.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much, Petty Officer.

Gunnery Sergeant Nancy Jean Koehler, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Gunny, welcome.

KOEHLER: Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, Dr. Snyder, members of the committee, it's truly an honor to be here today. I'm Gunnery Sergeant Nancy Koehler. I've been a Marine reservist for 14 years. I'm married to Richard Davis, and we have a four-year-old daughter, Abigail. I joined the military voluntarily and have re-enlisted twice voluntarily. Every time I've raised my hand and taken the oath I have recommitted myself and my family to military service.

I've been on a mobilization order since September 21 of 2001, over 18 months now. After the first year, I volunteered to extend for an additional 12 months, and I believe everyone, or all the reservists in my office, with the exception of three, did the same.

I was mobilized to work with my individual mobilization RMT detachment, the career management team, at Headquarters Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia. I was essentially a dualing reservist (ph). I was doing the record books of military and civilian skills of Marines that were volunteering for mobilization after September 11. After about 45 days, the process and my role in it changed, and I was reassigned to work with MPP-60, which is the mobilization section of Manpower Plans and Policy Division at Headquarters Marine Corps, also at Quantico, Virginia.

I still work in the same building in just a different step in the overall process. And today I still work for MPP-60, and

I'm a staff non-commissioned officer in charge of manpower requirements and global sourcing, and that includes joint task force requirements.

This is the second time I've been mobilized. The first time I was with Bravo Company, 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion out of Frederick, Maryland. As a selected Marine Corps Reserve Marine, my unit was mobilized then, and I was deployed to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm.

I served as a personal effects custodian at the battalion level, which means that I did the inventory of personal items for Marines that were killed, wounded or injured and sent those items back to the United States with the Marines or the Marine's next of kin.

KOEHLER: This particular mobilization has been an increasingly more difficult assignment and adjustment to my family. I'm fortunate to be able to see them most weekends, they live in Midlothian, Virginia. My husband is a police officer and works midnights on a rotating shift. Our days off do not always coincide. Although this is supposed to be temporary, the longer I'm on orders the more permanent it seems to my daughter. She's still too young to fully understand the impact of all this.

It has taken many readjustments to keep workable solutions to changing child care needs, keep up with financial responsibilities and plan for the future, both near and far. Most plans in our lives have simply been put on hold.

Prior to mobilization I was affiliated with Long & Foster Realtors. I primarily worked in the new homes community as a site agent, but I also worked with buyers and sellers in the resale market. This part of my career will be very difficult and expensive to restart. My license has since expired. I'll have to be retrained, reschooled, recertified and have my continuing education recertified.

Real estate is a people-oriented business and it's built and established on relationships that require routine contact. I've not been in a position to foster the kind of relationships that facilitate a growing, thriving real estate career.

I'm also the CEO of my own business, and it's a commercial real estate development company. This job is one that I'll be able to go back to. I have used my free time, which isn't very much, and weekends and many evenings to try and keep this business going. Although the company is behind in some development projects, I feel it is stable enough to get back on schedule within five months of me coming off orders.

There would be a lot of readjustments to the business. My business relies in part on bank loans and investment capital. To ensure funding for one project I may have to step down as CEO while on orders.

I'm supposed to come off mobilization orders after 24 months on September 20. I'll be due to reenlist in the Marine Corps by July of 2004. At this point, I plan to do so without reservation. And I look forward to your questions.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much, Gunny.

Master Sergeant Paul Needham.

NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. I'm grateful for the opportunity to appear here today before you and address some of the personal issues that I have faced while being mobilized.

As you've said, I am Master Sergeant Needham from the 123rd Intelligence Squadron, Arkansas Air National Guard. The impact on myself being mobilized has been varied. My job has not been affected since I work full-time for the Air National Guard and I do the job that I do full-time now.

But the impact on my family has been quite traumatic as they have no military background. My wife left her career as an operations director for a marketing firm to keep our family together. My first child was born 17 days after I was mobilized. However, I was allowed to remain at home station until he was seven weeks old and then sent to Langley Air Force Base where I've served ever since.

This is my second activation in three years. I was activated in May of 1999 to support Operation Allied Force, and I have now been activated to support Operations Enduring Freedom, Southern Watch and now Iraqi Freedom. My mobilization experiences has shown that there's an increased continual reliance on the Guard and Reserve to help the active force fulfill their full-time mission.

My career field, (inaudible) analysis, is a very small career field and critical in manpower. It is a unique career field where even at Langley Air Force Base we support combat forces in the field, in the theater on a daily basis. We can do

this from home station with the correct equipment and connectivity, and we look forward to that opportunity.

As a Guard member, we initially faced some animosity between our full-time active force members when we deployed to the 30th Intelligence Squadron at Langley Air Force Base. However, as our second year neared and the squadron understood that we were going to remain for a second year, they openly integrated us into their operations.

We now comprise 40 percent of the non-commissioned officer corps of the 30th Intelligence Squadron. Guard members now lead three imagery exploitation teams that the squadron has, and we comprise 50 of the imagery mission supervisors, which are responsible for the collection and exploitation of the imagery that the 30th Intelligence Squadron is tasked to support. We lead, supervise, counsel and set policy for the 30th Intelligence Squadron and its members, and they will feel a great loss when we come off active duty this fall.

The impact on our families as a group has been varied from member to member. Some members like myself were able to move their families to Virginia and keep the families together, thus helping the members and the families get through this ordeal together. However, some members were not able to, because their spouse's careers, children in school and other obligations at home.

These members have faced hard times. They face the stress of being separated from their families and the stress related to the job that we perform. Several families have broken apart because of this activation, and we feel their pain and try to support them the best we can to get them through this.

In addition to this family issue of separation and deployment, we have faced the issue of being on temporary duty status, and we attempt to take leave we do not receive our per diem or our lodging which pays for our place to stay there at Langley, Virginia. Currently, under law, we are not allowed to receive this, and it's put a great strain on several members.

These members not only face the separation of two years but also face the real possibility that they may have incurred a debt of anywhere between \$6,000 and \$9,000 depending on how much leave they have taken while on active duty.

Currently, we have been working with our congressional delegation to try to alleviate some of this strain, just to receive the lodging the expenses so that we can take leave, see our families and yet still maintain a place to live at Langley Air Force Base.

Our continued service, the 123rd Intelligence Squadron's members have varied opinions but most are determined to remain and stay the course. However, some have decided to leave because of their families, their careers and the uncertainty of future mobilizations.

As for employer support, from my squadron we have heard nothing but good things. The employers are very supportive and try to help the best they can. Some have paid the difference in salaries between the military salary and their civilian salary while others have just allowed the members to serve unconditionally.

However, there have been several employers that have asked their employees to reconsider their service with the Guard and the Reserves when they do come home. They have not asked them to separate, but they've asked them to reconsider.

I thank the committee for allowing me to speak today, and I'll address any questions that you have.

MCHUGH: Thank you, Master Sergeant.

Staff Sergeant Johnathan Stallings, North Carolina Air National Guard. Sergeant, thank you being here.

STALLINGS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee. I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Again, my name is Staff Sergeant Johnathan Stallings. I'm assigned to the 145th Airlift Wing, 145th Services Squadron of North Carolina Air National Guard. The service squadron's primary responsibility is for food service operations, lodging and setup for troops, fitness and recreation, search and recovery teams, mortuary affairs and honor guard programs.

In normal operations at my home base, I specifically work with the base Honor Guard Program. Along with my wife, Staff Sergeant Julia Stallings (ph), who is also a member of the Air National Guard, we are non-commissioned officers in charge of the base honor guard.

