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HEARING
ON
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024
AND
OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED
PROGRAMS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
—
FULL COMMITTEE HEARING
ON
**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FISCAL
YEAR 2024 BUDGET REQUEST**

HEARING HELD
APRIL 19, 2023



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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FISCAL YEAR 2024
BUDGET REQUEST**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mike Rogers (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROGERS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ALABAMA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. Today, we continue the fiscal year 2024 budget hearings with the United States Army.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here. And, General, this will be the last time you testify before our committee. And I want you to know we appreciate your leadership and your service to our country. You have been a dedicated servant to the men and women of the United States Army. And I want to commend you for completing the Boston Marathon on Monday of this week. In 4½ hours?

General MCCONVILLE. A little more than that, but pretty close, sir. I won the Joint Chiefs category.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

General MCCONVILLE. Our record is still intact.

The CHAIRMAN. I couldn't have done it in 4½ days. So, I'm really proud of you.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. The Army is seeking \$185.5 billion in this fiscal year. That amounts to an increase of less than two-tenths of 1 percent. Given the today's rate of inflation, the President's budget effectively cuts the Army by over 5 percent.

The President's budget cuts Army procurement, slashing combat vehicle acquisition by 16 percent and new aircrafts by 22 percent. It cuts overall Army research and development by 8 percent. That includes a whopping 42 percent reduction in early-stage research and development projects that are critical to Army modernization efforts. Finally, it guts military construction by 32 percent. Most disturbingly, that includes a 20 percent cut to family housing.

It is clear the Army is yet again the bill payer for the Pentagon. Unless Congress acts, the Army will struggle to manage the risk these cuts present. This will be especially hard to deal with in the

near term, as the Army is the lead supplier of drawdown assistance for Ukraine.

Making matters worse is the fact that the Army is struggling with an historic recruiting crisis. The Army missed their recruiting goal by over 15,000 soldiers last year. All the signs point to the service being unable to meet their recruiting goals again this year. That is unacceptable.

We need to understand what actions our witnesses are taking to overcome this crisis. This committee stands ready to change laws and eliminate misguided DOD [Department of Defense] policies that act as barriers to men and women interested in a career in the armed services.

If we are going to deter China, we need to recruit the best and the brightest. We need to provide them with the training, skills, and capabilities necessary to succeed on future battlefields. And we need to improve their quality of life to ensure we retain them in today's competitive employment environment.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on these priorities, and I look forward to yielding to my colleague and the ranking member for any opening statement he may have.

STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. And welcome to our witnesses.

I want to join you in thanking General McConville for his service, and he has been just an outstanding partner on this committee through some interesting challenges during your tenure. You will be missed, but congratulations on the impending retirement and thank you very much for your service.

And, Secretary Wormuth, welcome. We look forward to your testimony as well.

I think the chairman laid out fairly clearly the challenges. It is modernization and recruitment, in a nutshell. And I will be really interested in hearing from our witnesses today how modernization is going within the Army, what the role of the Army is going forward in meeting all of our national security challenges. Certainly, China is, as we always hear, the pacing threat, but there are many challenges, and the Army plays a key role in all of that. How does modernization affect that? How are you going to be able to meet those challenges going forward?

We do not have infinite resources. And as we have discussed in this committee, modernization is a huge priority in a number of different areas. We have to make choices somewhere. I personally think the President has made the right choice. An \$860 billion budget, roughly, should be enough to defend this country. The question is, how do we spend those dollars? But I do want to hear from both of our witnesses how the Army is doing that.

And then the recruitment issue, that the people are, obviously, the backbone of the Army and the backbone of our military. And it has been a challenging time. It is worth pointing out that, during COVID [coronavirus disease], you were significantly hamstrung in your ability to recruit, and this is the period where that would be

coming through. And that is in some ways reassuring, but, on the other hand, there were challenges before COVID and there are challenges that are unrelated to COVID. So, do definitely want to hear how you plan to meet those challenges; what your level of optimism is that we can recruit the soldiers that we need to make sure that the Army meets all of those modernization goals.

And then, lastly, is the issue of quality of life, which is connected, of course, to recruitment and retention. But this committee has done a lot in a bipartisan and bicameral way to increase basic housing allowance, to increase pay, to find a variety of different ways to increase the overall compensation and support for service members and their families. We want to know how that is going; what more we can do to make sure that we are meeting those needs going forward.

And, with that, I look forward to the testimony and the questions and answers. And I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. Today, our witnesses are the Honorable Christine Wormuth, Secretary of the Army, and General James McConville, Chief of Staff of the Army. Welcome to our witnesses.

And I will start with questions, and I want to prepare the witnesses. We have a 5-minute rule. I believe you have got the clocks in front of you. When we get to 5 minutes, whether you are in the middle of an answer or not, I don't mean to be rude, but I'm going to stop the time, so we move on. So, everybody knows I'm treating everybody the same on the dais.

So, let me start with—let me recognize Secretary Wormuth for your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTINE E. WORMUTH,
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY**

Secretary WORMUTH. Good morning, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for your support, as we continue to build the Army of 2030.

And I want to apologize up front. I have a bit of a cold, so I will try not to cough too much.

We are pleased to be here before you today. I'm joined by General McConville, and I also want to thank him for his decades of service. I am grateful to work with him every day.

We have accomplished a lot this year, but we still have a lot of work ahead of us. We continue to be focused on our three main priorities: people, modernization, and readiness. The fiscal year 2024 budget enables us to support the National Defense Strategy, provide ready forces to our combatant commanders, and take care of our people.

By investing over \$39 billion in procurement and RDT&E [research, development, test, and evaluation], we are maintaining our momentum in our modernization programs, and we are largely on track to bring 24 of our programs over the finish line in 2023.

This is a big year for long-range precision fires. Prototypes of the Precision Strike Missile, the Mid-Range Capability, and the Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon will be in the hands of soldiers this fiscal year.

It is also a big year for Next Generation Combat Vehicles. Mobile Protective Firepower is in production, and the AMPV [Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle] is also being fielded. And it is a big year for our integrated air and missile defenses, as well as the Future Vertical Lift program.

As we shift from two decades of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations to large-scale combat operations, we are also transforming our force structure. We are going to have to adapt our force structure to make room for things like our multi-domain task forces and other new units, like the Indirect Fire Protection Capability and our M-SHORAD [Maneuver-Short Range Air Defense] battalions.

We are a ready Army and we continue to emphasize readiness in everything we do. We are funding 22 combat training center rotations this year. We have a robust exercise program, and we are implementing our new readiness model, which helps us balance modernization, training, and ongoing missions. We are also investing in Army pre-position stocks, which have served us very well in Europe and will serve us in other theaters in the future.

To assist Ukraine in fighting against Russia, the Army has provided over \$20 billion in lethal assistance in the form of a wide range of munitions, radars, combat vehicles, and many other pieces.

One of the most important lessons we have learned from the war in Ukraine is the need for a more robust defense industrial base. So, in our budget this year, we have invested \$1.5 billion in our ammo plants, our arsenals, and our depots.

We are also working very closely with our partners in the defense industry to increase their munitions production, so that we can continue not only to help the Ukrainians, but also, importantly, to replenish our own stocks.

Even as our soldiers provide lethal assistance to Ukraine and train Ukrainian soldiers, we haven't taken our eye off the pacing challenge of China. INDOPACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command] may be a theater named after two oceans, but the Army has an important role to play there.

The best way to avoid fighting a war is to show you can win any war you might have to fight. The Army is contributing to strengthening deterrence every day in the Indo-Pacific, as we campaign in the region through exercises and robust partnerships. And if deterrence fails, the Army will be a key player on the joint team in the event of a conflict.

As important as it is to build new weapon systems and maintain our readiness, people are the strength of our Army. This budget increases soldier and Department of Army civilian pay by 5.2 percent and funds important quality-of-life improvements like family housing, childcare initiatives, and new and renovated barracks.

We want to build cohesive teams of soldiers that are trained, disciplined, and fit. So, the Army is committed to building positive command climates across the force, so that our soldiers can be all they can be.

We are also continuing to strive to prevent suicide in our ranks. Suicide, as you all know, is a national challenge, but we have to

do everything we can to reduce suicide in our Army. So, we are pursuing a range of initiatives to make our soldiers more resilient.

Our Army is the greatest army in the world, but to keep it that way, we have to solve our recruiting challenges. The difficult recruiting landscape we face didn't happen in a year, and it is going to take us more than a year to turn this around. We are laser-focused on this challenge and we are not going to lower our standards to solve this problem. The whole of Army leadership is focused on improving our recruitment.

We are generating positive momentum from initiatives like the Future Soldier Prep Course, our Soldier Referral Program, and our new reinvented marketing campaign, Be All You Can Be. Our efforts are geared towards one thing: reintroducing ourselves to the American public and inspiring a renewed call to service. We very much need your help in this effort if we are going to be successful.

I'm proud of all that our soldiers do every day and look forward to answering your questions.

[The joint prepared statement of Secretary Wormuth and General McConville can be found in the Appendix on page 69.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

General, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF GEN JAMES C. McCONVILLE, USA,
CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY**

General McCONVILLE. Thank you, Secretary, for your leadership. And good morning, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and for your continued support.

The United States Army exists for one purpose. That is to protect the Nation by being ready to fight and win our Nation's wars, as a member of the joint force. To do this, the Army has set three clear priorities: people, readiness, and modernization, or in other words, future readiness. We have remained aggressively committed to these priorities while answering the Nation's call during every crisis and every challenge.

This year, the Army continues to undergo its greatest transformation in almost 50 years. We are delivering on modernization because we have been consistent and we have been persistent on our modernization priorities.

Last year, we officially updated our Capstone warfighting doctrine to multi-domain operations, which incorporates emerging lessons from Ukraine. We continue to stand up new organizations to support our doctrine. Last June, we reactivated the historic 11th Airborne Division in Alaska. In September, we stood up the third of our five multi-domain task forces. As the Secretary noted, we are on track to field 24 weapon systems in 2023.

But, at the end of the day, we must get the right people in the right place in order for any of these initiatives to be successful. And that is why people remain the Army's number one priority. We want every person and every parent to know that service in the Army is a pathway to success, both in and out of uniform.

Whether you serve for 4 years or you serve for over 40 years, the Army offers endless possibilities. We are not only a profession of arms, but we are also a profession of professions. You can be what-

ever you want to be in the United States Army. In fact, you can be all you can be.

I'm often asked how people can help us, and my answer is: inspire other young men and women to serve. Because when we get the call, we go with the Army we have. The Army we have is the world's greatest fighting force because we serve with the world's greatest soldiers. With your continued support, we are going to keep it that way.

I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, General.

I want to ask both of you—we are going to get an authorization bill passed in a bipartisan fashion and on time. But if Congress doesn't do its job and doesn't get you an appropriations bill passed in a timely manner, and you are stuck with a 2-years continuing resolution [CR], how does that impact your ability to do the job that you just described? I will start with you, Secretary Wormuth.

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Chairman, it would be, I think, a significant problem for us. You know, first of all, at a time where we are competing against China, I think a CR is, basically, sort of us fighting with one hand tied behind our back. A CR would essentially tie down about \$5.3 billion in terms of procurement programs. There are tens of procurement new starts that we would not be able to move out on. There are dozens of research, development, and testing new starts that we would not be able to move out on. So, it would significantly impede us.

The CHAIRMAN. What about the pay raise you just described in your opening statement?

Secretary WORMUTH. I'm sorry?

The CHAIRMAN. What about the pay raise for the troops that you included in your opening statement?

Secretary WORMUTH. That would also be a problem for us.

The CHAIRMAN. You mentioned \$1.5 billion that you were going to put into ammo production. Would you be able to do that?

Secretary WORMUTH. Some of those programs would be delayed, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. General, what would it mean to you?

General McCONVILLE. Well, Chairman, I think it is going to hurt our people. You talk about pay raises, you know, we have got soldiers out there doing great things and their families deserve a raise. And we need to get that to them.

I'm concerned about the modernization. We often are criticized for being slow in modernization, but right now we have the opportunity to transform the Army, biggest one we have done in 40 years. And new starts, production increases, as all of you know, those things don't happen under a CR.

The CHAIRMAN. You have got the responsibility to resupply our stocks and at the same time supply Ukraine and Taiwan, trying to help them. Can you tell us how the Army is trying to achieve those goals?

General McCONVILLE. Do you want to start, Secretary?

Secretary WORMUTH. I will start, and then after, you.

We really doing three different things, Chairman.

First of all, we are investing in our organic industrial base, like I said, \$1.5 billion. And that is helping us be able to, for example,

expand capacity at the plant in Scranton that makes 155-millimeter casings.

We are also working really closely with defense industry to basically take the money Congress has given us, get it on contract, and allow them to expand their capacity and also the speed of their production.

The CHAIRMAN. And on that point, do you have enough multiyear contracting authority to be able to make those—get those industries to be able to expand, or not?

Secretary WORMUTH. Multiyear procurement authority is very helpful. We have asked in this budget—

The CHAIRMAN. And do you have it—

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes, we have asked for a couple more authorities.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Good. Good.

General.

General McCONVILLE. I just, along with what the Secretary says, what we have seen is industry works on contracts. They don't work on enthusiasm. So, as we talk about the things we need, we have to replenish our war stocks, and as we like to say, with the weapon systems we are giving, we are not buying new old stuff. So as we give them systems, we are going to buy the new modernization systems. And so we are able to transform the Army with your support, as we go through this.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I'm really interested in the \$1.5 billion for ammo production. We have really seen an exposure of our lack of capability in the organic industrial base. Tell us more about how you are going to spend this \$1.5 billion.

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Chairman, we have 23 different ammo plants, arsenals, and depots around the country, as you know well, and that \$1.5 billion is basically going into trying to modernize those plants. In some cases, it is putting in new machining tools. In some cases, it is putting in new software. But as you know, a lot of those plants were built in the wake of World War II. So there is a lot of work to be done there, and it is part of a broader, 15-year, \$18 billion plan to upgrade our organic industrial base.

The CHAIRMAN. Some of them are older than that.

Have you projected what kind of capacity increase you will get as a result of that investment? Or do you know?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, you know, for example, with the 155-millimeter shells, we are moving from—we went from 14,000 production a month to 20,000 a month, and in 2 years we will have more than 75,000 a month being produced. So, it is going to take a little time, but it is a good, upward ramp.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you know, this conflict in Ukraine has exposed the inadequate capability that we have now to produce ammunition. I just didn't know if this alone is going to get us to a good place, or are we going to need to overlay more on top of that particular sector of production in our country to make sure we have ammo that we need in the future?

Secretary WORMUTH. My sense is, sir, we are going to need to do more. Because, again, I think one thing that the war in Ukraine has shown us is that the estimates that we have made about muni-

tions for future conflicts are low. So, I think we are going to have to keep working.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I yield to the ranking member.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

General, I appreciated your reference to some of the old slogans in the Army there: "Be All You Can Be." I always liked the one, "We do more before 9:00 a.m. than most people do all day." My wife and I used to joke with our children that, "You do less all day than most people do before 9:00 a.m."

[Laughter.]

Mr. SMITH. But sadly, most people didn't get that joke. So I appreciate you bringing that up.

You know, on the modernization piece, the role of information systems and making sure the JADC2 idea of Joint All-Domain Command and Control, making sure that it is integrated, can you describe a little bit how that challenge is going in the Army? Because one of the concerns is, how do you truly make that joint? The Army is doing their thing; the Air Force is doing their thing; the Navy is doing their thing. How is that piece of modernization coming together for the Army—for both of you?

Secretary WORMUTH. I'm sure that General McConville will want to comment on this, Representative Smith.

But what I would say is, the primary way the Army has been trying to contribute to JADC2 is through our Project Convergence set of experimentation and exercises. We have a joint board of directors for that set of exercises. So, we have the Marines, the Air Force, the Navy, the Space Force working with us.

And what we have been doing for the last couple of years now is really coming together in the dirt, trying to see if we can get our different platforms to connect to each other and to share data, you know, data from different sensors to different shooters. And we have been doing that successfully. I think there is still more work to be done, but I think the work we have been doing is widely seen as very joint.

Mr. SMITH. Are there gaps in the resources there? Is there like a program that, gosh, if we had another \$500 million, you could make progress? Or is it more just a matter of trying to integrate very complicated systems?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think more resources would, undoubtedly, be helpful. And the RDER [Rapid Defense Experimentation Reserve] fund that the Deputy has established is something that we have been looking at. Part of it is, as the Chief likes to say, services, you know, we tend to do what is in our own interest. So, I think part of what we are experiencing is coming together and seeing how we can find common interest in building this vision.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. General.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, and we are seeing a lot of grassroots efforts because people realize the importance of being able to move data very, very quickly between sensors and shooters. If you want to do long-range precision fires, you have to do long-range precision targeting, and you have to do that at the time of relevance. So, we are seeing that.

As the Secretary said, one other thing I would add is we have stood up, we call it a Combined Joint Systems Integration Laboratory. It is up at Aberdeen. And what we do is we bring together the boxes. It is really about black boxes passing data between different weapon systems. And you have to be able to do that in a laboratory environment before you can actually bring it out to the desert, if you want to see it work.

And we are on our third iteration. Each time we get better. Each time we get smarter people to help us understand the best way to move data through a data fabric and how you are going to do this.

And now we are starting to bring in our allies and partners. So it is actually moving to a CJADC2, or Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control system, because we are always going to fight with allies and partners, and they are very interested in joining this effort.

Mr. SMITH. That is great. Thank you.

On the recruitment and retention issue, just focusing on compensation, particularly for your new service members, new soldiers who are coming in. They are starting at a relatively low pay level, and there are a number of stories about some of them are struggling just basically to put food on the table in some instances. We talked a little bit about this when we met yesterday. And some of that is economic choices. There is a whole lot of things that go into that.

But in terms of making sure that—and this affects recruitment, obviously; if you are coming in, you want to make sure that you are being paid enough to support yourself and, potentially, your family. What are the keys to sort of getting to a better place on that?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think, Congressman, we need to do a couple of things. One thing we pay a lot of attention to in the Army is financial literacy for our soldiers, so that they know how to make a budget; how to live under a budget; how to plan ahead. That is really important, and we make sure that our soldiers get that kind of training and those resources at multiple points in their experience in the Army.

This budget calls for a pay raise for soldiers. The Department has done a lot to try to help soldiers deal with inflation and rising cost of housing, for example. So, we have increased BAH [basic allowance for housing] in a number of different places.

And then the next big thing we are going to do, as we talked about yesterday, is look at the Quadrennial Military Compensation Review to see whether we have got the actual pay rates set appropriately for soldiers.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. Yes.

General McCONVILLE. Yes, I would just add, what I worry most about is our young soldiers with families. You know, our soldiers that are single, they live in the barracks and we provide them food. So a lot of their decisions are choices.

If you are not living on an Army post and you have to go out into the civilian sector—and some of these places have high cost of living, and you are trying to live; you are trying to have a family—that is expensive for a young soldier. So, we watch that carefully

with the housing allowances and the cost-of-living allowances. And I think that is where our biggest vulnerability is.

Mr. SMITH. I'm out of time. So, thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Wilson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much, Chairman.

And, Madam Secretary, General, thank you for being here today.

And, General McConville, I want to congratulate you on 42 years of service. You beat me by 11. But we look forward to you coming back and your input over the years.

I'm grateful of the service of all the soldiers at the greatest installation within the United States, Fort Jackson, South Carolina. The leadership of Brigadier General Jason Kelly is so inspiring.

The U.S. Army Training Center at Fort Jackson plays a critical role in the recruitment, training, and retention of soldiers through the Future Soldier Preparatory Course, and graduating over 50 percent of all soldiers through basic combat training.

With that in mind, we appreciate the recent and upcoming changes to the Army recruitment and retention policies, General, or the programs, as the Army continues to face a declining pool of potential recruits. How are these policies and programs expected to impact the Army's overall readiness and effectiveness, General?

General McCONVILLE. Well, Congressman, first of all, we are very proud of what Fort Jackson does every single day for our soldiers. But this new, innovative program, which stood up at Fort Jackson, the Future Soldier Prep Course, there is something there.

And the Secretary and I have made a blood oath we are not going to lower standards to bring soldiers in. Quality is more important than quantity. So, we are going to invest in young men and women.

And we have had about 7–8,000 young men and women go through the program at Fort Jackson, and about 95 percent are making it into basic training and they are excelling in it.

So, I think our strategy has to be, the young men and women are having a hard time passing our ASVAB [Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery]; they are having a hard time meeting our physical standards; and we are willing to invest in them. And that is what we need to make sure. So, when parents ask, "Why should my kid serve?" "Because your kid can be all they can be, and we want to help them be that."

Mr. WILSON. Well, I look at what you are doing as providing opportunities defending our country. All credit to my wife, I have got four sons who have served overseas in the U.S. military, and it is the most significant portion of their life. So, thank you for what you are doing.

And, Secretary, at this very moment, the courageous Ukrainians are involved in the largest artillery battles of World War II, stopping war criminal Putin. They are using M777 howitzers, which no longer are in production, and the Paladin Integrated Management [PIM].

So, I was disappointed to see the PIM program cut in this year's budget. And to me, war criminal Putin, the Chinese Communist Party threats to America, the Iranian regime pledge of death to Israel/death to America, they must be deterred. And the way to do

that, and given the prominent role of Ukraine and the global demand for this capability, how does the Army justify cuts? Would you agree that maintaining the capacity to produce artillery is vital to America's national security?

And I'm concerned that the production of our only armored mobile howitzer at a critical time when its need is so vital, and we stand to benefit from full-rate production efficiencies to defeat war criminal Putin. What is being done?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I absolutely agree with you that everything we see in Ukraine shows the importance of artillery. And we see that for future battles. That is why we put so much emphasis on long-range precision fires for the future.

The reason that we have made the choices that we have made about Paladin in the budget is we are trying to strike a balance. The Paladin is an enduring system. It is still very relevant for us. We need it. So, we are trying to continue to invest in that, while also taking our resources and investing in the new systems that we are developing—things like the Extended Range Cannon Artillery, for example. So, we think we have put enough in there to keep the production going, but also being able to invest in new systems.

Mr. WILSON. And indeed, the importance of what you are doing with the circumstances that we have—yesterday, the incarceration, the imprisonment, of Vladimir Kara-Murza in Moscow; the oppression, by my view, of Putin of the people of Russia. We must, again, and I want to urge both of you, that we expedite long-range HIMARS [High Mobility Artillery Rocket System], whatever, to deter the aggression, the mass murder being conducted.

General, as an Army guy myself, it never occurred to me what Putin is doing. And that is to attack civilian targets, and then to attract the EMS [emergency medical services] personnel and the fire departments, and then the real target would be to kill the civilian first responders. And so, this atrocity must stop, and you are in a position to help do that.

Thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Courtney, for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, General McConville, again, I want to join my colleagues in congratulating you on your great career.

The Massachusetts brain drain on the Joint Chiefs is going to be pretty steep this year, but I just want to say, hearing a Boston accent, I find very soothing at these hearings.

[Laughter.]

Mr. COURTNEY. So, again, I want to again thank you for your great work.

Secretary Wormuth, again, the announcement yesterday by Sikorsky that they are not going to go to court to appeal GAO's [U.S. Government Accountability Office's] decision sort of still begs a lot of questions. Again, I'm sure we are going to spend some time going through the forensics of that decision.

But, again, moving forward, the Army has stated a number of times that the—you know, the Valor is not going to be a one-for-one replacement for Black Hawks. Again, given the number of Black Hawks that the Army operates—it is about 2,000—it is hard

to visualize that there would be that many Valors purchased there. But that sort of begs the question of just, you know, what is the plan in terms of Black Hawk acquisition, which is probably going to continue for decades?

I mean, the first Bell [Valor helicopter] is not even going to come off until 2030. So, I mean, that is pretty long time. It is within the Davidson window. So, maybe you could just talk about that for a minute in terms of what the Black II program is for Black Hawk and where the Army sees Black Hawk's role.

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congressman, and I'm sure General McConville, as an aviator, will want to add to this.

First, you are absolutely right, we are not going to be bringing online the new FLRAA [Future Long Range Assault Aircraft] platform for some years, even though we have down-selected, obviously, a partner with that. Black Hawk is a great helicopter and will continue to be an important part of the Army fleet. So, I would expect that we will continue to have thousands of Black Hawks in our fleet. We will need to sustain them. You know, the terrific industrial base in Connecticut that is so critical to the Black Hawk program is going to very much still be needed, because it will take us some time to start bringing in the new helicopter.

General MCCONVILLE. I would second what the Secretary said. The Black Hawk is a great helicopter. One of my sons flies the Black Hawk, and it is in our Special Operations Forces at the 101st. It is going to continue to be the mainstay of medium-lift helicopters. And I see, for the next 40, 60 years, I see us continuing to incrementally improve that system, and I see many of our allies and partners taking a hard look at that is the type of aircraft they have. So, it is going to be around for a long time.

And I think it falls into what we have talked about, that enduring category. We are going to keep it. We are going to incrementally improve it, as we build—bring on the new systems. They're going to give us much greater range and much greater speed. In areas where we need them, we will use those systems. But the Black Hawk is going to be around for a long time.

Mr. COURTNEY. So, Congresswoman DeLauro and I actually flew on a Coast Guard Jayhawk during the Easter break. And again, the sea services, obviously, are another sort of customer that, honestly, the Bell platform just does not work in terms of landing them on, whether it is Coast Guard ships or Navy ships.

So, again, like I said, we are going to have plenty of time to, like I said, pick through entrails of this, and look forward to working with you.

On the recruitment question, I thought the Army actually did something pretty interesting, which is you conducted a survey to sort of find out what is sort of going on in terms of military age-eligible Americans in terms of their thoughts about the Army. And obviously, we are living in a time with an economy with almost 10 million job openings out there. So there is lots of choices out there. Can you talk a little bit about what that survey showed you in terms of just, you know, how do we address this recruiting challenge?

Secretary WORMUTH. Sure, Congressman. We surveyed 2,400 people between the ages of 16 and 28 to try to, frankly, under-

stand, you know, how do they see the Army; what do they think about the Army? And we found a few things. And specifically, the survey was really focused on, what did people see in that age group as obstacles to service?

And what we found was the number one fear was fear of death or injury. There was sometimes a fear of psychological harm or a fear of leaving friends and family. And then, after that, it was sort of a fear of the Army somehow putting your life on hold.

So, one of the things we are really trying to do is emphasize the tremendous range of opportunities that the Army offers, you know, and the Be All You Can Be campaign, really tries to speak to that.

Mr. COURTNEY. Great. I mean, obviously, there is the culture war sort of backdrop to this there, but that really came in very low, right, in terms of just that being a barrier?

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes. Concerns about, for example, wokeness in the military or the COVID vaccine mandate, for example, those were relatively low on the list of barriers to service.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Lamborn, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank you both for your contribution to our country's national defense.

And there is a couple of important future weapons programs I want to ask you about in a minute. But, first of all, I need to drill down on a local issue of extreme concern.

Secretary Wormuth, I'm still deeply concerned by the poor housing conditions at Fort Carson in my district. Soldiers at that base, and their families, face poor living conditions and maintenance which is hard to come by. The promise of modern and improved housing has been held hostage by severe construction delays.

In the Army's annual housing survey released last year, Fort Carson ranked last in some of the categories for resident satisfaction. Just last month, a pregnant woman fell through the floor at her house because of poor maintenance. So, this is alarming and completely unacceptable. Construction on the Cherokee West neighborhood has not even started, as the design continues to be redone.

So, each time I raise concerns to senior Army personnel, I am assured that these issues would be highly prioritized and resolved quickly, but this has not yet happened. The soldiers at Fort Carson and their families, who sacrifice for our country daily, deserve resolution of these issues immediately. Will you commit today that you will urgently prioritize improving the housing conditions at Fort Carson and addressing these pervasive problems?

Secretary WORMUTH. I will, Congressman. I will talk to General Omar Jones, our installation commander, today about the kinds of things that you are raising.

Mr. LAMBORN. Well, thank you. I will be following up with you on that.

I'm sure Fort Carson isn't the only Army base that is facing serious housing challenges. Can you, or either of you, elaborate on how you plan to resolve these continuing issues, especially maintenance and modernizing base housing?

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes, Congressman. I actually, when I went to Fort Carson last, I went to see the Cherokee West neighborhood, and they were just getting started to do that demolition.

Balfour Beatty, the company that provides the housing at Fort Carson, is a company that we are scrutinizing intensely, I think it is fair to say. We also have some challenges with them down at Fort Gordon. And one of my Assistant Secretaries was just there the other day.

So, we are working very, very closely—and BBC [Balfour Beatty Communities] knows that—to make sure that they are living up to their contractual obligations. One of the challenges that BBC has, along with some of our other privatized housing partners, is hiring and retaining maintenance workers. That is part of the challenge, is, you know, we are all facing a war for talent and a war for workers. But we are really encouraging companies like BBC to make sure that they are paying for and retaining maintenance workers, so that they can go through those work orders quickly.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

General, anything you want to add?