I've been a member of the North Carolina Air National Guard since May of 2000. Prior to joining the Air National Guard, I served a little over seven years active duty Air Force from 1990 to 1997. During my active duty tour, I voluntarily

deployed to Operation Provide Comfort following the Gulf War. This was my only deployment while on active duty.

Since joining the Air National Guard I've deployed once. This deployment was overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. My deployment to Operation Enduring Freedom was involuntary activation of a large portion of my unit. During my recent deployment with the Air National Guard, just as when I was on active duty, my unit felt it was being deployed to do a specific job, a specific mission, and that is in fact what we did. Our mission is to provide services to our military members.

The main difference in being deployed as an active duty or as a member of the Guard or Reserve or as a Guard member, you have to work a little harder to that active duty components realize you are competent. I believe the active duty services commander had a good plan for integrating the active duty, Guard and Reserve together, but there was still a feeling of the typical active duty attitude toward Guard and Reserve, and that attitude is that Guard and reservists are weekenders and do not know what they're doing. I know this because as a prior active duty member, unfortunately I was uneducated about the Guard and Reserve and felt the same way.

Due to the plan set in place, again by our services commander, of integrating the units together with little time and hard work the active duty members realized that the Air National Guard was not only competent but also a very valuable asset to the team. There still seemed to a few isolated incidents where this continued to be a problem but nothing that hindered the mission dramatically, though it did affect some of the Guard members' morale. For the most part, everyone felt like a part of the team, but, again, there were isolated incidents where this was not the case.

For myself and others, the hardest part of being in deployment is being away from the family. The difficulties for me were knowing the added stresses for my wife. Not only was she a full-time student and working, but she was also a full-time mom and now a dad too.

Unfortunately, on a lower level than this some squadron units did not keep in contact with deployed members or their families very well. There was a low morale for many military members because they felt a lack of concern or support from their units and squadrons, not only for themselves but their families.

I am fortunate to have a strong wife who is also prior active duty. She made things work on her own by looking at the same situation if she was not in the military, I would have to say this previous deployment would have been very dramatic on her and may have caused her to have negative feelings towards the military.

As Guard and reservists, we do not always have the luxury of military support groups due to the fact that we are so spread out, unlike active duty who are centrally located near a base. For example, in my case, I live two and a half to three hours away from Guard base in Charlotte, North Carolina. This makes it hard to reap the benefits from the family support groups. Besides the support issues and being separated from my family, the only major difficulty was transitioning back into normal everyday life upon returning home from a deployed location.

I continue to have full support as a military member from my family as well as my civilian employer. I am a law enforcement officer employed by the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office in Fayetteville, North Carolina. The sheriff's office is dramatically affected, and was dramatically affected, at the time I was deployed due to the number of people deployed from the department, because the need for law enforcement in the community continues with fewer officers to fulfill that need.

Unlike many others, I cannot have asked for more support than what my civilian employer gave me and my family while I was deployed, and they continue to give me support throughout my military career. It's unfortunate that many of our members are not in the same situation as I. Looking back on everything, from the deployment, being separated from my family and away from my civilian job, I would still continue to proudly serve as a member of the Air National Guard.

Being deployed is never easy for anyone involved and will always be difficult, but it is made easier with the help and support of the family and the unit. To me, the unit is the key to keeping the morale up for the members and the family as well. I am a National Guardsman, I always will be and will always be proud to serve if called upon again.

I would like to thank you all again for allowing me to appear before you today and speak on behalf of our guardsmen, the men and women of the Air National Guard. I welcome any questions you may have.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much, Staff Sergeant.

Lastly, not leastly, Master Sergeant Kevin R. Smith, United States Air Force Reserve. Master Sergeant, thank you.

SMITH: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee.

MCHUGH: Could you pull that — pardon me, Master Sergeant, could you pull that just a little bit closer?

SMITH: I am Master Sergeant Kevin Smith. I'm a logistics plan technician assigned to the 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Grissom Air Reserve Base, Indiana. I am a traditional reservist and have completed 17 years of service. On September 19, 2001, I was mobilized for Operation Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and remained on active duty...

MCHUGH: Master Sergeant, again, I apologize. Some of the members are still — yank her as hard you can right in there.

SMITH: Is that better, sir?

MCHUGH: That's great. Thank you very much. These are very touchy microphones, so it's not your fault. Appreciate it.

SMITH: On September 19, 2001, I was mobilized for Operation Mobile, Enduring Freedom and remained on active duty for one year. During this time, I deployed in support of Global KC-135R air refueling operations to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Misawa Air Base, Japan and a classified location in the Persian Gulf. I spent a total of 135 days deployed overseas.

Between those overseas deployments I performed logistics plan duties at Grissom coordinating all aspects of the wing's deployed assets for Enduring Freedom and the previous committed air expeditionary force requirements.

My mobilization definitely had an impact on my family. The most significant was my absence in two roles, which are important to me: a husband to my wife, Julie, and a father to my nine-year-old son, Kyle, and our new daughter, Sarah (ph). Deployment was short notice to report to active duty so Julie and Kyle had less than 24 hours to go to make sure things were in order at home and say good-byes. Julie was now solely responsible for all the immediate decisions in the household.

Despite the current situation in the Middle East and the possibility of continuing mobilization and deployment, my family supports me in serving my country.

There is another issue which is unique to reservists and that is linked back to our employers. The most serious issue to my employer, Delphi Delco Electronic in Kokomo is the short notice I gave before being mobilized. Again, I was given less than 24 hours to report for duty. This meant I was unable to assist in finding someone to take over my responsibilities on the job. I'm one of the fortunate few who had employers provide wages to cover the pay gap when I'm mobilized.

Currently, we receive our wages minus military pay we receive while mobilized. But benefits such as health care and life insurance continue to be provided as if I had never been mobilized. I do believe that although these deployments are difficult for Delphi Delco Electronics, they will continue to support the armed services.

I've always felt very much a part of my unit, and even while we were deployed this did not change. Within our unit, traditional reservists and full-time reservists share in the same responsibilities. I believe that also held true between our unit and the active duty forces that we were assigned to work with.

My recent experience on active duty has not changed my intention to continue to serve in the United States Air Force Reserve. When I joined the Reserve I knew that there was always a possibility of being mobilized and having to spend time away from home. I also knew that it was and still is important to me to serve my country. This is my decision but it requires the continued support of my family and employer.

For those reservists and guardsmen who do have not the support system, I believe a couple of things will emerge. One, we will slowly uncover these problems, identify them and hopefully work to fix those problems. Second, our increased tempo to augment the active duty forces could present an obstacle for future service as some can no longer hang on without a family financial support system.

I appreciate the opportunity to come here and speak about this today, and I would like to thank the members for your continued interest in our well being and your continued support for reservists, our families and our employers.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much, Master Sergeant, and, again, thank you all.

Just to kind of set up the discussion period, I hope it is clear to everyone that this hearing is in no way intended to

question the effectiveness, the efficacy of the Guard and the Reserve; quite the opposite.

Back in January of this year, I had the honor of heading up a congressional delegation that traveled throughout Europe that some other members, Mr. Hayes and others, of this subcommittee and the full committee joined in and traveled to a number of places, Istres, France, where we fly Air National Guard out of a French air base to Ramstein, where both the Army and the Air Force are located; Naples, of course, the Navy and Marine Corps; Enchenza (ph), with an Army deployment presence in Siganowa (ph), for the express purpose of meeting with Guard and reservists.

And the first thing that struck me in those travels was every one of the combatant commanders that we met and the field commanders that we met said, simply, no question, without the Guard and Reserve they couldn't do the mission they were being asked to do, which is the underpinning philosophy, if you will, of this total force seamless concept.

But the interesting thing beyond that is in each one of those stops we gathered focus groups, discussion groups of Guard and reservists, and perhaps most importantly we asked the officers to leave the room to try to foster an environment of the most open conversation possible.

And I think it's fair to say in the more than 200 members collectively that we met through those meetings, we heard some very troubling things. Most of those folks were volunteers. They were there because they chose to be, they wanted to be, and they understood the importance of their mission. And most were — not most, all were very proud, and rightfully they should have been, of the contribution and sacrifices they were making.

But in the course of those conversations, we heard some concerns from those members that suggested that if we don't do some things here in Washington to smooth out the growing number and the height of the bumps that people like you are encountering, we have the real opportunity to break the force.

And it's not a question of people like yourselves and others wishing to serve. It's not a question of being unwilling to participate in deployments, but it is a question of the ability to encounter all of the individual challenges that exist, some of which were mentioned in your testimony: the pay differentials, the utilization of your skills, the non-utilization of your skills upon deployment in jobs that you weren't trained for, so you're not really participating in the full seamless force; short call-ups, Master Sergeant Smith, 18 hours notice. I can't pack a toothbrush in 18 hours.

To expect people to get their lives together and leave for six months, a year, however long in less than a day is the kind of thing that can make one wonder as much as you're honored to serve and want to play a part how much can that traditional Guard and reservist's role of being a citizen military participant endure? The family pressures.

We heard from one small business owner, reservist himself, who admitted that because of the repeated deployments amongst certain categories of jobs that he's inclined when he gets a resume to set aside those who show Guard and Reserve obligations. We heard from a, I thought, strikingly high number of Guard and reservists who said they no longer put their Guard and Reserve service on their resumes for the concern that an employer might want to go somewhere else for fear of that person being called up repeatedly. That's the first thing anybody should want to put on their resume. It says so much that is good and honorable about you, but that is the concern we have.

So we're here today to try to establish a record if it's appropriate so that we can begin to work to fix some of these specific problems and to take the larger issues of why are we relying so much? I happen to believe the M-strike numbers in both the Guard and Reserve are dangerously low. That, in part, requires both active and Reserve component people to be utilized time and time again.

So I've read your testimony, those of you who submitted it, we all gratefully received your comments. But let me just ask you anecdotally, as you talk to your fellow guardsmen and women and reservists, do you hear people begin to question, "You know, I just can't sustain this anymore. My employer cannot allow me to leave again. My family can't really hang together. The pain of the current level of service is too much." Or was I hearing from people in Europe who perhaps came together at an unusual grouping and we got all the concerned people and didn't hear from those who thought everything was fine?

And I know, Master Sergeant Beaver, you mentioned in both your written statement and your spoken comments that you did have members of your unit who either said or in fact did choose to re-up because of those problems. I certainly would welcome any further comments you have on that.

But to the rest of panelists, do you hear that kind of talk, because if you do, we need to act very, very positively to try to fix it so that the tradition of the Guard and Reserve can continue. Because I happen to think, and I'm confident everyone

here today believes, it's absolutely vital to what the military has been in this country.

Master Sergeant, anything you'd like to add to that?

BEAVER: Yes, sir. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Again, my wife Linda is here and I'd just like to thank her for supporting me throughout the years. I couldn't do it routinely much less being gone full-time without her watching the kids and taking care of the house while I'm gone. She knows I love to do this, it's in the blood, and I really enjoy it.

However, there are guys in my unit and on my team who have said that it is very much a stress on their jobs to be gone for long periods of time. A year away from a law firm or a federal government job, especially if you're new, your golden years is the time you make a name for yourself, and now you're an empty chair and/or someone else is sitting in it.

I'm in a pretty good position because being a patrol police officer you can pretty much replace a patrol police officer by paying overtime, not to degrade what the county has to pay because they have to pay in money someone else to be in my job. But other people aren't as fortunate as me, particularly people who own their own business, they share 50 percent with another person, a business that absolutely needs them there to operate. They have unique problems.

MCHUGH: Thank you very much.

Sergeant Davis, anything to add to...

DAVIS: Sir, in my unit, it's exact opposition of what you're saying. We have plenty of people that want — they all want to stay. I believe we're always going to have the one or two that's going to want to get out because it's financially difficult or it's creating problems for them or too many problems for them, but in my unit, all of our soldiers want to stay. They volunteered to go places, they want to go places, they're committed to our unit. I can't say enough good things about the soldiers that we have in our unit. I'm not hearing the same thing that you did, sir.

MCHUGH: Well, that's what we need to hear. By the way, none of that, even if you were hearing it, would suggest these aren't people willing to serve. But we want to make sure we're maintaining the correct balance. I mean there are certain expectations. Historically, as you know, you've got a 38-day minimum call-up a year. I think people are willing to do that.

Let me just read, and this was carried in a story by the Associated Press news wires. "In one extreme example some Kansas National Guard members returned from six months guarding the patriot missiles in Saudi Arabia in October 2001. They were then deployed to domestic airport security before they could even attend traditional welcome home ceremonies. Guardswoman spokesman Joy Moser said, quote, "The same troops were then assigned to guard bases in Germany three months later."

I don't think anybody would question the commitment of the folks in that particular unit, but I'm just wondering if that becomes a more widespread reality, that repeated call-up, how many employers can sustain that, how many families can put up with that? That's not what we designed the Guard and Reserves to be, and it's not in any way intended to question someone's commitment, but rather have we gotten too far out of balance, at least in some cases?

But I'm certainly glad, Sergeant Davis, that that hasn't occurred, and we're not wishing this on anyone, certainly.

Petty Officer Lehman...

LEHMAN: Yes, sir.

MCHUGH: ... any observation, sir?

LEHMAN: In my experience, my observations with the mobilized reservists I have worked with personally, I haven't heard any complaints or reservations from them to have extended, problems with their employers. We were in a unique situation in my call-up, because everyone I basically worked with were police officers.

Being that said, their departments had basically things in place that would take the situations off of their own department so they would be able to be more supportive of their officers that were called up and basically have them there longer. But other than that, we have not — or I have not personally observed any complaints like I'm hearing today, sir.

MCHUGH: Thank you.

Sergeant Davis, just for my own information, what is your background on activations for your unit? I believe you said it in your testimony. You've been called up one time?

DAVIS: Sir, in the unit that I'm currently in I was called up once.

MCHUGH: Over what period? I'm sorry, I don't recall that.

DAVIS: Seven years, sir.

MCHUGH: Seven years, one time.

Petty Officer Lehman, if you could respond same question, how many times has your unit been called up?

LEHMAN: Well, we don't get called up as a unit, sir, we're as individuals.

MCHUGH: So you've not had a unit mobilization.

LEHMAN: Right. Personally, this was my first experience.

MCHUGH: OK.

Gunny?

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

MCHUGH: Any thoughts or comments or observations on this particular topic?

KOEHLER: Yes, sir. MPP-60 is our reservists. There's a staff of active reservists, which were full-time reservists, and the rest of us are all mobilized individuals. We encourage the members of MPP-60 to keep in constant contact with their employer to foster that relationship and make sure that the employers are informed of when they're coming off orders, when they've been extended, that they have contact phone numbers for us at the unit, that we have literature available to answer questions that they have about Reserve call-ups. And as far as I know, the Marines at MPP-60 none of them have too many concerns about whether or not their employer will accept them back.

Personally, before I got into real estate, I did have a job that did not like me being a reservist. They had problems with giving me days off for anything other than to attend drill or the two weeks in the summer. Basically, what I did with that and my response to it was I did file a complaint with the Department of Labor and then I found another job. And, personally, I would never consider not putting my military background and history and experience on a resume, because, quite frankly, I wouldn't want to work for an employer that did not appreciate my service.

MCHUGH: Thank you.

Any of the Air Force sergeants? Master Sergeant, Staff Sergeant? Comments?