General McCONVILLE. No. As the Secretary said, we have a sacred obligation to make sure that our families and soldiers have quality housing, and we are committed to doing that. And when it doesn't happen, we have got to fix it.

Mr. LAMBORN. Okay. Thank you.

Now, changing gears, for both of you, I'm excited that the Army will be fielding the Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon, LRHW, later this year. It will be the Nation's first operational hypersonic capability. However, I understand that a test scheduled to occur last month was scrubbed. So I'm concerned that we might be facing some delays. Can you give us an updated testing and fielding schedule with the committee?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I would be happy to talk more in a closed session with you about that. We are rescheduling the test that we had to scrub. So, I think we will be okay on that.

And I also just wanted to emphasize that the battery at JBLM [Joint Base Lewis-McChord] that will eventually field that weapon system is already training with their equipment. They have already been moving their equipment onto C-17s. So, I think we are still going to be on track.

Mr. COURTNEY. Okay. And, General, what kind of capability will this give you that helps you and your successors to better operate?

General McCONVILLE. Well, you know, we've seen it played out in Ukraine. People talked about HIMARS being a game-changer as long-range precision fires, but this is really long-range precision fires. And the speed and range that you get gives you options, quite frankly, to deter those who may be wishing us harm.

Mr. LAMBORN. And, General, since I have got you here, it may be my last chance to ask you a question. We have some good developments in the area of directed energy with shooting down—well, Short-Range Air Defense, SHORAD. What are your plans for that in the future?

General McCONVILLE. Yes, I think it is an option. It is an arrow in the quiver. And this gets to convergence, where we have multiple sensors and we start looking at swarms of UAVs [unmanned

aerial vehicles] and other types of systems coming in. We have got to be able to react very quickly. We have got to pick the right arrow and be able to respond to it.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Garamendi, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you so very much, General, for your long, long service and your work with all of us. I appreciate that.

Madam Secretary, you have been focused on many, many things, one of which we haven't talked about.

But, before I go to you, General, we were recently in a congressional delegation led by the chairman. And we were able to observe in Romania and Poland the extraordinary work being done by the 101st, as they rotated in and, eventually, will rotate out. Very, very impressive in delivering the necessary supplies, weapons, munitions into Ukraine and tracking and keeping a clear record of our efforts to arm. And so, thank you.

Madam Secretary, you recently issued a report on how the Army can deal with climate change, resiliency in the face of a changing climate, but also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I would like you to speak to that for a few moments.

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congressman. Yes, we put out a climate strategy that had some ambitious goals in terms of, for example, fully electrifying our non-tactical vehicles by 2035, for example. And we are working on that. Frankly, one of the limiting factors is the availability of electric vehicles writ large, but we are working to purchase those.

We are also investing quite a bit in the resilience of our installations. As you know, in California, basically no matter where you are in the country, you are either experiencing drought or wildfires or floods. We have got to make sure that our installations remain functional throughout that extreme weather, so that our soldiers can train. So, we are investing in microgrids, for example, so that we can have the ability to continue to generate power.

And then we are also investing in looking at hybrid vehicles, for example. This is sort of farther off, but I saw, for example, a hybrid Bradley Fighting Vehicle, which is not only more fuel-efficient than the conventional Bradley, but it is also quieter, which has some lethality/survivability benefits. And it also is going to, because it is more fuel-efficient, it could potentially reduce the fuel convoys in the future and the numbers of soldiers that are exposed to danger. So, those are farther in the future, but I think it is important for us to explore that.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, thank you very much.

I urge you to continue to press forward on all of those efforts, particularly the hybridization of the tactical vehicles. It may be not so difficult, in that the downtime, I think, General, you still hurry up and wait a lot. And so, the waiting is, you know, the turbine can be going or the diesel engine can be going, or it could be battery-powered communications, and the rest. So, I urge you to continue to process that.

I would like to go back to the issue of the new systems that you are bringing online. And I would like both of you to speak to the

vulnerability of the systems coming online if we delay the appropriations and the authorization and have a CR. So, once again, drive home that issue, so that we might actually be listening to your concerns.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman.

You know, again, this is the most significant modernization of the Army in the last 40 years. And a CR, particularly, a long-term CR, will significantly slow down that modernization effort at precisely the time where we are trying to compete with China. So, we will have, as I said, tens of new-start procurement programs that we wouldn't be able to move forward. The same with our research and development programs. It is really about \$5.3 billion of programs that would be affected. So, it would be a substantial delay and impediment for us.

Mr. GARAMENDI. If you could provide us with the specific list?

Secretary WORMUTH. I would be happy to do that.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 91.]

Mr. GARAMENDI. Amongst us, we have advocates for one or another of those programs, and we ought to know what happens if we have a CR.

Secretary WORMUTH. We would be happy to do that.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Please do that.

General, would you like to comment on that issue?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I would. I think the Secretary covered it well on the modernization effort. But, again, I come back to the soldiers and their families, and training and readiness. You know, what tends to happen in units—and it is hard to capture—is they slow down spending. And so, they are not doing maybe the training they need. Or they don't get the increases that they need to pay for those things, and the system slows down. And as a result, you can't make up for that training that those soldiers didn't get or those benefits they didn't get.

So, I just would ask, anything we can do to avoid a CR would be very helpful for the military.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you. I yield back, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Wittman, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Secretary Wormuth, General McConville, thanks so much for joining us today. Thanks again for your service to our Nation.

And General McConville, great to see you again from this past Saturday there in Boston. And thanks again for your incredible service to our Nation and for your family's legacy of service. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I want to begin by talking about where the Army is and what I think is a position that is very precarious in the restructuring to address the challenges in the INDOPACOM. In fact, I think the things that are there are lacking.

I see the Army is divesting in watercraft and logistics connectors. There are some challenges, too, in creating the necessary communications network there and, for that matter, a continuation of logistics in the INDOPACOM.

I think that it appears to me at this point that the Army is not as well prepared as it needs to be for the challenges that are going to be there in the INDOPACOM. Listen, we know combined arms maneuver has a place in Europe. We have seen that today. I think it is going to be minimally important in any sort of scenario we see in the INDOPACOM.

And I just want to get your perspective on what do you think are the principal lines of effort that the Army needs to accentuate to make sure that the Army is up for the challenge in the INDOPACOM AOR [area of responsibility] and for that matter, specifically up to the challenge that we face from China.

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I would answer your question this way: I think the Army will do a number of important things in an INDOPACOM conflict, if there were to be one.

First of all, we would be the primary force that would be establishing and building out staging bases for air and maritime forces. You know, ships are going to have to come to shore to refuel, reload, et cetera, and the same thing with airplanes. We will be protecting, then, those staging bases with integrated air and missile defenses.

I think we have a role to play, a huge role to play, in terms of logistics and sustainment, which you mentioned. And we are investing in those areas. We are investing—we are also looking at we will play, I think, an important command-and-control role as well.

So we are investing in Army pre-position stocks in INDOPACOM. We are investing in deep-sensing capabilities oriented at INDOPACOM. We are investing in Patriot, IFPC [Indirect Fire Protection Capability] for INDOPACOM. Those are all, I think, really important roles that the Army would play out in that theater.

Mr. WITTMAN. General McConville.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I would just add on the contested logistics, you know, we are seeing that play out in Ukraine, is if you can't resupply or sustain your forces, they're not very effective. And it is magnified in the Indo-Pacific, as you said, sir, because the distances are great, it is more a maritime capabilities.

And so, some of the things that we are developing is the ability to operate in that environment. We just stood up a cross-functional team for contested logistics.

Many of our systems that we are building, like long-range precision fires, they are long range and they go fast because that is what the theater demands. The aircraft we are bringing onboard, they go much further ranges, they go faster.

And air and missile defense is really going to be important out there. And what we think is important is the convergence factor, because we are going to be working as a joint force. We have got to have deep sensors. You know, if you are going to do long-range precision fires, you have to do long-range precision targeting. You're going to have to take advantage of space and other capabilities we have to do that. You're going to have to work as a joint and coalition team. And we are doing all that right now, and we certainly can do more.

Mr. WITTMAN. Well, listen, I think long-range precision fires in that theater are going to be key. I think that is an important role

for the Army to play. The question is timing. We have to get that capability quickly. Listen, I like what you all are doing in taking current technology and putting that in a form the Army can use.

I still, though, have deep, deep concerns about the logistical element. The Army is divesting in watercraft. Back in Fort Eustis, Virginia, is that logistic center there. I see it. I watched those Army ships, unfortunately, go away.

We see the Ready Reserve Fleet is now down to 40 ships. I guarantee if there was a turbo-activation today, all 40 of them would not be certified to go to sea. So the Army is going to be really stretched in order to respond, if the balloon goes up in the INDO-PACOM.

Give me some sense about what you see as far as logistics. It is great to be developing these platforms, but you have got to be able to get to the fight, and then, as you said, sustain the operations in the fight. And we can go into weapons magazines later, but I just want to get your perspective on it. Give me some sense about what the Army is doing to address the logistics tail.

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, you are right, the Army made a decision a few years ago to divest of watercraft. Frankly, I think before everyone was as fully focused as we needed to be on the Indo-Pacific. But we are now reinvesting, if you will.

So, for example, this year's budget has \$180 million for—

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 101.]

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Norcross.

Mr. NORCROSS. Thank you, Chairman. I would like to thank the witnesses for being here today and General, for your lifetime of service. I much appreciate it.

I want to start by focusing on our industrial base. And when we take a look over the course of the last few months, obviously we have seen a tremendous strain on the munitions industrial base. This is something that we have been working on, quite frankly, for the last 3½ years, as part of our Tactical Air and Land [Subcommittee].

Very early on, we noticed that we were looking at an industrial base that, literally, reflected World War II, and we accelerated much of the improvements that needed to be done—from modernizing the safety improvements, but, incredibly, the capacity, which, had we not started then, I think where we are today would be in much, much worse space.

So, Secretary Wormuth, I just wanted to get a view from what you see as the highest risk and most urgent, from a technical standpoint, where you see that industrial base? Even with the investments that we made, that 10-year plan has been shortened down to 8, and I think should be even more resources. Where, technically, do you think our biggest challenge is?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, I mean, as you said, there are a number of challenges. The Army's organic industrial base is very, very old. I think it is fair to say it is vintage in a lot of our arsenals and depots. So, there is a lot of work to be done.

Some of it is just putting in new machining tools. Some of it is bringing in new, more automated systems. Some of it is really trying to, again, get more automation and shift some of the workforce and up-skill some of the workforce.

So, there is a lot of different areas that need work. And frankly, we continue—the more we are better able to see ourselves in our organic industrial base, the more we see that we need to invest. So, when I started as Secretary, we had a 15-year plan for \$15 billion. We still have a 15-year plan, but it is now \$18 billion, because I think we are better understanding the kinds of investments that we need to make.

Mr. NORCROSS. Certainly. And we are far from out of the woods, but the plan is laid down and I think we need to accelerate even more.

Let me just shift a little bit to what we are witnessing in the Ukraine. When we look at the Abrams upgrade plan over the last few years, it has actually slowed down. Yet we see it in the unfunded priorities list. And then ultimately, we, as Congress, have plussed that up to a rate of around 90 tanks a year.

General McConville, walk us through what we have witnessed over the course of the last year in Ukraine, its impact on our armor, and particularly in tanks, and what we have seen out there. Is that impacting any decisions on what we are doing with our Abrams and the upgrades?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, I think it is interesting. We watched the battles unfold in Ukraine; initially very defensive, and you saw our Javelins being used very effectively and some logistics problems for the Russians. And some people said, “Hey, I guess we don’t need armor anymore. Take a hard look at it.”

I argue the opposite. If you want to win, you do it with armor. And we are seeing that play out, as we speak. And really, the strategy within the Army is, you know, we are modernizing our armor. We’re doing—that is an enduring system, the Abrams is. You know, we have gone through the different models, and we continue to do that.

As we give up armor to other countries, we are buying the brand-new capabilities. We are also seeing our allies and partners buy. Poland has bought a whole bunch of Abrams tanks. They certainly understand the importance of having mobile protective firepower.

But even within our portfolio, we are building mobile protective fires. We are building the AMPV [Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle]. We are building the capabilities we need, so that we can conduct combined arms operations. And that is where we are going in the future.

We don’t have all the resources we need. So we make tough decisions on we have got to modernize and we have to do the enduring programs, and they may have to slow down, depending on the resources we get.

Mr. NORCROSS. I thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes Dr. DesJarlais of Tennessee for 5 minutes.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary Wormuth, you have stated that recruiting shortfalls is the most important issue for the United States Army. And while I'm glad to hear your commitment to not lowering standards, I do want to ask you what you think the reasons are for the apathy in our young population when it comes to serving in the military.

And I just wanted to cite a Wall Street Journal poll that I had entered into one of our last hearings that showed that patriotism has dropped in the young population, from about 25 years ago, of 70 percent considered themselves very patriotic, to about 38 percent today. So, with that, what is your explanation as far as why we are seeing this apathy?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I saw that poll as well. And frankly, I was really disturbed by it. You know, I consider myself a patriotic person and I think young people should be proud of this country. So, I was disturbed to see such a dramatic drop in patriotism.

I think there are a lot of different reasons why young people aren't as interested in service today as they used to be. I think some of it is just a lot of young Americans don't know very much at all about the Army. After the 9/11 attacks, you know, we went into our bases for obvious security reasons that were appropriate, but I think young people didn't see as much of us anymore.

As I said, we have done polling that shows that young people sometimes are afraid that the Army will put their life on hold in some way. And I think we are really trying to challenge that misperception and show just how many opportunities the Army offers.

Some of it is kids are, you know, a little afraid about leaving their families. So, I think there is a lot—the fact that we weren't in high schools for a couple of years during the pandemic didn't help us.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. You know, you compare the current predicament to the general attitude around 9/11, when people were very patriotic and lined up around the block to serve. There certainly seems to be a little apathy in that regard now.

Do you think it is possible that the lack of clarity in our policy could be driving some of that? I think, as far as what the outcome may be in Ukraine; what our goals, what our objectives are; the looming conflict with China and Taiwan—there doesn't seem to be clarity, and frankly, a lot of ambiguity from the administration on what our objectives are.

So, do you think that more clarification in what the goal of the Army, and the military, in general, is coming from the Commander in Chief would be helpful in recruiting?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I think the administration has been very clear about what its objectives are in terms of supporting Ukraine or in terms of the competition with China. But I also always think it is helpful to talk to the American public about why national security matters, and that the job of the United States Army is to protect this country and to fight and win the Nation's wars. And I think helping people understand that this is the most dangerous national security environment in the last 30 years is very important.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. Well, I appreciate your optimism that you think they have made it very clear. But we have probably a different opinion from a lot of constituents back home, and I know I'm not alone on this committee, from both sides of the aisle. There seems to be a lack of clarity. So, I think there is definitely room for improvement in terms of what our mission is.

Certainly, there is ambiguity when it comes to China and Taiwan. President Biden says, on three occasions, "We'll be there"—only to have the White House walk that back. In Ukraine, we see billions of dollars going over, but we don't see a clear endpoint.

So, even though your opinion—and maybe in here, where we get a lot more information—it seems clear, but, to the general public, I don't think that is the case. So, I definitely think we need to do a better job of clarifying it.

General McConville, what effect would further reduction in the Active Duty Army have on the Army's ability to execute its position of the National Defense Strategy?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, first of all, I think the Army we have right now is we need to continue to grow this Army we have. If you take a look at what our troops are doing, the deployment-to-dwell ratio is very significant. We live in a very dangerous world, and you can't create an Army overnight. So, we need to be very aggressive on the recruiting.

And just my thoughts from where I sit is, 83 percent of the young men and women that come into the Army come from military families. So, we are a military family business. We need to be an American family business.

And the second one is, 44 percent come from high schools that have JROTC [Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps], and they are only in 10 percent of the high schools. And so, we need to do a better job.

I'm going to stay out of the politics, but we need to do a better job exposing what our Army is about. And we put some of these great young Americans serving in uniform and they go back to their high schools, and they show how much they have grown, I think we can really have a much better effect on that.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. I thank you both for your time.

I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Carbajal, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary Wormuth, for being here.

And, General McConville, thank you for your service, for your longtime service to our country. Certainly, we are better for it. So, I congratulate you on your retirement coming up.

I want to start by focusing on the recruiting challenges that the Department and the Army have faced today. Secretary Wormuth, you mentioned in your testimony that we are experiencing the most challenging recruiting landscape in a generation, making retention that much more important. What can Congress do to help you in your efforts for recruiting and retention?

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman.

Retention is incredibly important at this time. I mean, it is always important, but it is particularly important when we are fac-

ing the difficult recruiting landscape we have. And I am happy to report that we are retaining extraordinarily well right now at over 104 percent.

And I think that speaks to, frankly, how soldiers, when they join the Army, are more often than not happy to stay in the Army. And I think that is because they feel a sense of purpose, that what they are doing matters. They are getting great training opportunities. So, retention for us is good.

Part of that is we are able to offer retention bonuses. So, certainly, we appreciate congressional support for that. And I think in terms of other things Congress can do to help us, I think the Department will be coming forward probably with some legislative proposals looking at how we can get better access, for example, to college dropout lists, for example. You know, that is a potential pool of high-quality recruits for us, but we don't always get that information from colleges in a timely way. So, you all supporting some of the legislative proposals that come over would be very, very helpful.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Great.

As we work to increase recruitment for our military, I want to applaud the Department for increasing the numbers of underrepresented minority groups. However, in fiscal year 2022, the Hispanic community, for example, represented 17.6 percent of the Army. That is up 5.6 percent over the last 10 years. However, my concern is that those numbers don't translate to the senior officer ranks. In the same year, the Hispanic community represented 9 percent of the Army's officer corps, but only 4 percent of the ranks 0 to 6. What is the Army doing to ensure greater representation of the underrepresented groups in the senior ranks?

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman, for that question. The Chief and I have talked about that very thing, and we do need to do better, frankly, in terms of making sure that our Hispanic-American officers, for example, have opportunities that they need to develop professionally, so that they are competitive for those more senior roles. You know, you are absolutely right that we don't have, frankly, the same percentage that we would expect to see.

Part of what we are trying to do to rectify that is to have better mentorship programs, for example. So, we have some mentorship programs—the Cavazos program is one of them—but I think we need to do more to mentor our Hispanic-American officers earlier in their career, so that they, again, are getting the kind of leader development that they need. And our BCAP [Battalion Command Assessment Program] and CCAP [Colonels Command Assessment Program] assessment programs I think are also going to be helpful in that regard.

I don't know, Chief, if you want to add.

General McCONVILLE. I think we want to give everyone an opportunity to rise to the highest levels, and we have to coach and mentor to do that. We have got to make sure that the best and brightest, we keep them in the Army. We are in a war for talent, and it starts not at the colonel level, looking at how many generals you have. You really have to go back into the force; get the right people to go to the best universities, whether it is West Point or other places, and then make sure, as they come up through the

ranks, we are competing for their talents, giving them the experience they need. So, when they come to the level, they are ready to assume that. And we are seeing that within—you know, the next commander of the 101st Airborne Division is going to be an Hispanic officer.

Mr. CARBAJAL. The one point I would remind you is that there is a tendency, a natural tendency, for those that are in a position to promote, unless they reflect those that are in front of them, sometimes those biases have an impact. So, I encourage you to look at those promotional panels to make sure that they are representative of those that are before them as well.

As the war in Ukraine continues, we are sending some of our stockpile of munitions to assist their efforts to defend against Russia. General McConville, what processes are in place to ensure we are maintaining enough supplies needed to defend ourselves, and do we have a set number—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Kelly.

Mr. KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, first of all, General McConville, I just want to thank you for your service. And I want to highlight, I mean, the BCAP program, that is your baby. And I got to work with you when you were the Deputy G-1 and G-1 and Vice Chief. And I will just say, some of the accomplishments you have done over the last 7 or 8 years have been tremendous and not only impact our Army of today, but they impact the Army of the future. And I want to thank you for that because I don't think you will ever get enough credit for that.

That being said, what can we do better? You are a personnel guy, and I know you are also a combat warrior, but you are a personnel guy at heart and you know about soldiers, and you care about soldiers and their families. What things can we do better that help us with our families, the EFMPs [Exceptional Family Member Programs], all those things that make it better quality for the family, so that we can retain and recruit soldiers, so that is where they want to be, they know it is home?

General McCONVILLE. Yes, thank you, Congressman.

And as you know very well from your experiences, the Army is people. And quite frankly, that is why, when we talk about people first, they are our most important weapon system, if you will, and we enlist soldiers, but we retain families.

And so, as we talk about continuing resolutions, we don't need a continuing resolution. We need to get the resources that you have given to us, we need to get it in the hands of our families, so they can build the right housing. When you think about it, what do our families want? Quality of life. They want good housing. They want good health care. They want child development centers. They want an opportunity for their spouses to have employment. And we have almost fixed this, but they want to have good moves, so they don't lose all their stuff when they go from place to place. And so, those investments really matter.

Mr. KELLY. And I would just ask that we continue to invest. And, Secretary, we had a great talk yesterday, but we have got to invest in making sure we have transfer of professional certificates across

States for our Army spouses. We have to make sure that we look at a retirement for those, and I have recommended TSP [Thrift Savings Plan] for spouses that are separate from their others, that they can invest in, and that is portable between States and employees and jobs. I think that is great opportunities. I just think there is a ton of things.

I want to talk a little bit about resourcing, because, as a battalion commander, you know, I thought all I'd care about is operations, and I cared little about operations. I cared about personnel and equipment, because if you don't have those two things, you are not there.

So, we have got the Army Futures Command and we are talking about the new systems that we are going to bring on. So, are we going to relook, based on the capabilities of these systems, how we form—you know, I think we have too little artillery in today's world, as opposed to the eighties, when I first was entered into—so, are we going to relook how we form our brigades, divisions, whatever those fighting units are, and what those capabilities? Do we have more artillery, more long-range precision fires, more or less aviation, more heavy armor? And I agree with you, just because the Russians failed to use armor right and have inferior tanks doesn't mean that armor is out of business. Trust me, Desert Storm and the initial invasion of Iraq showed that armor works and is necessary. And if you can comment on that, General McConville or Secretary?

Secretary WORMUTH. Sure, Congressman. I would say we absolutely are looking at all of those things.

First of all, Army Futures Command, with General Jim Rainey, and particularly as he looks out at the Army of 2040, is really looking at our formations. What do they need to look like with these new capabilities? How should we be thinking about autonomy and artificial intelligence, for example?

But kind of closer in the windshield, we use our total Army analysis process to basically help us redesign. And, you know, we are putting a lot of emphasis on our joint forcible entry divisions, as well as our armored strike divisions.

Mr. KELLY. And I'm sorry, but I have one more question, and I have got to get to it. General McConville and Secretary, over the last 25 years in Iraq, we have turned the Guard and Reserve from a strategic reserve into an operational reserve. But I'm seeing the same things now that happened in the seventies and eighties. I'm seeing the mentality of saying, "We'll give them second-class equipment. Or give them the older version of the new equipment. Don't field them on the same rate that we do our Active Component." And I can tell you, we cannot fight a war with China or Russia or Iran or Korea without those guys and girls deploying tonight.

So, I'm asking you, will you guys commit not to make the National Guard and Reserve second-class citizens when it comes to fielding of equipment? Because if you do, they will perform at the level of your expectations of them.

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes, Congressman, I'm a full supporter of the total Army.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I just want to say something about what a great job our Guard and Reserve is doing. As you said, Con-

gressman, for the last 25 years, they have been incredibly impressive. They are doing a great job away and at home, and we are just very, very proud of our National Guard and Reserves, and they will get the equipment they need to do the job.

Mr. KELLY. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Pennsylvania, Ms. Houlahan, for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you very much for your testimony and for your service.

I had questions about supply chains, but I'm instead going to pivot to some of the questions that have come up since about retention and recruitment.

I was an ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] scholar recipient in the 1980s, and my class of 40 ended up graduating 4. And of the four that graduated, half of them had military families in their background. I was one of them and I was the only woman.

Of the program that I was a participant of, I was able to receive full tuition and room and board and books as part of my deal at Stanford University. Since then, in the last 30 years, that program has been enormously watered-down—to the point where the tuition reimbursement is only about a sixth of what an education at a place like Stanford would be.

And so, General, you were talking about wanting to make sure we could get the best and the brightest, and we wanted to make sure that we were able to find people whose families weren't necessarily from that West Point background or West Point heritage. I feel as though we have lost the thread on our ROTC programs because we have created sort of what seems to be a program and a process to get more, rather than better.

And I'm wondering if you have seen that and reflect on that. And is there something that we can be doing, especially in a world where debt, college debt, is a real issue and where kids are making choices based on kind of where they are going to come out of this, with how much debt? Is there something that we should be doing to perhaps to return to a program and a process that allows people to emerge debt-free?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I need to check on that, Congresswoman, because two of my sons went to those type, went to Boston College and Boston University.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Yes.

General MCCONVILLE. They went on ROTC scholarships, and quite frankly, the military did a very good job of really covering almost all of that. And even those universities kicked in to help those type things.

So, we will come back to you. Because we want young men and women to go to Stanford. We want them to go to Harvard. We want them to go to their top schools. We want to give everyone an opportunity to serve. And if we have something missing, then we need to look into that because that's not what I believe.

And West Point is kind of the core where we have got a thousand great young men and women there every year, but ROTC actually produces the most officers. That is a very important program and

we have got to make sure we are funding it to do precisely what you said.

Ms. HOULAHAN. I would absolutely love to look at that with you, because the feedback I have gotten—and I also have children of probably about your children's age—has been that this has been a discouragement from people pursuing opportunities like ROTC over other scholarship opportunities.

My next question has to do with military spouses. I grew up in a military family and my mom moved every year, and every year hit reset. In fact, when I went off to school, to college, she was able to finally go back and pursue a graduate degree in GIS [Geographic Information Systems] and remote sensing. So, she is a smart, smart lady.

Is there something that we can be doing, not just for making sure that people who are in career fields that need certificates and transfers can be happening, but also who are in career fields, for instance, that are financial or high-tech, who can also pursue their careers? Meaning, can they stay a little bit longer in their service stations or their duty stations? Is there anything we can be doing to address that kind of a spouse?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think, Congresswoman, we need to be looking at the very good point you are raising about sort of longer assignments. You know, this is something I have heard from a number of different places. I think it would have benefits for spouses. It would, also, I think, have benefits for soldiers and just families generally. You know, that is not how the Army has done things, and we have slowly been lengthening assignment times from 2 years to 3 years and a little longer. But we probably need to look at that for a number of reasons.

The other thing I would say, you know, where we could use your help is there is now, thanks to Congress, a Federal law that says all professional licenses are transferable across all States. But I think working with the States to get that actually implemented, that is part of the challenge. I don't think the State legislatures and Governors are all aware that you all actually passed a law making all those licenses portable nationwide.

General MCCONVILLE. If I could just add, I think this is really important on our spouses. And we see many professional spouses in the military now in all ranks. And I have watched my wife move 23 times, who was a professional trying to do the whole license bit and, you know, those type of things. We have gotten better, but we need to get a lot better.

But we are going to have to compete. We are going to have to compete for these couples. And that is why the talent management system we have gone to is we really had to fundamentally change it. We cannot be an Industrial Age personnel management system and treat everyone the same. You know, you have got to bring the whole family along if you want them to serve, or they will go someplace else.

Ms. HOULAHAN. A hundred percent. I appreciate you guys. I yield back. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Gallagher, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you.

General McConville, how soon will we see an Indirect Fire Protection Capability fielded in an operationally meaningful number?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, as you probably know, Congressman, we do have—we have Iron Dome, which is fielded, which is an indirect fire, but that is not where we want to be. We want to improve that. We have what we call an Integrated Battle Command System which is the ability to take multiple sensors to combine that, and that is where we are going with it. Really, the future air and missile defense is multiple sensors, multiple shooters, tying them together, so you are not shooting Patriot missiles at an \$100,000 unmanned aerial system.

Mr. GALLAGHER. I guess the concern is, particularly, thinking about Guam and Misawa, you know, how far away are we? It seems to me that IFPC, it is like, you know, the Chicago Bears of systems. It is always, like, 2 years away from being 2 years away. I could have done a Boston team, by the way; I didn't do that.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, thanks. Thanks.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And you guys win.

General MCCONVILLE. You hit that, that would be getting really close to home there, Congressman, but go ahead.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes. But, I mean, it is a timeline.

General MCCONVILLE. Your point, I mean—

Mr. GALLAGHER. And why not buy NASAMS [National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System] if they are good enough for—

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, well, you know, as you have probably seen, the Integrated Battle Command System has been going on many years. We are fielding it right now.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes.