SMITH: Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. Looking at folks from my unit that have discussed separating because of the current mobilizations, we've estimated that anywhere from 5 to 15 percent of our imagery analysts will separate after the current mobilization. And a large part is due to the fact that in three years time we have now been activated twice, and prior to that it had been 31 years. And all we see in the future is continual reliance on our career field, and that's why we have sought the idea of moving the capability to the home station where members would be more likely to stay and serve at home station versus deploying 1,000, 1,500 miles from home to do the exact same job somewhere else.

MCHUGH: Thank you.

Staff Sergeant?

STALLINGS: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, my unit is in a situation where we have a good variety of people, whether it be business owners, college students, members like myself who are law enforcement. For the most part, everyone there — they're volunteers and they're there because they want to be and they're going to stay. We have members that are close to retirement. They could leave whenever they want to or they could stay.

I believe their hearts are telling them to stay but over the past deployments they're losing money whether they have their own businesses or getting indirect stress from their civilian employers where they feel they need to concentrate more on that career versus their military. They're able to retire so I've heard those talks. I believe if they were in a little different situation as far as the Guard goes and weren't losing the money that they are from their civilian employers, that it would probably be a lot different for them.

MCHUGH: Thank you, sir.

Master Sergeant?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir. During the deployment in 2001–2002, we did have quite a usual number of people saying they're going to retire or get out after this, because we have been — the unit has been activated Kosovo in 2000, Enduring Freedom, and, yes, we were just activated again for Iraqi Freedom. The whole unit doesn't get activated at the same time, we send out like 200 or 300 people personnel packages at one time, but it's becoming a hardship for some people to continue to be activated continuously. Every two to three years they're expecting to be activated, so they're planning on getting out.

MCHUGH: So you've had — let me make sure I understood you correctly — three deployments since '91?

NEEDHAM: Three activations since Kosovo. Kosovo, Enduring Freedom and...

MCHUGH: And now with OIF. Thank you all very much. And I thank my colleagues for their patience.

Let me yield to the ranking member, Dr. Snyder.

SNYDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. See, I wanted to spend my time if I might and try to flesh out some of the specific things that two or three of you mentioned.

Master Sergeant Needham, I'll give you a home boy advantage here since you're from my congressional district. But I want you to walk through so that we'll all understand the first issue I want to talk about is this per diem business. When you were working at Little Rock Air Force Base, I assume you had a home in Jacksonville or Little Rock or...

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir; I live in Cabot.

SNYDER: You live in Cabot. And then you got mobilized to go to Langley. So pretend that I'm in the actives and I'm leasing an apartment for one year in Langley, Virginia, right?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: And you're assigned on temporary duty, correct?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: And you rent the place next to me for the same — lease the place next to me for the same amount of money. Is that about the scenario so far?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: Walk through now where the problem occurs when you and I decide to go on a 10-day scuba driving trip or a three-week leave or 30-day leave. Explain the problem, the financial problem.

NEEDHAM: Well, sir, the member on active duty receives their leave as normal, still receives their base pay and allowances, just like they are — because they are stationed there at that base. The Guard members from our unit in that same situation are deployed there temporarily where we still maintain our homes back in Arkansas and have to pay the bills back there.

And then our per diem, which includes our meals and our lodging, pays for us to remain there at Langley Air Force Base. If a Guard member decides to take leave to go home to see their family or just take a vacation to get away from the stress of the job for a week, two weeks or what not, that member then has to incur all the costs to maintain that living arrangement there at Langley Air Force Base.

SNYDER: So you don't want to go scuba diving after all, you decide you're going to go back home and see the folks in Arkansas. So you take me with you as the active member and we're there for 30 days. So if I understand you right, during that time there, I'm going to continue to get help with my lease payment but you're not; is that correct?

NEEDHAM: Correct, sir.

SNYDER: And so we have comparable per diem payments until we went on leave?

NEEDHAM: The active member doesn't receive the per diem since they're not on a temporary duty status.

SNYDER: Since they're not on temporary duty. So they have a different...

NEEDHAM: Right. They're under a different pay scale, sir.

SNYDER: Different pay schedule. So the issue then is you've got the household back home, you've got this household which they're calling temporary duty but it may go on for a year or two the way it's going for you, and then when you take your leave time, your vacation time, there's a fairly vigorous financial penalty for deciding to take leave time. You can't get out of your lease for 30 days while you take your leave, I guess is the bottom line. Is that correct?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: OK. The other issue that you brought up and you referred to it as I think you said connectivity so you can do your work at the home station. I think that that's — I mean obviously, the technology has to be there. I mean we can do — I don't think I'd want it done on me, but we can do surgeries — a doctor in Des Moines, Iowa can work the controls and operate on somebody in another country. I mean the technology is there and it's been done. What you're talking about you're an imagery analyst.

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: And those kind of things can be moved, even classified stuff can be moved safely and thoroughly through fiber optic cables. And so what you're saying is rather than move the people why not just move the information in a technological fashion that you can then send it back there the next day. Does that summarize what you were trying to say?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir. We do it every day at Langley Air Force Base. We support combat troops in the field today.

SNYDER: So what you're saying is you've got the technology to do it from Langley to wherever. We don't have the technology at a lot of our bases around the country to feed into Langley, I guess, or to the local base to overseas. Is that what you're suggesting?

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: Yes. My understanding is that the solution is pretty easy, it's just it's not necessarily cheap. Like in our particular situation in Little Rock Air Force Base, I think it would be a little over \$6 million to do that, but that may well be a very good investment in order to improve the efficiency for the men and women of service.

Do I have time for another question, Mr. Chairman? I wanted to ask Gunnery Sergeant Koehler...

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: ... I think you presented one problem that there's not a good answer for, and maybe it's particularly, I don't know, irritating. I mean I know some of our airlines are really struggling and people are not flying as much right now, and I think we're going to vote out a fairly hefty financial help for them out of the House today, and I'm sure they'll end up ultimately with it. But for somebody like you, I'm talking now specifically about the business loss that you sustain when you're called up, I don't see that we have anything to offer you, or at least haven't. Is that a fair statement? You have to eat the loss?

KOEHLER: Basically, yes, sir. The states could waive the fees to reinstate my license as long as I go through the proper training.

SNYDER: But in terms of the — you know, I don't know what kind of money you were making off the realty at the end of things, but if it was \$40,000 a year, no one's stepping forward to say, "Well, gee, we're going to make up for that 40 grand. Here's half." No, that's not happening?

KOEHLER: No, sir; that's not happening at all.

SNYDER: I had a couple of friends who have — I'm a family physician — some doctors that were mobilized in the past in civil practice and what you described to me there, the personal relationships you have...

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: ... certainly apply to family doctors. I mean patients are wonderfully loyal. When you're gone for a year, they have to take care of business.

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

SNYDER: And when you come back they may have found someplace else to go with somebody who's going to be around, and we don't step forward for them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MCHUGH: Thank the distinguished ranking member.

The gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Hayes.

HAYES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sergeant Stallings, if I may, we talked yesterday and in an ongoing fashion today about the seamlessness. If you would refresh some of the panel members — well, not refresh, but share some of our conversation with them about your concerns, issues filtering down from the top about things that we talked about. I'm talking about being in touch with families and things like that. And, again, because of your active duty and Guard component, I think you're particularly well qualified to speak on that.

STALLINGS: Yes, sir. We direct problems with our — I guess, our lower managerial skills, as far as our squadron and our unit, keep in contact with the members as well as the family throughout the deployment.

There's times when you are deployed you don't have communication to be able to be in touch with your family, whether you're in transit or even once you get there until you get the proper clearances to use the e-mail systems or things of that nature.