General MCCONVILLE. So, that has come into play, which is kind of the brain that it going to allow us to have it tied together, so you don't have one radar for one missile system. If you want to take advantage of the different sensors, you have got to have a system that is open architecture that allows you to bring that together.

And really, when you take a look at places like Guam, and those types of things, it is bringing together THAAD; it is bringing together Aegis; it is bringing together Patriot. You are going to have to have smaller systems. You are going to have unmanned aerial systems. You are going to have to deal with swarms. And so, those are the capabilities we are bringing, and quite frankly, I see them sooner than later. I'm talking in the next couple of years, like really soon.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Okay. Secretary Wormuth, you know, among the many lessons learned from, I think, our inability to deter a war in Ukraine, and the subsequent conflict there, it seems to be that in modern war, conventional war, even conventional war where you sprinkle on sort of asymmetric aspects, you burn through a lot of munitions very, very quickly. And we are just burning through a ton.

How concerned are you about our stockpiles of key munitions systems at present, in light of what we have seen in Ukraine?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, I think, you know, I would like our industrial base to be more robust than it is today. But, as I have said a couple of times this morning, we are investing

\$1.5 billion in our organic industrial base to increase our capacity, to increase the speed of production. We have taken the money you all in Congress have given us and gotten it on contract very quickly with our partners like Lockheed Martin, like Raytheon——

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes.

Secretary WORMUTH [continuing]. To get them to be able to ramp up their production.

I think the combination of expanding our own organic industrial base, getting our partners in industry to ramp up quickly, and frankly, pushing our European partners to increase their production and their industrial base, and working with allies and partners to make contributions, I think we can continue to provide assistance and replenish——

Mr. GALLAGHER. But specifically about our stockpiles, and the same question for you, General McConville, are you concerned about the state of our stockpiles of key munitions?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well—oh, go ahead.

General McCONVILLE. Okay. Yes, I'm always concerned about our stockpiles. I think we went through about 22 years of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we were basically building about 14,000 rounds of 155 a month, and that was more than sufficient.

If you take a look at some of our other stockpiles, like Stingers and—you know, we haven't built a Stinger in years; we didn't need to.

And so, I look back at when General Marshall had my job, he said, you know, "When I had the time, I didn't have the money. Then, when I got the money, I didn't have the time."

And I think that is what we need to be careful. We need to get ahead of this thing. We know where we are at right now. To me, it is not about supply chains; it is about supply networks. We don't want to be one-option commanders. We don't want to have one capability. We need to invest in that, and we have to be innovative in how we get ahead of long-lead item times, because you don't want a whole bunch of ammunitions sitting in warehouses, either.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes. And I don't know if you wanted to finish here.

Secretary WORMUTH. I would just add maybe, Congressman, that I think the multiyear procurement authority is very, very helpful in terms of getting industry to have confidence that that demand signal is going to be there.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Authority is important. As authorizers, we, obviously, share that view. Appropriation would be even better. And if you talk to all the companies that you mentioned, I think they would say that multiyear appropriation, in meaningful scale for critical munition systems, particularly, Long-Range Anti-Ship Missiles, JASSM [Joint Air to Surface Standoff Missile], SM-6, is absolutely essential going forward.

With that, I have 15 seconds, so I can't ask another question. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, I do want to follow up on that, General McConville. You said you don't want to have a bunch of munitions sitting around in storage. Isn't that what a stockpile is?

General McCONVILLE. Well, what I mean by that is you don't want to have excess—I will clarify that. What you don't want to do,

we find with ammunition, is have ammunition you don't need. You spend a lot of money on it, and then, you spend a lot of money doing what we call a service life extension program, or you do a—what we call demilitarize that ammunition. So, you want to be smart on how you want to do it.

And like some of the systems, you may just want to buy the long-lead items. Because, you know, we talk about missiles. It is going to take us 2 years to get this. Why? Because this component takes 2 years to get it. So, we may want to be innovative and buy that component and maybe have that sitting in a warehouse.

And then, the other things that we can make very, very quickly, we can turn in 3 months. So, you just took your time to make that missile to 3 months, and that gives you—and it is all about risk management. How long can you wait before you need that system? I think we need to think about doing it differently.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from New Jersey, Ms. Sherrill, for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

Secretary Wormuth and General McConville, it is really good to see you both again. And thank you so much for your service to our country and for keeping our troops safe.

Over the past two decades, our military has been focused on counterinsurgency operations. And as we prepare to transition to a potentially contested logistics combat environment against near-peer adversaries, how is the Army addressing our supply chain issues, specifically, on critical minerals which are mostly mined and processed by our strategic competitors?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congresswoman, I think the pandemic highlighted to all of us the fragility of our supply chains, and we have all become, I think, much more aware of how reliant we are on certain foreign sources for different things, like critical minerals.

So, we are working with our partners in OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] to basically try to identify where we have vulnerabilities, where we can find additional sources. That is something that we are going to have to, I think, work together on with the Department to make sure that we find additional sources that we have much more confidence in, for example.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

And I know the last briefing I had at Picatinny Arsenal, I know they are hard at work on tracing much of that. And as we work to onshore, nearshore, and friend-shore our supply chain for critical minerals, we are also going to have to come up with viable chemical solutions, not only to potentially provide the raw materials, but to process the minerals we procure.

As the Army moves forward with that critical effort, our scientists and engineers are working out of, in many cases, World War II-era facilities. Can you describe the Army's plan to recapitalize our S&T [science and technology] infrastructure and why new lab facilities are so important for our lethality enhancement efforts?

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes, Congresswoman. Just as you said, you know, our labs are critical to our ability to produce a wide range of systems, munitions, and critical components. We have a 15-year

plan to reinvest in our organic industrial base and our labs. And the resources that we have estimated to go into that 15-year plan have actually increased since I have been Secretary, and we are now looking at about \$18 billion to reinvest in a lot of that infrastructure, which, as you pointed out, much of it is very, very dated.

So, given the resources we have, we are not going to be able to do all of that work in the next couple of years, but we do have a plan, because we need to recapitalize those labs to make sure that we have the workforce that can supply us with the components that we need.

Ms. SHERRILL. That is great news, because I know, as we try to modernize our Army, getting some of the top-level scientists and being able to recruit them to world-class laboratories will be very important.

And as we recapitalize our facilities, it will, of course, be important to fully utilize them, as the Army moves to outpace China and as the war in Ukraine proves our munitions need to have extended range and increased lethality.

So, Secretary Wormuth, can you speak to the Army's specific expertise in developing next-gen propellants and explosives, and speak to a few efforts that could benefit from increased congressional support?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congresswoman, you know, we have a robust long-range precision fires program, for example. I know that you are familiar with that. And propellants are obviously a key piece of that. You know, things like our Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon, for example, is going to need new and different kinds of technologies for it to be successful.

So, I think we are always looking at how we can do a better job of making sure that we have got the kind of skilled workforce that we need. And we have really built into our modernization plan looking at what kinds of capabilities do we need in our labs, for example, or do we need to have with our defense industry partners, to be able to successfully produce those new systems.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

And then, switching gears just a little bit, how is the Army working to address resiliency and sustainability requirements? I know that clean fuel usage will impact the Army's logistics capabilities and overall lethality and survivability for equipment and personnel. Can you speak a little to the movements in those areas?

Secretary WORMUTH. Sure. We have put out a climate strategy, and I think of it as kind of really focused on two big areas of investment. Part of that is looking at the resiliency of our installations, so that they can be hardened against extreme weather, so that our soldiers can continue to train. So, that is where you see things like microgrids, for example.

We are also investing in making our non-tactical vehicles, for example, fully electric by 2037. And that is going to have fuel-efficiency benefits. It is going to have greenhouse gas emission reduction benefits. But we are also looking at some hybrid vehicles that may actually be quieter, more fuel-efficient, and less resources used—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Waltz, for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to pick up on that climate strategy, Madam Secretary. The fiscal year 2023 NDAA required the Department to provide Congress with a cost-benefit analysis before you go to any indefinite orders on EVs [electric vehicles], and certainly before we go to tactical—I mean, I find it incredible that we are laying out in a long-term strategy to go to electric tanks and fighting vehicles. I haven't seen any charging stations in Ukraine or Africa, or anywhere else.

My concern is, as my colleagues mentioned, we don't control the supply chain. Do we control the lithium, the cobalt, the manganese that would go into an EV fleet?

Secretary WORMUTH. No, Congressman, we don't, and I share your concerns about that.

Mr. WALTZ. So, would you agree, then, that we should certify to this committee, to the Congress, that we have control, and not only have control of it, that our greatest adversary that we are gearing up to defend against, and hopefully, deter, doesn't also control that same supply chain?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think we do need to work to get control of our supply chain, so that the critical components we have we control.

Mr. WALTZ. I 100 percent agree, and we will be looking to insert that certification language into future legislation, so that we don't go too far down that road and find out that it is too big to fail, and we have no control over the supply chain that would go into our tanks, non-tactical vehicles, tactical vehicles, what have you.

In that same vein, along with the climate strategy, you recently unveiled a solar panel microgrid at Fort Bragg; not microgrid, but a panel at Muddy Lake, at Fort Bragg. Did the manufacturer certify that those panels were made in America?

Secretary WORMUTH. I don't know the answer to that, Congressman.

Mr. WALTZ. Shouldn't you?

Secretary WORMUTH. I believe—

Mr. WALTZ. Okay. It is in accordance with the law.

Secretary WORMUTH [continuing]. China makes a lot of a lot of our—a lot of solar panels.

Mr. WALTZ. Can you confirm that the solar panels were not made in China? Or that, as we go to base resiliency, that they are not made in China, in accordance with the fiscal year 2023 NDAA?

Secretary WORMUTH. I believe many solar panels are made in China.

Mr. WALTZ. Actually, the largest solar panel factory in the world is in Western China—ironically, powered by coal. So, as we are patting ourselves on the back for going to a zero-carbon Army by 2030, it is actually being powered by slave labor with our greatest adversary and Russian coal in Chinese plants. Do you find that problematic?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think there are a lot of interdependencies that are challenging that we have to work through, yes.

Mr. WALTZ. Okay. So, for the record, you don't know if that grid, or any other grid, is made in America or not made in China?

Secretary WORMUTH. I would imagine, given that most solar panels are made in China, there's a good chance that those panels were made in China.

Mr. WALTZ. I find that just jaw-dropping, that we are driving our military—it is one thing for the country—but to drive our military into greater dependency on our greatest adversary to power our bases, much less our fighting vehicles in the future, to be a huge problem. And I just find it astounding that you are testifying before this committee that you don't know.

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I said that I think, since most panels are made in China, they are probably made in China.

Mr. WALTZ. Let's shift to the recruiting challenges. Are you on track to hit your number this year?

Secretary WORMUTH. We are doing better than we were last year, but we—

Mr. WALTZ. Are you going to hit the number? I mean, are you going to hit your recruiting goal?

Secretary WORMUTH. Sixty-five thousand was a very ambitious goal. We still—

Mr. WALTZ. Because we had to make up for 25,000 short last year—

Secretary WORMUTH. Because the Chief and I, because the Chief and I felt it was important to send a signal to our recruiter force that they shouldn't take their pedal off the metal.

Mr. WALTZ. Madam Secretary, are you going to make your number this year? Are we going to fall short again?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think it is going to be a challenge, but we have still got the summer, which are traditionally our best recruiting months. But I think it is going to be a challenge.

Mr. WALTZ. Are you going to, then, have to, subsequently, cut force structure? Are we going to be having a conversation this summer about cutting force structure in the Army, as we face unprecedented threats around the world?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, we were already going to be making some structure changes because we are transforming from a CT [counterterrorism]-focused Army to a near-peer major warfight Army. But certainly, if we don't turn our recruiting situation around—

Mr. WALTZ. Are you arguing, then, that a CT-focused Army needs to be bigger than a great power?

Secretary WORMUTH. No, Congressman. I'm suggesting that the kinds of structure we need for the Army of 2030 is different than what we needed in the last 20 years. And if we don't turn our recruiting situation around, I am concerned that we may have to make cuts to force structure.

Mr. WALTZ. I think you are going to have to, and that is—

Secretary WORMUTH. But we don't want to be a hollow Army, certainly.

Mr. WALTZ. Right.

General, I agree with you, Junior ROTC can be a real game-changer.

Mr. Chairman, I will be introducing legislation to expand Junior ROTC to help with this recruiting crisis.

Thank you and I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a great idea.

The Chair now recognizes another great member from New Jersey, Mr. Kim, for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIM. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the two of you for coming out here today.

I wanted to just talk to you about something I was hearing about last time I was at the base in my district. You know, April being the Month of the Military Child, we were there talking about the challenges that military families are having. We are still having real significant problems when it comes to military families and childcare. And I guess I just wanted to kind of get a sense from you—I know you mentioned it earlier—but just how are we doing on this front? What is your assessment in terms of our grade level, in terms of handling childcare, Secretary Wormuth?

Secretary WORMUTH. Thanks, Congressman.

We are continuing to try to invest in childcare. I hear about that anytime I go to visit a camp, post, or station. It is critically important to our soldiers and their families.

We have built a number of new child development centers in the past few years. We have got 10 CDCs and child/youth services that are going to be built in the future years. This year, we are really focused on trying to increase the staffing at our CDCs. If we are operating at 100 percent staffing, we can bring more children in off the waitlist.

Mr. KIM. And I saw that, that you have made investments into being able to increase some of the entry-level salaries and other types of benefits—

Secretary WORMUTH. That is right.

Mr. KIM [continuing]. To be able to grow that workforce. As you say, we are not firing on all cylinders right now in terms of our capacity to be able to do that. Have you seen these types of steps being able to increase that workforce? Are you getting a good response from these initial steps?

Secretary WORMUTH. Yes, it is definitely helping. We also have recruiting bonuses, for example. We also have creative things like a new CDC worker, if they have a child, we will give them a 50 percent discount. We have let new staff get commissary privileges, for example. So, that is helping.

One of the things that is a challenge, frankly, is it takes a long time to bring on board our CDC workers—

Mr. KIM. Yes.

Secretary WORMUTH [continuing]. Because of the background checks and such.

Mr. KIM. I don't know if you know offhand—do you know, offhand, what the waitlist is on the Army side in terms of military families seeking childcare?

Secretary WORMUTH. I know that the average waitlist time is about 119 days.

Mr. KIM. Do you know how many families are on that waitlist?

Secretary WORMUTH. I don't know off the top of my head.

Mr. KIM. If you don't mind, maybe follow up, because I was told that before that we were talking about upwards of 20,000-plus military families, I think across the DOD, but perhaps I'm wrong on that front. So, I would just like to make sure that I have the latest numbers on that.