But there are channels to be able to communicate with the units back home, and just being able to pass the information along to the families, maybe even having a liaison specific from the unit that can be responsible for keeping contact with the families and with the members themselves.

There are family support programs available as far as the packets that are given to you pre-deployment. The availability of being able to use those is very slim. Members like myself live two and a half to three hours away. Unless you live locally it's very hard to be actively involved with family support programs.

HAYES: Tell us for just a minute, if you will, about the resources that are available and the difference between what family support things they offer active duty and Guard deployed.

STALLINGS: Again, with the Guard, we receive pre-deployment packages. With active duty, they have an actual family support program, their family support site on base. Active duty members they live local to their bases. They're able to actively participate in those programs. There's always someone there for them if they need that.

That's not always the case with Guard and Reserve members, and it is very unfortunate. Even members that I've spoken with that live in the local area were not able to receive what they really needed through the family support programs.

Active duty, again, they have an office set up right up on base, they can go there, everything they need is right there at their fingertips for families, spouses, children. Everything's available for them. With Guard and Reserve, you have a pamphlet passed out to you, and you're pretty much on your own from their, unfortunately. If there's no further contact kept up with the family, it's left up to them to search out the answers that they're going to need.

HAYES: Let me ask you one more question, because someone in the press always asks us, is there anything else you'd like to add?

STALLINGS: I'm very fortunate, again, as I said in my opening comments, that my wife is prior military, active duty and Guard as well. She's very strong, she's very knowledgeable in the system in where she needs to go, what she needs to do if she has problems and who to contact. If she doesn't know who to contact, she'll find someone to contact. We have a lot of other spouses who are not as educated in that area, and if they don't know who to contact, they're pretty much out there on their own. And, again, that's added stress to the military member. If you have added stress, you're going to have more problems from there as well. Thank you.

HAYES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In closing, thank you, Staff Sergeant Stallings and all of you that have come today. And I think it's important to make a point. Mr. Chairman, you've worked very hard to help solve some of these problems, and some of the folks have asked me, in the press particularly, well, what kind of legislation are you going to pass?

We are more than passing legislation, we have to have a real direct and constant contact with your commanding officers, and we can help them understand the necessities to deal with directly and immediately some of these issues. So we don't

want anyone in the audience, regardless of what your connection is, to think that it takes way more legislation for things to happen. So thanks for making things happen, Mr. Chairman.

MCHUGH: Well, I thank the gentleman for his leadership and great demonstration of concern and his participation, including his lovely wife on our trip recently.

With that, the vice chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Oklahoma, Mr. Cole.

COLE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First, let me tell you I'm just in awe of all of you in your collective service to your country and your sense of dedication. Thank you very, very much. It's quite inspiring to hear your testimony, quite frankly.

Second, if I may, Sergeant Davis is probably the smartest politician because he was the guy that introduced his spouse first, so any of the rest of you that have — and I noticed Sergeant Beaver picked up on it and followed right away — any of the rest of you that would like to introduce members of your family that are here, we recognize very much this is a family responsibility, and there's a lot of people in addition to yourselves that serve us indirectly. So if you'd like to point out any spouses or other family members that are here, I'm sure we'd be delighted to meet them and appreciate them.

LEHMAN: Thank you.

COLE: Petty Officer?

LEHMAN: Sir, I have here today with me my wife, Michelle, married to her for nine years, sitting right over there. Couldn't have done it without her.

(APPLAUSE)

KOEHLER: Sir, my husband is with my daughter today, and I have my mother and my grandmother with me.

COLE: Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

NEEDHAM: I'd like to thank my wife. She wasn't able to be here today with me, but for her support and encouragement within my military career. And I'd like to thank...

COLE: We'll send her the testimony.

(LAUGHTER)

NEEDHAM: I'd also like to thank my mother for being here today.

COLE: You bet.

(APPLAUSE)

STALLINGS: As I've mentioned, my wife, Sergeant Stallings who's seated behind me. I would like to thank her for being here today, the constant support that she gives me and our country.

(APPLAUSE)

SMITH: I'd like to thank my wife, Nira (ph), she couldn't be here today. She had to stay home and watch the children, so I'd like to thank her and my children for supporting me.

(APPLAUSE)

COLE: Again, thank you very much. And thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just thought that was an important thing to do.

If I may very quickly, because I used some of my time, let me start first, Sergeant Beaver, with you. You mentioned that one of your concerns, while you had a generally good experience, was you didn't have all the equipment that you needed and as quickly as you needed it and certainly not enough time to train on it. Was that specific — number one, do you see that in your experience as a problem with other Reserve units or were we just simply short in the area that you focus on?

BEAVER: Sir, we were short due to specific decision-making back under the bottom-up review of the mid-'90s when it was decided not to fully equip the two National Guard special forces groups, and it came back to bite us. To the Army's

credit and special forces' commands credit, they are trying to make good. I saw a lot of real hard work to get us the equipment we needed, and it is getting better. I've seen improvements. We are getting a lot of the radios and the weapons systems that we need, so I stand by to see that it's fully equipped.

COLE: Thank you very much for bringing that to our attention. Is that true of any of the rest of you? Did you have equipment problems?

Obviously, Petty Officer Lehman, you mentioned some of the specific concerns you had.

LEHMAN: Right. The equipment for the Naval Reserve is bad. I'd like to go on record in saying that. However, we do make good with what we've got, and that's the bright side of it. If there's anything that could be done about that, I'd appreciate it. However, again, people are there because they want to be there and they make do with what they have. Thank you.

COLE: No, thank you. Any of the rest of you have any similar comments to add or observations?

Let me ask this, too, quickly: A number of you mentioned how quickly you were called upon, and we know that the norm is supposed to be 30 days. We also recognize we had a national emergency and that didn't happen in a lot of cases. But I'm just curious on a case-by-case basis how much notification you had before you were called.

Can I just start and work over with you, Sergeant Beaver, just move through the group?

BEAVER: We heard in October about the activation, and we activated in January.

COLE: OK. Thank you.

Sergeant Davis?

DAVIS: I left 12 hours later, sir.

COLE: That's what I thought.

Petty Officer Lehman?

LEHMAN: I had a week; however, I was notified at 6 a.m., told to come in, that I was going that day, but fortunately I was sent home and told to — I had a week, basically, to get everything ready.

COLE: Gunny Koehler?

KOEHLER: Notified the day the presidential executive order was signed on the 14th of September and reported in on the 20th, so about six days, sir.

COLE: Thank you.

Master Sergeant Needham?

NEEDHAM: Well, sir, our squadron was sent out in three groups, and I went with the third group, so I kind of — working full-time I kind of knew what was going on. So I had a little bit of time to prepare.

COLE: How about some of your other fellows that — let's say that first group?

NEEDHAM: That first group had no more than 48 hours notice.

COLE: Thank you very much.

Sergeant Stallings?

STALLINGS: Yes, sir. We were given about two weeks notice. Fortunately, about a week prior to departure they bumped that back 30 days, so we had an additional time frame.

COLE: And Master Sergeant Smith?

SMITH: Yes, sir. I was notified on the 19th about 11, report 6 o'clock a.m. the next morning, and I was in Hickam by 2 o'clock that day.

COLE: Just one last question so I don't use up my time, I know there's others here, Mr. Chairman. Do any of you — we heard a number of suggestions just in general on things like the per diem, which is extremely helpful. Thank you very

much for pursuing that line of questioning. But do any of you have specific things that we can do legislatively, monetarily?

It might be things like one of the things we talk about sometimes on this particular subcommittee are commissary privileges year-round, those type of things that would make a difference in retention and in making life a little bit more livable under obviously what are sometimes very challenging situations.

Any of you care, we'll start again with you, Sergeant Beaver.