Secretary WORMUTH. Sure, we will get that for you.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 101.]

Mr. KIM. Just to kind of switch gears a little bit, I know that you have been working hard, and we have been seeing a Pentagon-wide effort when it comes to suicide in the military. I believe that the Army has seen some decreases, at least in terms of Army components in terms of suicide, more recently.

But I guess I just kind of wanted to get a sense from you all, in terms of the initiatives that you are pushing, are you seeing certain ones being more effective? Are there lessons learned that you understand already? And I know from the broader Pentagon efforts and what they have looked into this—are they any recommendations from some of those efforts that you are looking to now invest in the Army?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, we are doing a lot in this area. And I would say, you know, we did have a better year last year in terms of suicide rates going down. I will tell you, I am concerned this year, particularly, in the Active Component, we are seeing our numbers tick up a little bit, and that is concerning. So, we are really trying to focus on which installations are we seeing those suicide rates go up, but also, importantly, looking at the installations where we have seen the numbers go down, to look at those installations to say, what are they doing that, actually, maybe we should export to other camps, posts, and stations?

But we have seen the behavioral health resources that we surged, for example, to Alaska, that has been very, very effective.

Mr. KIM. Yes.

Secretary WORMUTH. And it is not just about behavioral health specialists; it can also be military family life counselors, chaplains. You know, the sort of full menu of resources I think makes a difference.

I think what we are finding is, it is about connections, and it is not a one-size-fits-all program. One division may need a different set of resources than another division.

Mr. KIM. Yes, I agree wholeheartedly. I would like to make sure you have as many tools in your toolbox to be able to address it. I like that you are trying to be hyper-targeted about what installations; also, what types of professions within Army, you know, if there is any sort of prevalence there.

And you are right, while it was encouraging that the numbers were not as significant the other year, but we all know that one data point is not enough for us to know that we have turned any corner or that it is any trend.

But, yes, both of these issues, I raise these because they are not just issues that are there about helping our military families and our service members, which should be our top priority, but they are also issues that are related to our readiness, and they are also issues related to our recruitment. The stronger that we can show

that we are being responsive, that DOD is a good employer, and a great employer at that, you know, the more we will be able to push forward and address some of these broader issues.

So, with that, I will yield back the balance of my time. Thank you.

Secretary WORMUTH. Completely agree.

Mr. GALLAGHER [presiding]. I will note that a new generation of leadership has occupied the top row and recognize Mr. Bacon for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Thank you, Mr. Gallagher.

I appreciate you both being here. I'm grateful.

I'm sorry, my question may have been asked, but we have had simultaneous hearings today. So, we are trying to juggle a little bit.

I don't want to repeat what Mr. Waltz said on the recruiting questions, because I was going to ask the same thing. But I want to dig a little deeper.

When I go around the district, which is around Omaha, Nebraska, I hear reluctance to join the military right now for a variety of reasons. So, getting into the recruiting and retention issues.

One of them was quality of life, which I have got some follow-on questions. We are going to lead a panel on this, starting in June, trying to make improvements to quality of life.

I have heard some voice concerns, like after Afghanistan, how we pulled out, that that has been an inhibitor. I hear from some multi-generation families that served in the military, where their kids would be more apt to join, a reluctance to let them join because there is a perception that the administration, that they are more about social issues versus warfighting. And these are the families you would recruit from, primarily.

And I have also heard from some that the private sector, with offering college education, like at Starbucks, Walmart, sort of undermines our tools.

Am I missing something or is there more to it than this? I just get curious for your feedback. Because this is what I am seeing on the ground.

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, thanks for that.

I think many of the things that you raise are things that we have heard as well. I mean, certainly, quality of life is a big issue. You know, that is why we are spending a billion dollars a year on barracks, because, you know, I have seen some of our barracks, frankly, that I wouldn't want my daughters to live in. So, we are really trying to get after that. I want parents to know that their kids are going to come and have good accommodations.

I do think, when I go and visit our soldiers, whether it is here in the States or overseas, what I see is them focused on warfighting. You know, we are a ready Army. We got an entire brigade combat team from Fort Stewart to Germany and doing live fire training in 1 week. That is a ready Army. That is what I see our soldiers focused on.

But some of the concerns that, you know, you have highlighted are ones that I have heard. I think the Chief and I try to emphasize everywhere we go that our Army has to be apolitical.

Mr. BACON. Right.

Secretary WORMUTH. You know, our soldiers swear an oath to the Constitution, not to a particular President or a political party. And I think there are a lot of people who have questions about that on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. BACON. Right.

Secretary WORMUTH. So, we really need to hammer that home.

Mr. BACON. I appreciate your feedback on it and I agree with you. And it is a perception. Perception is not always reality, but it is reality to those who they see it on cable news or read it on the internet. I just think we have got to keep reminding folks we serve the greatest country in the world. We have the greatest Army in the world. We have the greatest military that will kick anybody's butt. And that is what people want to join and be a part of. They want to be part of the bust, but I think it is getting lost amongst all the differing messages that are out there.

If I may ask, General McConville, if you had to prioritize quality-of-life measures that we need to take, what do you see?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I think where it comes to quality of life, probably the most important thing is housing, is the number one quality of life. And we talked about, at least I have talked about this. It is I worry the most about young soldiers with families that, quite frankly, can't get on-post housing. Only like 35 percent of our families actually live on post. And so, if they are off post, and they are specialists, and they have got two or three kids—

Mr. BACON. Right.

General MCCONVILLE [continuing]. The compensation is not that good. And even the way we do the housing allowance is not that good.

Mr. BACON. Yes.

General MCCONVILLE. So, I just worry about those young—

Mr. BACON. Let me follow on that. We have cut housing allowance by 5 percent, which, obviously, affects those who live off base. But it even affects those on base because that housing allowance goes to the private owners of those homes. I think we have got to reinstate that 5 percent.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes.

Mr. BACON. I mean, do you have any feedback on that?

General MCCONVILLE. I think we need to—you know, we are in a war for talent, and we want these qualified soldiers and families to stay. We like to say, we enlist soldiers, but we retain families.

Mr. BACON. Right.

General MCCONVILLE. And so, we have to compete for them. And it is a very competitive market out there right now.

Mr. BACON. You are absolutely right. I moved 16 times, and when my spouse decided she was done, it was hard to keep going. So, till it gets you there.

We have anecdotal evidence of soldiers being on SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and food stamps. Do you have much evidence of that? Because we want to dig into that and see if we can adjust the pay to fix that.

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I would say, you know, we certainly hear about food insecurity. I think RAND did a study recently—

Mr. BACON. Right.

Secretary WORMUTH [continuing]. And that would be important to look at.

And we are not always entirely clear about what is at play. One thing we really try to emphasize is financial literacy for our soldiers. But I do think we need to relook our compensation, and the Department is going to do the Quadrennial Military Compensation Review starting very soon, and that will help us, I think, look at that.

Mr. BACON. Well, starting in June, the panel that we are standing up, we are going to be tackling that, too. So, we look forward getting your perspective and expertise on it.

Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Ms. Escobar.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much.

And Madam Secretary and General, thank you very much for being here today. Thank you, of course, for your service.

General McConville, you will be missed. Thank you for your incredible dedication over all these years.

And, Secretary Wormuth, I want to thank the Army, especially, for the great collaboration with my community, especially on Castner Range—incredible gift to the future, and it could not have happened without your leadership. So, thank you very much.

As you both know, I have the privilege of representing Fort Bliss, and want to say that I was absolutely thrilled to see \$74 million in the President's budget for the railyard at Fort Bliss. And additionally, it has been encouraging to find several key investments for Fort Bliss—the transient training barracks and a line haul facility—included in the Future Years Defense Program. I have long advocated for all of those investments.

Can you speak about the importance of these MILCON [military construction] investments to support Fort Bliss mobilization and training mission requirements?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congresswoman. And first of all, I would say we are very pleased about the Castner Range situation. I think that is a win/win and we will look forward to being the custodian of that new national monument.

In terms of the importance of the investments you cited, first of all, the railyard is going to be very important in terms of power projection. And we have got to always be looking at our power projection infrastructure and investing in that. And so this is going to be an important investment that goes towards making sure that we are able to push soldiers out of Fort Bliss.

And then, just as we were talking about quality of life for our soldiers, the training barracks will be very important for that. We want our soldiers, when they come to Bliss to train, to be staying in good accommodations. So, we are pleased that we are going to be able to invest in that in a couple of years.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Thank you so much.

I also want to ask for an update on M-SHORAD, the stationing timeline. Fort Bliss was identified as one of six potential stations for M-SHORAD battalions, which could be fielded at up to three of those installations, pending a programmatic environmental as-

essment. Could you provide information about the timeline for potential stationing at Fort Bliss?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congresswoman. We are using our total Army analysis process to basically look at things like where we are going to station the M-SHORAD battalions, but also our multi-domain task forces, for example, and the IFPC battalions.

And I expect, you know, we are looking at some of that work right now and won't be making any decisions in the near term but will probably be in a position to be able to come and talk to you and other members about where we are later this summer.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Okay. That would be great. I'm very interested, obviously, not just in the timeline, but really hope that Fort Bliss is well-positioned from that perspective.

And then, really, I actually want to take my last minute or so to mention that—I want to echo some of what my colleague, Mr. Kim, mentioned in his remarks about not just servicemember suicide, but provisions for childcare in child development centers, and making sure that we are providing those wraparound services for our families.

One of the things that has been really alarming for me, especially at Fort Bliss, obviously is the suicides. And I know that we continue to work hard at providing the services and support that our service members need. At Fort Bliss, our commanding general actually is incredibly innovative. I'm so proud of his leadership, so happy that he is at our military installation.

But he has really piloted, I think, something unique and something worthy of exploring at other installations as well, in terms of those wraparound services, kind of making sure that our service members—trying to dig into what their challenges are, so that they don't get to the brink. And I am very hopeful that his approach will be successful, and if it is, I think it would be a model to use throughout the military.

And with that, just thank you again for your service, and I yield back.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Ryan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN. Thank you both for being here. Thank you for your leadership in beating Navy this year—very important and near and dear to my heart.

On a more serious note, I really want to commend you both for many things, in particular your commitment to our people, and throughout your testimony today and written testimony, just emphasizing the priority on our most important resource amidst the programs and equipment.

I'm really proud to now represent the preeminent leadership institution, I think, in the world at West Point and know that you are both committed, and the Army is, to continue to invest there.

I want to just shine light on and commend the President's commitment of an additional \$48.7 million in this year's budget to the USMA [United States Military Academy] 2035 construction and capital projects to make sure that we can keep that institution physically up to at least the 20th century in terms of barracks and facilities.

And I also want to commend—President Biden included this year a provision in an Executive order to ensure that that work is done using local union labor from our community in the Hudson Valley. So, as we invest in our future military leaders, we are providing good-paying, union jobs in the Hudson Valley. And I just want to ensure that, I know you are supportive of that, of course, but that we continue to support and work that, as we go forward.

Another critical project there is the cybersecurity and engineering center. And so, that leads into my actual question, which is just to hear from you both, both in terms of cybersecurity and training the future force and the present force on cyber, but across the board, how do you feel in terms of both the readiness and morale of our junior officers and cadets showing up? And where do you need more help, more resources, to make sure we are prepared for all the contingencies across all domains, both for officers, NCOs [non-commissioned officers], and soldiers?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, I want to just agree with you completely about the importance of West Point and the amazing cadets and officers that get produced out of there. It is really, really impressive.

I think in terms of cybersecurity, in particular, I would say we are making huge investments in that. We are 3 years in to moving to the Cloud. We are spending \$400 million on zero trust implementation.

But we have got to be able to recruit the best and the brightest, and I think offering them opportunities in the cyber field through things like our Software Factory or in positions at Army Cyber Command, for example, you know, that is really important. And you can do things in the cyber field in the Army that you can't do anywhere else. And I think that is something we have to continue to emphasize.

I don't know, Chief, if you want to add.

General MCCONVILLE. No, I think it is, as you may know, cyber is one of the top branches to go out first. So, there is tremendous competition to get into the Cyber Force. We are getting the best and brightest to come in there. And as the Secretary said, what we have to do is keep them. How do we keep them in? How do we get their master's, you know, doctorate? How do we give them purposeful work, which we are seeing? And it is going to be so important on the future battlefield protecting data, zero trust. All these type things that are going to give us the edge, we are going to need to protect, or we will go back to World War II tactics.

Mr. RYAN. And to the degree that you can come to us with sort of creative ideas on retention or ways to compensate/retain those kinds of unique skill sets that we all agree we desperately need, I think we are very—certainly, I am—open to hearing that and would love to work on that.

Only a minute left, but I just wanted to follow up on the discussion on what potential recruits and future soldiers are focused on; what their concerns are. My colleague brought up threats, essentially threats to their safety as a number one concern. Can you like talk and go a little bit deeper of what do we mean by that? Is this the result of seeing 20 years of conflict? What do the surveys say, really, is below the surface there that we can try to address?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think, Congressman, it is about sort of perceptions [audio malfunction], like PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder], for example, that they are concerned about. And that gets reinforced quite a bit through movies and things like that. And, of course, there are real threats in the Army to one's physical safety. You know, we are America's fighting force, but, again, I think we have to emphasize all of the amazing opportunities that you know very well that are out there for young Americans.

Mr. RYAN. General, anything to add there?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I was just going to add that the idea about putting your life on hold, I felt the same way when I was 17 years old going to West Point. I was going to be 28 before I got out of the Army, and, you know, I'm still around.

Mr. RYAN. They got you. They got there, yes.

Thank you and I yield back.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Strong.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, it was good to see you a few weeks ago at Redstone Arsenal at AMC's [Army Materiel Command's] change-of-command ceremony. It was great to see you there.

I know neither of you play favorites, but I can. North Alabama is home to the best there is, Redstone Arsenal. I have enjoyed a close relationship with arsenal leadership for years. I hope if I can ever be of assistance to the Army, you won't hesitate to call.

You will be hard-pressed to find a more pro-Army State than Alabama. General McConville, I understand the Army's plans to field two IBCS battalions per year, but your top unfunded priority included another system, too, for the Indo-Pacific theater. Given the increased need for sophisticated air defense systems, do you believe this plan is truly sufficient to meet the need of the joint forces?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, Congressman, as you said, the air and missile defense is absolutely critical. The Integrated Battle Command System, which is coming online, we think is extremely important because the edge it is going to give us is many of our air and missile defense systems are based on one radar for one system. And what we want to be able to do is take those multiple sensors, bring that information together, and use the appropriate arrow, if you will, to deal with that sense. So, we need to move out as fast as we can develop these systems, and they are going to be very, very important for whatever fight we are in.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you.