BEAVER: Well, sir, as I mentioned before, I believe that airborne military free fall, hazardous duty type pays that are paid for risk incurred not rank should not be prorated for drill. We have to maintain all the same qualifications, as I said before.

Secondly, the servicemen's group life insurance, I was kind of disturbed recently to see it listed in a newspaper article as a benefit, and I stopped using several years ago because there are private companies that offer more insurance for less money. It also covers my family. And I just don't think that's really sufficient.

As a police officer, there's federal benefits if I'm killed in the line of duty that amount to over \$100,000 in payment to a police officer killed in the line of duty. And a soldier who's killed in the line of duty I believe it's going to go up from what I've seen recently to about \$12,000. I believe there are improvements that can be made in those type of benefits.

COLE: Any ideas, Sergeant?

DAVIS: Yes, sir. In reference to the TRICARE issues that we had in our tri-state area — our four-state area, our command is located in Kansas, we're located in Iowa, and we have members in our unit that are located in Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota, Missouri and Illinois. If we could have something centrally located there to assist our family members in knowing what they can do and what their options are with the TRICARE, that would benefit us tremendously.

COLE: OK. Thank you. Any others have any further suggestions?

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I yield back my time.

MCHUGH: Thank the gentleman, vice chair.

The delegate, gentlelady from Guam, Ms. Bordallo?

BORDALLO: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I am certainly impressed with the family support that our guardsmen have with them today, including their wives and their mothers and their grandmas. I think that's wonderful.

I represent Guam in the U.S. Congress, and we have some very, very fine reservist units and guardsmen on my island. And I noticed when all of you were speaking there, I think at least two or three of you alluded to this, you mentioned the members of the active service and how they view National Guardsmen and reservists. Are these negative feelings, are these adverse feelings are they improving or is it still there to some extent? In other words, do they view you less than themselves? I mean I think this is what I'm trying to ask? We can start with...

BEAVER: Well, that's of course very touchy. What I believe has to happen oft times is we have to prove ourselves, and perhaps what may cause it is a feeling of ignorance, really, of not knowing chain of events. Soldiers get off active duty after a number of years of service in my unit. They come to our unit and then they work in a different field, perhaps, for a number of years.

They get a little bit older, a little more experienced, and now they're back doing what they did before. And what's happening is you have gained a level of maturity and experience and bring those things to the table, and so we are constantly trying to educate and help the active duty guys understand who we are. It's not really pervasive at a lot of levels, but once we get there and they see what we can do, they want to have us there, and we contributed greatly.

BEAVER: But there's a perception because of the weekend warriors going back decades. But I think it takes time, and the men I'm associated with are professionals, they understand that. It's just a matter of educating the active duty guys and letting them see what we can do when we get there.

BORDALLO: Would you say then that the relations are improving?

BEAVER: Yes, yes. And I didn't say they're so bad that we can't operate or anything like that. I would say they are improving as evidenced by some of the funding that's come along. We need money for construction at our unit, for instance. And that's what we're looking for. We're looking for them to see what we can do and what we've done in Enduring

Freedom and say you know what, this is a force of people where we want our active duty guys to go to.

We want to keep them around, because guys are going to get off active duty. They might get off active duty for a few years and then go back to active duty. We want to keep them in the system, so we want to have a place for them to go in the National Guard, and we want to have a place for them to go that they want to be, a nice facility with good training and good leadership and so funding for construction would be helpful for us. It's sort of a total package, a circular pattern.

BORDALLO: Well, that's good to hear because I feel morale has a lot to do with it. How about any of the others that — a couple of you mentioned it. Would anyone like to comment?

DAVIS: I will, ma'am. In my experience, we deployed and we integrated with the Department of Defense forces, and I think the initial feeling was, "Wow, what are these guys doing here?" But by the end of our deployment it was more of a surprise factor for them, "Wow, these guys really know what they're doing," and they appreciated us much, much more. So I think this deployment had done wonderful things for us in that relationship between the Reserves and...

BORDALLO: Because I really think that the members of Congress here would want to know if there was any problems, such as this, we have to straighten it out. Any others that feel that they'd like to speak on this?

LEHMAN: I'd like to echo Sergeant Davis' sentiment. Our problem was with the Department of Defense police officers, not the active duty. However, I did hear of animosities between active duty and reservists, of course. However, my opinion that starts in your command, the command staff, the supervisors. It comes down from there. Personally, our CO, our captain of our base, wouldn't have that. So it's people like that where most of that comes from.

BORDALLO: Thank you.

KOEHLER: Yes, ma'am. I would like to comment just because I don't want anyone to think I intentionally left this out of my opening statement. And this would apply to both times I've been mobilized and many tours of active duty special work. The integration of Reserves into the active duty environment, in my opinion, was not a concern prior to mobilization, and it hasn't been an issue since, which is why I didn't mention it.

At Headquarters Marine Corps, specifically, I think they welcome our varied educations, varied backgrounds and various input from our civilian employment and civilian experiences, and so far it hasn't been an issue.

BORDALLO: Good.

NEEDHAM: Yes, ma'am. Initially, we had a little bit of the animosity, especially with our career field being so specialized. A lot of the active duty folks did not believe that we were equally as qualified. Quickly they learned. Like Sergeant Beaver said, we had to prove ourselves and once we proved ourselves, they realized that we were their equals and sometimes their superiors.

BORDALLO: Good.

STALLINGS: Yes, ma'am. My comments would mirror Sergeant Beaver and Sergeant Needham as well. Initially, there was some negativity but in the end they realized that we were very capable of doing what we were there to do, and we're definitely their equals and, again, as Sergeant Needham said, at times their superiors.

BORDALLO: Sergeant?

SMITH: I must have been fortunate because the locations I was at they all seemed to welcome us.

BORDALLO: Well, good. I'm glad that these feelings are improving and we're working together.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MCHUGH: Thank the gentlelady. Gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Schrock?

SCHROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me thank you again for what you do. What we need to realize is the services may have enlisted you but they're re-enlisting the people behind you, the wives, husbands, mothers and grandmothers, and I think that's something we need to keep in mind because the impact is not only on you, it's on your families as well.

Let me urge you all to do something. When I was in the Navy if I had talked to my congressman, that was it, I wouldn't go anywhere. I encourage that now. I think you need to talk to your congressman, no matter where you live. You need to

make them understand the problems you're having. That's because, as I tell my constituents, whether it may be uniformed or not, if there is a problem and I don't know about it, I can't fix it. But if I do, I can and I will, and we've had very good luck doing that. So I urge you all to do that. I think that's very important.

And Petty Officer Lehman, you're absolutely right, it's a mess. Your head guy, the three-star admiral, told me that today, and I can assure you I need to do something about it, as do all of us, and I probably need to talk to his counterparts in other services as well, because I don't think the Navy is the only one having these problems.

Master Sergeant Needham, let me follow-up a little bit on what Dr. Snyder said. First of all, do you live on Langley or do you live in Hampton?

NEEDHAM: I live in Williamsburg, sir.

SCHROCK: You live in Williamsburg.

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: Oh, my Lord. OK. That's pretty nice up there, isn't it?

NEEDHAM: It's very nice.

SCHROCK: Yes, it is nice. Help me understand the \$69,000 investment some of these people made in per diem. I kind of lost that, I need to understand that.

NEEDHAM: Well, sir, when a Guard member who's on temporary duty takes leave and say they go back home to Arkansas and they go home for a week, if it's during the summer months, we receive \$100 a day for lodging and \$42 a day for meals and incidentals. Those funds stop when we go on leave. Yet we still have to maintain the apartment or the hotel room where we live while we're assigned to Langley. So that member has to incur that cost out of their own pocket.

SCHROCK: Has to eat that cost.

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: OK. Personal thing, do you know, is there a Lieutenant Colonel Durham who's a police officer from Texas who's been at Langley for about 17 months and is going on another year?

NEEDHAM: I do not know him, sir.

SCHROCK: I'm trying to find that guy, because I was so impressed with him when I was at Langley. I represent Langley, and I was so impressed with him. He's a police officer. In fact, he's the police chief of his home town in Texas, and he'd been at Langley — I was there as he finished his 17th month. He'd been extended for another year, was able to go home for his daughter's high school graduation and in a couple of weeks will go home for his son's graduation, and he had one week of vacation, and it's taken a big toll on him, I can assure you.

Gunny, let me — because I live in Virginia...

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: ... you mentioned a couple of things that I think we can help you with. Your license expired. Why did it expire?

KOEHLER: Well, because I wasn't available to continue with the continuing education that's a requirement.

SCHROCK: Oh, I see. So they weren't able to — the Licensing Board wasn't able to put that on hold because you were on active duty?

KOEHLER: No, sir. Plus during that time I would have had to pay the dues and membership fees and that type of thing, which not knowing exactly what was going to happen and how long this was going to go on and the potential for mobilization or the unknown, I didn't want to keep incurring the monthly expenses in keeping up with dues, subscriptions, that type of thing to put my license in referral.

SCHROCK: OK. We need to fix that. After this is over, there's a house of delegates member who's becoming a very powerful house of delegates member, named Thelma Drake. She's a realtor from Norfolk. This is something that I think she'd like to get her teeth into. I think this is something the state should take care of, the federal government shouldn't,

but afterwards we'll exchange cards and addresses, and we'll start working on that, because I think that's only fair. You shouldn't have to be penalized because you've been called back on active duty, and let me see if we can help you with that.

Help with me the bank loans. You talked about bank loans but didn't go into detail on that.

KOEHLER: Well, one particular bank that we were working with, it wasn't that they did not want to work with us. They were fully confident in my abilities to do the job as a CEO. What, they weren't sure of was what was going to happen if I wasn't there? Who was going to take over the functions as the CEO, accounts receivable, accounts payable, day-to-day operations, policies, that type of thing. What they suggested was that we hire somebody part-time to fill that role as CEO.

And what we were struggling with was trying to find someone with adequate experience, education that was willing to take that job on a temporary basis with no true end in sight, that would actually come and work for a company for an undetermined period of time. We were trying to figure out how we would compensate that person and what would be just, and how we would actually recruit a CEO for a very temporary period of time.

SCHROCK: So the bank wasn't questioning or challenging your ability to make payments, if that's what it was, they were just concerned if you went away, the whole place would come down and they're stuck with a bad loan, that's what they're concerned with.

KOEHLER: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: Let's work on that one too.

KOEHLER: OK, sir.

SCHROCK: Let me ask you all something. Help me understand the compatibility and the equipment of what you all use as Reservists and Guardsmen as compared with what the active duty people have. How does that compare and what are problems presented as a result of that? I'm sure there's a disparity there. Even though you may not have as good equipment as the active duty people, they're going to expect you to do the same tasks as they active duty people when they bring you back on active duty. I'd be curious to know what your experience has been with that.

Let's start with Master Sergeant Beaver.

BEAVER: Generally, sir, the equipment is the same. The problem is we just don't have it, regarding radios, sniper weapons systems. Vehicles, probably the biggest ticket item to look at, traditionally, our unit has not had vehicles. Consequently, when we hit Afghanistan, we had no Humvees, GMVs, to do our vehicular patrols in, so we rented pick-up trucks locally, mounted machine guns on them.

And I sent a couple of guys to Germany and they got a bunch of vehicles from the demo yard there that were getting ready to be, I guess, thrown out or whatever the Army does with old vehicles, and brought them back to Afghanistan. We spray painted them tan and cut some pieces off of them we didn't need and turned them into desert vehicles. And as far as I know, they're still there working right now.

SCHROCK: But from a protection standpoint, the active duty guys were and you weren't.

BEAVER: From a protection — well, we were never not protected, but we didn't have all the vehicles we needed to do the patrols right. My guys were chomping at the bit to get out there. They would have gone in a Volkswagen or a dune buggy or whatever just to get out there and try to track down these guys and do what we had to do, but we didn't have enough vehicles when we went over there. I don't fault the command at the time for sending us over there, because they couldn't keep us off the airplane to get there, but...

SCHROCK: But it's incumbent upon them to provide you with the equipment when you get there that you need so you don't have to scrounge it up yourself.

BEAVER: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: OK. I didn't mean to put words in your mouth, but...

BEAVER: Yes, sir. And we just did what we had to do to get the job done, sir.

DAVIS: I'd like...

SCHROCK: Sergeant Davis.

DAVIS: I'm sorry. I'd like to start by saying that I'm part of a port security company, or detachment, excuse me. There's only three detachments in the entire Army Reserve. We don't have a sister unit in the active duty. There are no port security companies, so our equipment as military police are the same as an active military policeman. We require a couple of different things for port security such as ride control dispensers and things of that nature, and we do have that.

We do encounter problems with radios. Because we work the entire eastern seaboard, we don't have our own radios, we have to borrow radios as we go along, which sometimes presents a problem. We end up taking care of it with what we've got.

SCHROCK: From whom do you borrow them?

DAVIS: MTMC.

SCHROCK: Oh, MTMC.

DAVIS: MTMC will send them. Sometimes they have to send them through the mail. They'll get there early, they'll get there late, but ultimately they do get there and we get them. But other than that, we don't have any problems with logistics.

SCHROCK: Great.

Mr. Lehman, I'm sure you could be all here today, and I know how...

LEHMAN: I think our biggest problem is, I would say, clothing. We have the same roles as active duty personnel at our Reserve units and Reserve stations. However, if I need a change of uniform, I don't have the accessibility as the active duty people have in obtaining uniforms. If I lose weight, I have to wait my term or wait my time limit until I can get a new uniform, whereas active duty personnel they could go to an exchange or a place on base and buy them and be reimbursed.

SCHROCK: Why can't you do that?

LEHMAN: Well, I lost 30 pounds when I was on active duty.

SCHROCK: Good for you.

LEHMAN: I went from a 42 waist, which is being help up right now by pins, and I cannot get unless I drive to maybe Willow Grove or something and get a pair of pants. So I think those are important issues.

Communications has been brought up. I've seen radios being used in the military service that we stopped using as police officers 15 years ago. I think that needs to be addressed. Other than that, equipment's been a problem and I think it will continue to be a problem unless someone makes a serious effort to just change it once and for all.

SCHROCK: Yes, I know it is, and we're going to address some of that.

Gunny?

KOEHLER: On the uniform issue, I don't have...

SCHROCK: Don't tell me you lost 30 pounds.

KOEHLER: No, sir. Actually, this is the outfit that I was issued 14 years ago.

(LAUGHTER)

SCHROCK: Oh, geez. That hurts.

KOEHLER: The issue is not necessarily outgrowing it or under-growing it, it's a matter of wearing it out. The Marine Corps is in a unique position right now. We have a brand new camouflage uniform, a digital pattern, and the availability of that is not so great in CONUS bases and stations, but it is nice to know that most of the men and women that are going overseas are getting new uniforms, the replacement uniforms, that don't have holes and tears and whatnot. Other than that, I don't really have equipment issues because I work in an office now.

I would like to see possibly something with reservists first on the enlisted side, individual mobilization augmentees, making it easier for them to get security clearances prior to a mobilization. That was the biggest hurdle, I think, that we've

seen other than a classified environment behind closed door, and that was probably the biggest obstacle.

SCHROCK: You don't carry a classified secret, top secret, TSC, you don't carry that all the time?