How does the IBCS fit into the Joint All-Domain Command and Control?

General MCCONVILLE. I think it's a key, an essential part of that, as we develop our future system. We talked about Iron Dome. That was one of the concerns we had; how does that fit in? But the systems we are developing and the systems that we are working with our joint partners are all going to need to play on that, because we are going to be able to use joint sensors. So, if we can't use each other's radars and sensors, we won't get the advantage that we need.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you.

Secretary Wormuth, section 1244 of last year's NDAA gave the Department of Defense the authority to utilize multiyear procurement to accelerate production efforts. There are proposals for multiyear procurements within the fiscal year 2024 budget, but I notice several critical munitions programs or Army programs in general, were included as candidates. Do you support using multi-year procurement for the PAC-3 and other critical Army systems?

Secretary WORMUTH. I do, Congressman. As General McConville said earlier, you know, industry doesn't generally do the work out of enthusiasm. They like to see a continued demand signal, and that multiyear procurement authority sends them that signal. So, we very much hope that Congress will give that to us for Patriot and GMLRS [Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System] this year.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you.

Do you see a problem with the fact that there isn't an appropriations companion policy for the multiyear procurement?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, it would be helpful, I think, to have multiyear appropriations also.

Mr. STRONG. Okay. I agree.

What measures does the Army propose to support expanded production of critical munitions?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, one of the things we are doing, Congressman, is to invest \$1.5 billion in our organic industrial base. That is going to help us expand our production capability.

And then, we are also trying to work very closely with industry, with our partners in industry, to get money on contract for them, so that they can ramp up their production, both in terms of speed, but also volume.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you.

General McConville, you have given the United States your entire life. You and your family have made countless sacrifices, and we thank you for that.

With this being said, your last time before us, what is a message you would like to leave with Congress and the American people?

General MCKONVILLE. Well, what I would say is I could not be more proud than [of] the soldiers I have had the privilege of serving with over the last 42 years-plus. This is a great Army and I'm very, very proud of those who have served, those who are serving now, and those who will serve.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, General.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Hawaii, Ms. Tokuda, for 5 minutes.

Ms. TOKUDA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mahalo, General McConville, for your service.

Thank you, Secretary Wormuth, for being here today.

Last November, the Congressional Budget Office found that the U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii was in far worse physical condition on average compared to other Army bases. Our Army facilities accounted for significantly higher amounts of deferred maintenance, renovation, and modernization costs than any other Army base. In total, those costs combined come to about \$4 billion, as you know, for U.S. Army Garrison Hawaii, which includes Schofield Barracks, which is in my district.

Failing infrastructure has real, harmful impacts on our local communities and, honestly, strain our military's relationships with the people of Hawaii. It is not just the negative environmental or public health impacts that we hear about, like water main breaks or unauthorized wastewater discharges. When military housing on base is undesirable for our service members and their families to live in, they may choose, and do choose, to live off base instead, taking homes off the market for local residents and far worsening the housing situation in our strapped communities right now.

Secretary Wormuth, I'm grateful that you recently visited Hawaii and was able to see firsthand our infrastructure issues and problems. Could you please discuss some of the challenges that you did see? And how is the fiscal year 2024 Army budget going to be addressing some of these challenges? I do know that, of the identified barrack—permanent party barrack requests, we were not part of that, and I know we have seen improvements back in 2022. But what can we expect to see in terms of investments prioritized going forward?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congresswoman, and it was very helpful for me when I went out in Hawaii recently to both—you know, I did a townhall with our soldiers and families and heard from them directly. I know that the Red Hill spill has had a tremendous impact on the folks out in Hawaii.

And we, basically, have sent a couple of teams out recently to look at the infrastructure there, in particular, with a real focus on not just the aboveground infrastructure, but the belowground infrastructure, because we have got to look at our sewer lines, water lines, the power grid. And I think, as the Chief and I look to build the next year's budget, we are looking hard at how we can put more resources towards the infrastructure in Hawaii.

I also saw barracks at Schofield, and some of the barracks I saw did not look too good. You know, we have got such a huge inventory of barracks across the country, you know, CONUS [continental United States] and in Hawaii and elsewhere, we just can't renovate all of them all at once. And so, what we have tried to do is we have a plan, basically, that we started in 2021 that goes to 2030 that will have us investing a billion dollars a year in barracks across Active, Guard, and Reserve. And so, while we are not getting to barracks this year, you know, we will be getting to barracks in Hawaii in the next couple of years. And we constantly evaluate with our commanders the state of those barracks, and we can make adjustments over time.

Ms. TOKUDA. Thank you.

And then, I would say, to help guide us in those investments and prioritization of that infrastructure, I appreciate the belowground as well as the aboveground infrastructure repairs needed. Is it possible for us to also do some kind of housing impact assessment that takes a look at a number of different factors—how much of the BAH is being used off base; total number of service members and their families relative to move-in-ready units that we have got available—just to determine really the scope and the scale of the Army's impact on our local housing inventory, so that we can, then, focus on prioritizing that infrastructure needed to, then, say, "This is how much more we need to renovate or actually build up, so that

we can accommodate our service members versus against straining our local housing inventory,” which is we are on an island. So, we really can’t build out too much farther. Is there ability to do that kind of assessment?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think we could certainly work with you all to do that kind of assessment. And we have also really pushed our colleagues in Office of Secretary of Defense to reopen BAH and how it is calculated, because I am not confident exactly how we are calculating BAH is reflective of sort of the real-time housing costs that we see, not just in Hawaii, but, frankly, in other parts of the country.

Ms. TOKUDA. Absolutely, and possibly to also have a discussion with us on that matter as well. We appreciate more being given to our service members. What we can say is that it also drives up housing costs and rental prices in Hawaii.

So, as we look towards the next subject I did want to touch briefly on, which is our overall leases that are going to be coming up for renegotiation, as you know very well, they are set to expire in 2029. This is a whole-of-military type of discussion that we have had in terms of impact on community, understanding we know our strategic importance and role in the Indo-Pacific, but things like impacts on housing always comes up in every single one of our communities.

I’m running out of time, but I would like to have further questions about how the Army is approaching the lease renewals coming up in 2029. What is the next key deadline you are seeing prior to that, and how we are going to focus on constituent and community engagement, as part of this renewal and prioritization process?

But thank you very much for your service, and I look forward to continued discussions.

I yield back, Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gaetz, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GAETZ. When Secretary Austin was here, neither he nor General Milley could defend some of the bizarre DEI [diversity, equity, inclusion] activities that were going on at the DODEA [Department of Defense Education Activity]. And then, promptly, after my questioning, they shut down the DEI entity at DODEA. So, like maybe we can make similar progress today.

Ms. Wormuth, do you acknowledge that some of the strange manifestations of this DEI embrace have put negative pressures on the Army’s recruiting?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I’m not sure exactly what specifically you are referring to, but when we have done surveys—

Mr. GAETZ. Okay. If you could put that slide up on the screen? I will give you one. I thought that might be where this was going.

So, this is Vignette 8. It is an Army training, and it is regarding the use of showers. The vignette reads, “A soldier transitioned from male to female, as indicated in DEERS [Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System]. The soldier did not have sex reassignment surgery. The transgender service member is using the female showers and has expressed privacy concerns regarding the open

bay shower configuration. Similarly, other soldiers have expressed discomfort showering with a female who has male genitalia.”

And then, you look over at subpart 3 regarding the considerations, it just says, “All soldiers will use the billeting, bathroom, and shower facilities associated with their gender marker in DEERS.”

What is your reaction to that?

Secretary WORMUTH. My reaction, Congressman, is we are focused on building cohesive teams that are trained, disciplined, and fit—

Mr. GAETZ. General McConville, I’ll give you the next chance. Do you think that it builds cohesive teams to have biological males showering with women?

General MCCONVILLE. I think we need to respect the privacy of our soldiers and have an environment where everyone can thrive.

Mr. GAETZ. Well, of course, but that is not an answer to my question.

General MCCONVILLE. Well, that is the—

Mr. GAETZ. You and I spent a good amount of productive time yesterday talking about cohesive team building.

General MCCONVILLE. We did, and—

Mr. GAETZ. Does this advance cohesive team building in your best military opinion?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, I think the fact we are talking about this, and not talking about warfighting, is problematic. Because our focus—

Mr. GAETZ. Well, but that is what the Army does, General. I’m looking here, “Army Policy on Transgender Military Service,” where you guys require training on this stuff. So, don’t you think that when you require training on how to deal with men and women’s shower stalls, and when you have these mandatory trainings on transgender service members, that that takes away from our focus on warfighting?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I think what, you know, again, from the Chief of Staff of the Army, my focus is very clear. I talk to every commander, every sergeant major, in the Army. I do it every single month. And what I talk about is our job is to build cohesive teams that are highly trained. They are disciplined; they are fit, and they are ready to fight and win. And that is where I am at.

Mr. GAETZ. Right, but I am positing that, when there is a focus on how biological men are going to shower with women, and on unconscious bias training, which you require, and on mandatory gender sensitivity training, that like the call is coming from inside the house at DOD on some of these problems. And the proof is in the pudding.

There seems to be a cognitive dissonance between your recruiting nightmare that we are living through, the Nation’s recruiting nightmare at the Army, and this kind of stuff. Because I don’t think it is going to be a big, like, positive recruiting pitch to women that, when someone shows up with male genitalia in their shower stall, that we tell them that we are trying to build a cohesive team. I would posit to you that that probably makes the team a little less cohesive. Will you allow for even that possibility?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, what we have seen in our surveys is that, basically, women are more worried about being sexually harassed in the Army than they are about the kinds of things that you are bringing up.

Mr. GAETZ. Well, don't you think that someone might get sexually harassed if they are showering with a biological male? Don't you think that that environment could potentially increase the likelihood of that? We are all concerned about sexual harassment. We have grappled with these challenges about how to have it in the chain of command or outside the chain of command, but it seems a little silly to sit here and have discussions about the flowchart of a sexual harassment complaint when you have got people with male genitalia showering with your female soldiers.

I want to recruit talented women into our Army, and I am concerned that this weird stuff that you guys are doing is not going to make it more likely that those people are going to sign up.

General McConville, you and I spoke yesterday about the fact that the Army has to recruit extensively men from the American South, that that makes up a wide variety of who is coming into the United States Army. Do you think you are going to recruit more of them with this kind of stuff?

General MCCONVILLE. Probably not.

Mr. GAETZ. And that is the point.

General MCCONVILLE. And I would—

Mr. GAETZ. And I appreciate the honesty. And I know that, in August, you conclude a storied career, and we thank you both for your service.

And we did get somewhere with this last time with Secretary Austin, and I hope you all will reflect on the damage that this embrace of DEI is doing to the military.

The CHAIRMAN. Who is next?

Oh, Ms. Strickland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Thank you, Chairman.

The United States has a long and proud tradition of offering immigrants a path to citizenship through military service. From the Lodge Act of the 1950s to the Military Bases Agreement of the 1990s, America's leaders have found creative ways to improve readiness through the call to service.

Secretary Wormuth, with such an acute recruiting crisis at hand, what is the Army doing to avail themselves of the thousands of Dreamers and other undocumented young men and women eager for a path to citizenship?

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congresswoman.

I know that the Department has—for example, your colleague in the Senate, Senator Duckworth, has introduced legislation that is focused on, you know, trying to look at Dreamers and others who might be interested in serving in the military. And the Department is very supportive of looking at finding ways, for example, to bring the Dreamers into the Army and the other services as a pathway to citizenship. And so, I think we would very much welcome that.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Thank you. My next question is for General McConville. I was pleased to see the selection of Sergeant Major JoAnn Naumann as the next Command Sergeant Major of Army

Special Operations Command, the first woman to occupy the position.

I'm trying to make eye contact with you, sir.

[Laughter.]

Ms. STRICKLAND. As you know, special operations experience is frequently a common denominator among many of the Army senior leaders. Are you satisfied that there are career pipelines available to women capable of consistently producing general officers, part one? And then, part two, what are you doing to ensure that women are both aware of and encouraged to pursue opportunities in the special operations community?

General MCCONVILLE. Well, first of all, we are very proud of the women that are serving in the special operations community. And I think now that we have assignments opened up to everybody, that based on your merit, you can rise to the highest levels. You know, we have Laura Richardson, who is a four-star general, who came out of combat aviation.

But in the military, or at least in the Army, the combat arms tend to have more general officers than the other branches. So, those branches are open. And then, we also have an obligation to, just like anyone else, recognize that talent throughout the ranks and make sure they get the appropriate experiences, so when they get to that level, they are highly qualified for those jobs.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Great. And I just want to go on record to let you all know that the majority of this country supports the work you do and understands that a diverse, equitable, and inclusive military is a strong one. We have a volunteer military, and everyone who is qualified who wants to serve should have the ability to do so. So, thank you very much for your leadership.

I yield my time, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Fallon, for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALLON. General McConville, thank you for your service and your storied career. And this may sound odd coming from someone from Texas, but "Go Red Sox."

General McConville, did General Milley over the last few weeks perhaps talk to you about the Humvee ABS [antilock brake system] and ESC [electronic stability control] program?

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, he has.

Mr. FALLON. Wonderful. Because we had talked and he did promise me in this committee room that he was going to discuss this with you, and I'm glad he did. So, thank you for that.

Secretary Wormuth, does the name Specialist Luis Herrera mean anything to you?

Secretary WORMUTH. I'm not sure that I have heard of that specialist, Congressman.

Mr. FALLON. Okay. Specialist Herrera was from Marion, North Carolina, and he was killed in a rollover with the Humvees. And as you know, there have been about 900 of these incidents and we have lost 125 service members to rollovers.

And we are very supportive. We have a bipartisan group of members on this committee that have allocated nearly \$300 million for this program to retrofit approximately how many Humvees? Do you know, offhand?

Secretary WORMUTH. We have 106,000, I think, approximately, in the overall fleet right now.

Mr. FALLON. And there is about, from what the Army told us, in the neighborhood of 48,000 that are eligible for retrofitting. And why this is important is it saves lives, number one. Also, instead of buying new ones, this will save the Army \$8 billion to retrofit them instead of buying new ones.

And so, my question is, in fiscal year 2022, we allocated \$193 million. And, Secretary, we haven't even spent all of that money yet. And then, last year, we allocated \$119 million for this fiscal year. And I believe that money hasn't even been touched yet.

And from what we are being told, there are between 500 and 700 vehicles that are being retrofitted every month. The problem is the kit manufacturer and the folks that actually do the labor at Red River Army Depot are telling us that they have the capabilities to retrofit 1,000 to 1,200 per month. And when we drag our feet, military members are losing their lives.