KOEHLER: No, sir. On the enlisted side, as a reservist, your clearance will expire, and on the enlisted side you aren't really — they don't consider you eligible to actually apply for one unless you're already working in an environment where you need one. So it's on an as-needed basis.

SCHROCK: Is it that way with all the services?

UNKNOWN: No, it's not.

BEAVER: Sir, we maintain our classified billets on a five-year basis.

SCHROCK: Five-year basis. But it's not for the Marine Corps.

KOEHLER: No, sir. Well, I wouldn't say the Marine Corps-wide, I can only speak for myself.

SCHROCK: OK.

KOEHLER: Prior to mobilization, I worked in a more confidential environment with sensitive information, but upon mobilization that information now becomes classified.

SCHROCK: OK. I think I saw some OLA people here from the Marine Corps, I think. Oh, yes. We need to find out what that's all about, yes. Thanks.

Master Sergeant Needham?

NEEDHAM: Well, sir, like I told Dr. Snyder and the committee, we do lack some of the equipment that our active duty counterparts have, which would allow us to do our job from our home duty location. The equipment that we do currently have is good equipment and allows us to train and prepare ourselves to do the job. It is outdated but it is adequate equipment. But additional newer systems and a wider variety of connectivity would definitely improve our ability to do our job.

SCHROCK: But it does allow you to work with the active forces. It has to be seamless then.

NEEDHAM: Yes, sir.

SCHROCK: OK. Thanks.

Sergeant Stallings?

STALLINGS: Yes, sir. We've been fortunate this past year to really update a lot our equipment. We're not having any problems as of right now. Until this recent year, everything has been still hard copy paperwork. We've updated much of our computer systems and programs so that we can integrate with the active duty better when we are deployed unlike last year when we deployed they were using programs that we had never seen before. And thanks to them, during that deployment they helped us get up to speed in that area.

As far as uniform issues and things of that nature, we at this time don't have any problems there, but it is a serious issue that if you don't have the proper uniforms and you're deployed to work with people that you're supposed to be on the same level as and you show up with holes in your uniforms...

SCHROCK: It sets you apart.

STALLINGS: ... first appearances mean a lot, and they look at you that way.

SCHROCK: I guess the other Sergeant Stallings agrees with that? Good.

Master Sergeant Smith?

SMITH: Sir, seeing that we're a flying unit we take all the equipment we need when we deploy forward, and usually the host basis will provide vehicles and such like that.

SCHROCK: Good shape. Great.

SMITH: We really don't have any equipment issues, sir.

SCHROCK: Great. Thank you all. I sure appreciate what you do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MCHUGH: I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Gingrey.

GINGREY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a couple of observations, and then I'm going to ask each one of you a fairly straightforward question. Observation: I am very jealous of you and proud of you in that you are soldiers and sailors and Marines and airmen, and only 25 percent of the members of Congress can say that. I'm not one of those, and I think that it's fantastic what each and every one of you are doing for this country.

And I want to commend my chairman, Mr. McHugh, and what he is doing with this Total Force Subcommittee and bringing to everybody's attention, particularly DOD, the problems that he has uncovered in regard to the Reserve and the National Guard, things like insufficient notification, the length of deployment and abuse of that. In fact, I think someone suggested that maybe people who are in the Reserves or the Guard on an employment application might tend to falsify their resume for fear that they get blacklisted by a potential employer who has heard about these situations where employees are deployed for long periods of time. And housing allowance discrepancies, and TRICARE availability or lack of and lack of appreciation, indeed, from the active duty forces, all of these things.

And I sincerely believe that Chairman McHugh is going to solve these problems. And assuming that he and the committee and the members of Congress are able to do that, all of these problems, here's the question, and you can answer it as an individual or as your perception of what the typical member of the Reserves or Guard would answer or both. If you spent your entire time in the Guard or in the Reserve and never got deployed, would you consider yourself lucky or unlucky? And let's start at the end there.

BEAVER: I think I can speak for the men in my unit. We would consider ourselves unlucky. A few people in a recent conversation said, "What do you mean you've got to go to Afghanistan?" And I said, "Well, that's what we're here to do." To be left stateside like some of our sister units have they feel left out of the fight as special forces soldiers.

The perception is generally "break glass in case of war." If you need me, send me, let me do my job but don't waste my time. Special operations soldiers take years to develop, and when a guy gets out who is a sniper and a ranger and a HALO jump master, he's an asset that's just really difficult to replace. A guy can't just raise his hand and sign up to be one and instantly I have one. So that's my answer.

DAVIS: That's somewhat of a trick question, and I don't feel comfortable speaking for everyone in my unit, but I will speak for myself. And I would consider myself unlucky if I didn't get deployed at least once. It's something that I've trained to do all my life, it's something that I pride myself on, it's something that I love. And to actually be able to put that experience to work is something that I can take with me for the rest of my life.

LEHMAN: Definitely unlucky. Everyone is on the Reserve or Guard for one reason, is to be utilized in the instance they are needed in an active duty capacity, and I can't express it any more than that.

KOEHLER: I would definitely feel unlucky. My husband, on the other hand, would probably consider it very fortunate if I never got mobilized again. And my mother and grandmother would definitely consider it fortunate if I was not going to go overseas again. But I would consider it unfortunate that I was not able to be utilized in a capacity in which I was trained.

And a lot of tax money and a lot of time and energy and effort goes into training not only me but all our reservists and Guard members, and it would be unfortunate if we were never utilized, although I would have liked to say that this whole mobilization was for nothing, that there wasn't a need to go to war, that there wasn't a need for all of us, but unfortunately the world that we live in today there is a need, and I would definitely consider myself unfortunate if I was never called up.

NEEDHAM: Well, sir, I believe overall we would consider ourselves unlucky to perform the duties that we have trained so hard to do and become experts at. I think with technology that gives us a unique ability for my career field to do that from a home station, from a non-forward deployed location. So as leaving home, some may view it as lucky that we would not leave home and be able to do this job from home, but we definitely want to do that job that we've been trained to do.

STALLINGS: I would concur, sir. I would feel unlucky if I was not able to deploy and actually put the training that I

have into action. No, it's not that I would like to be constantly deployed and away from my family, but I did join the Guard for a reason. I joined the Guard to serve my country, and that's what I want to do.

SMITH: Sir, I would feel very unlucky. I trained — everybody trains to do a job and not to get mobilized would be, in my opinion, a tragedy. Utilize what you have to augment the active duty when we need it.

GINGREY: Thank you. And we are indeed very proud of you. Thank you very much.

MCHUGH: I thank the gentleman. And as you — everyone in the room just heard we've just been called for a vote, so I guess the timing is somewhat propitious. Two hours may not qualify you for hazardous duty pay, although I suppose it should.

(LAUGHTER)

I was thrilled to hear you talk about your attitude in response to Mr. Gingrey's question to feel lucky. What we want to make sure is you don't feel too lucky in terms of deployments. Our interest is to try to do everything we can to smooth out the rough edges where the seamless force may not be as seamless as it should be.

We've heard some of these comments today about TRICARE, and Mr. Gingrey read a very extensive list of things that we certainly need to address, and we're going to promise you we're going to try to do that if for no other reason to at least in some small way acknowledge the tremendous service that you and your families and your fellow Guardsmen and women and Reservists provide as well.

Mr. Gingrey said he's in awe, and I think we all feel that way. God bless you for what you do. You're the reason this Congress is here, you're the reason this country's here, and we're honored to have had the opportunity to share the last two hours with you. So God speed in the future, and thank you for your service here today as well.

And with that, I would adjourn the subcommittee.

END

NOTES:

[????] - Indicates Speaker Unknown

[—] - Indicates could not make out what was being said.[off mike] - Indicates could not make out what was being said.

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