So, I would like to ask, why in the world are we delaying when this is not a controversial issue? We have bipartisan support on it, and it is saving the taxpayers billions of dollars and soldiers' lives.

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, of course we take the safety of our soldiers incredibly seriously, and we never want to see soldiers be injured or die in accidents that are preventable.

As you said, you know, we are investing. We are taking sort of a combined approach of retrofitting our existing Humvees, and it was my sense that we had not only been doing that at sort of full rate at Red River, but that we had actually had to spread some of that work to other locations. But then, we are also buying some new JLTVs [Joint Light Tactical Vehicles] that have the anti-lock brake systems on them, because the Humvee is an old vehicle, and we want to get new vehicles—

Mr. FALLON. Yes, and I have no problem with—you know, we are moving towards those. But in a November 2022 meeting, we met with the program office and General Warner and let them know, if you need any help from us, please—if you need any authorizations or anything, we are here for you.

And so, I'm begging you and General McConville to help us out, because the money is there. The labor is there. And I think that we need—the vendor has been very successful, and we need a contract that lasts a year. We are giving you money on an annual basis to get this work done because it is absolutely inexcusable.

So, just in summary, we save \$8 billion. And, General McConville, I'm sure if we gave you \$8 billion, you could put it to good use. It saves lives. But we are, again, dragging our feet.

And please, can you commit to us, Madam Secretary, that we can get this up to full capacity immediately?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I'm certainly happy to look at, if there is money that is not being spent and there is capacity of the workforce, I'm happy to look into that.

Mr. FALLON. Yes, from what we were told, it is over \$100 million that hasn't been spent and there is the capacity there. So, I would love to work with your office—

Secretary WORMUTH. I will certainly look into that. Happy to work with you on that.

Mr. FALLON. Please. Thank you.

Thank you, General, and again, congratulations on a storied career. You are a great American, sir.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Virginia, Mrs. McClellan, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you to the witnesses.

General McConville, thank you for your service and congratulations on your retirement.

I have the pleasure of representing Fort Gregg-Adams, formerly known as Fort Lee, and I want to take a deeper dive on some of the quality-of-life issues.

First, I will say the three issues we hear the most from, from the service men and woman and their families, is housing, particularly, the quality of the barracks and the dormitories there; access to mental health services and the mental health workforce; and childcare. We have touched on each of those, but I want to dive a little bit deeper into childcare. And I'm making my staff nervous by asking a completely off-scripted question.

Following up on your comment, Madam Secretary, on the difficulty of getting background checks, does the DOD, do you do your own background checks, or do you rely on those done by State or local services?

Secretary WORMUTH. I believe we rely on, I think, the Department's consolidated agency that does background checks.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. And do you allow portable background checks, or do you have to have a background check every time a person applies for a particular childcare job?

Secretary WORMUTH. I would imagine we probably check every time.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. Okay. We have found in Virginia that when we allow portable background checks, that opens up a lot of doors because we saw where someone may be applying for five different childcare jobs, they had to get a background check every single time. If they get a job within a year, they would have to get another background check, and there was a huge backlog. So, if that is something we need to look into for you all, I think we should.

I think we also need—well, are you finding the challenges to increasing the workforce greater or about the same for your child development centers versus your centers for school-age children?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think I would say they are about the same. I mean, we are really just in a war for talent against, you know, the private sector, Walmart, Amazon, Target—you name it.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. Thank you.

And childcare is not just about providing care. I think they are called child development centers for a reason, because you are developing the child. And we know that 90 percent of a child's brain is developed before they are 5.

And so, can you talk about what you all are doing, through your childcare programs, to ensure kindergarten readiness, and in your school-age programs to ensure that you are helping those children with any sort of K-12 needs that they have?

Secretary WORMUTH. Sure. You know, one, I would say, I was a working mom. My kids are now off in college. But anytime I go to see an Army daycare center, I am just really impressed by the quality of the facilities, but also the staff.

You know, we have very strict standards for certification for our daycare workers. So, they have to be trained and certified to be able to provide age-appropriate educational development. And I think, to my knowledge, we are doing everything that we are supposed to be doing to get kids ready for kindergarten.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. And as part of that, are you developing partnerships with the school superintendents in the area, so that you can ensure that whatever curriculum you are using in your child development centers is aligned with the curriculum that they will face when they begin kindergarten?

Secretary WORMUTH. You know, I would have to look into that, Congresswoman, to see if we are doing that specifically. I know in many locales we are partnering with colleges and universities that have children's education programs and bringing in those students to be, basically, interns in our daycare centers, for example.

Mrs. MCCLELLAN. If you are not, I strongly encourage you to do that. Because what we have also seen and studies show is, if those curriculums are not aligned, all the gains that that child gained before they started kindergarten will be lost by third grade because those curriculum are not aligned. And you really are laying the foundation for those children on whether or not they are going to succeed once they enter kindergarten and beyond. So, I strongly encourage you to do that.

And I probably don't have time for another question. So, again, General, I want to thank you for your service, and thank you all for testifying here today.

And if you have not been to Fort Gregg-Adams to look at the barracks and the dormitories there, I invite you to do that. They really need some attention as well.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentlelady. Excellent line of questioning.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. McCormick, for 5 minutes.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

General, first of all, it is a pleasure to see you in person. Thank you for your service. We have actually known some of the same people. We have served in some of the same places and in the same units. And I just found out recently that you actually yelled at a junior Army officer who happens to be now my Chief. So, I get to yell at him every day, too. So, we have that in common also, Phillip Singleton. I'm sure he will be happy to hear I said that.

I'm a little bit concerned. As we move forward in the next generation of weapons systems. Squad automatic weapon, when I grew up it was the M249. Now, we are moving into a different caliber weapon, away from the 5.56 into a 6.88 or 6.8, I believe. It is not a 7.72. It is not a standard round that we have had in the past. So, we are starting a whole new chain of ammunition production that we have never had before. And is it a NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] round, by the way?

Secretary WORMUTH. No, Congressman, I don't believe so.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Okay. So, my concern is, obviously, we do a lot of joint operations. We are going to have a lot of supply around the world of different munitions. You could see what we are doing with Ukraine, and we are going to give them weapon systems or ammunition. Why would we go away from something we have basically standardized since the Napoleonic era, where we tried to standardize ammunition size and something we distribute? Why would we go to a new size of caliber weapon system at this time in history? I don't get it.

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, I think—and I'm sure the Chief would want to elaborate on this—but it is my understanding that we needed to do that because of we needed the sort of penetration ability that that new caliber could give us, given some of the adversaries and equipment that they have.

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, I would just say lethality, and I think we owe you a private meeting on this thing; we get behind the scenes.

I just talked to one of our senior leaders who has got tremendous operational experience, and probably one of the best in the Army. And I asked him about the new weapon system. He says the best he has ever seen, and this person, I would be glad to share with you who he is and his background.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Okay.

General MCCONVILLE. But there is a reason we went to that caliber. That caliber is the perfect sweet spot. The weapon itself—and this is someone that has served in our most elite units and have done some incredible things. And he was just talking about how lethal; this is going to change the way our soldiers operate on the battlefield. And that is why we went to the 6.8.

Dr. MCCORMICK. And the 7.62 is just a little bit too large—

General MCCONVILLE. A little too large, and the 5.56 was just a little too—I mean, again, we were aware of the logistics.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Okay.

General MCCONVILLE. We did take a hard look at that, but, at the end of the day, what drove this capability is lethality. And we owe you a briefing on it—

Dr. MCCORMICK. Okay. Great.

General MCCONVILLE [continuing]. And what is behind that.

Dr. MCCORMICK. Maybe it will become a new standard for NATO forces, too, as we move on. That would be awesome.

Singapore has a newly established digital and intelligence service, and they are seeking partnerships with other countries, especially allied nations' militaries, notable to those dedicated cyber services. CYBERCOM [U.S. Cyber Command] is, obviously, our focal point. However, they are persistently stretched beyond their resources right now.

Like our Singaporean counterparts, do you think, if we supported a dedicated cyber service which could offer a bandwidth beyond what we are currently afforded by CYBERCOM today, would that be a good thing?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, you know, I don't think the Department has done a study yet looking at a separate cyber force.

I, personally, you know, my sense at this point is I would be reluctant to go in that direction, and here is why.

You know, as I came to understand when I became Secretary of the Army, we are the biggest consumer, actually, of space capabilities, not the Air Force. And we have the best understanding of what our needs are. And I think we have the best understanding of what our cyber needs are. And I'm sure the Air Force has its own unique needs.

So, I would be concerned that, by creating a standalone cyber force, you would be creating new headquarters, new billets for GOs [general officers], and might actually be taking it away from the home services, if you will, that know best what their requirements are.

Dr. MCCORMICK. That is interesting. That was one of my concerns as well, when I was briefed on this, because there is, obviously, point and counterpoint to this. There are advantages and disadvantages, but that is exactly my concerns that I issued also.

I'm running out short. So, I'm going to kind of—actually, let's stick to this because it is my home district, or at least near me. Fort Gordon, recently, there has been some reports on the dilapidated state of that. And you mentioned, actually, in your opening remarks that that is a concern of yours. But it sounded like other people have forts in their areas that are also bad. I'm a Marine, so I'm used to some austere facilities. But do you think you have enough for your budget to make those improvements that are needed right now?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, I would say, you know, the inventory of our housing is enormous. So, we don't have enough in our budget to get it done in 1 or 2 years. But we just sent some of our officials to Fort Gordon, and we are laser-focused on Balfour Beatty and getting them to improve the housing at Fort Gordon.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Nevada, Mr. Horsford, for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and to the ranking member.

General McConville, congratulations. Thank you for your service and best to you and your family.

I have four military installations in my district, in Nevada's Fourth District. One of them is the Hawthorne Army Depot, which is housed on over a 140,000 acres and provides an explosive storage capacity of 7,685,000 square feet. It is quite an important and secure facility.

I'm just curious, when was the last time either of you visited the Hawthorne Army Depot and what did you think of the facilities and the equipment of the base?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I have not yet been to Hawthorne. But what I can tell you from some of the other depots and ammo plants I have been to is, I am always incredibly impressed by the quality of the workforce there and the pride they take in the work that they do. And I imagine that I would see that if I went to Hawthorne tomorrow.

Mr. HORSFORD. Well, I will extend an invitation. We have Armed Services Day on May 20th. It is the greatest parade in the country,

and we will have the American flag that will rise and walk down the streets of Hawthorne.

Can you outline some of the steps that you are taking to address the special requirements and funding needs of the smaller, rural installations in order to ensure proper maintenance and readiness at these crucial sites?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly. You know, for all of our ammos— ammo plants, depots, and arsenals, a lot of them are very old and in need of reinvestment, because they provide critical capabilities for us. So, we have a 15-year plan to try to, basically, modernize our industrial base.

And what we have done is essentially identified \$18 billion worth of requirements to invest in them, and this year's budget has \$1.5 billion focused on updating our arsenals and depots.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you.

I agree, and I believe investing in the future force relies on timely, adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding in every budget cycle in concert with a focused plan. So, I look forward to working with you on that.

Secretary Wormuth, thank you for stating, both in your testimony and in response to one of the colleagues on the other side, that the Army is committed to reducing the harmful behaviors that break trust with soldiers and the American people. These harmful behaviors you list as sexual assault and harassment, acts of extremism, and racism, among others. Can you expand on what the Army is currently doing to reduce these behaviors?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly. And I think it is really important because we have to have cohesive teams, as General McConville has said multiple times. You know, we bring together young people from all around the country from all different kinds of backgrounds, and they have got to be able to work together and respect each other.

So, we really try and focus on making sure that our soldiers know what right looks like, and frankly, what wrong looks like. So, a lot of training around sexual harassment, for example, is focused on helping our soldiers know what they can do and what they shouldn't be doing.

And one of the things we are doing to help us across the board, whether it is with sexual harassment or suicide prevention, is hiring a prevention workforce, so that we can have folks who are really focused on trying to make sure these behaviors don't happen in the first place. And we have hired the first tranche of prevention workers, but we are going to continue to be doing that in the next couple of years.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you.

Finally, I care about our military members and their concerns. And if we push changes on them without a sound strategy to fulfill the mission line, then the holistic concept of readiness is not fully achieved.

With this in mind, the Army's new unit lifecycle model, designed to address readiness issues caused by high operational tempo, has come under question due to the emerging COCOM [combatant command] requirements that challenge it. Has the Army made a plan

to combat these issues to achieve the full stated implementation by 2023?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, what we are really trying to do—our biggest challenge is unpredictability of world events. You know, we need to be able to take units that are going to get some of this new equipment and give them a protected period of time to shed their old equipment and get their new equipment and start training on their new equipment.

So, what we are really focused on is working with our combatant commanders to try to get more predictability on what their needs are going to be. And the Chief does that in his role as a member of the Joint Chiefs. I will be honest with you, it is a constant struggle because the world is unpredictable, but we are trying hard to stay agile.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. Finstad, for 5 minutes.

Mr. FINSTAD. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Smith.

Thank you as well, Madam Secretary and General.

I'm relatively new to this committee and I was told early on that you never want to get in between a hungry general and his lunch, and here I am. So, I will be specific and quick and get you out of here as soon as we can.

But I would like to introduce and touch on a specific issue that impacts so many Active Duty service men and women, as well as veterans, and that is hearing loss. And as a farmer who has grown up around large, loud equipment, this resonates to me.

And so, according to the Defense Hearing Center of Excellence, the ability to hear and communicate is critical to soldier and unit safety, central to effective command and control, and integral to mission accomplishment. However, despite military services stressing the importance of using hearing protection and the establishment of conservation programs, military hearing loss and auditory injuries remain a consistent issue, including with our veteran population.

The Veterans Benefits Administration reported that in fiscal year 2022, there were over 2.7 million veterans receiving disability compensation for tinnitus and 1.4 million veterans receiving benefits for hearing loss. These numbers make tinnitus and hearing loss the number one and number three combat-related injury for our service members.

Our military men and women are equipped with the best technology available, and this should be the same when it comes to hearing protection. Many individuals do not wear passive protection, such as foam earplugs, because they only suppress noise and do not allow for situational awareness. And again, as a farmer, guilty of this also.

Conversely, active hearing protection technology can prevent hearing injury. And again, I just want to say, active hearing protection technology can prevent hearing injury, while allowing service members to remain aware of their operational environment—a benefit from improved overall situational awareness and increasing

mission effectiveness, safety, and survivability. Active hearing protection devices have the potential to save the Defense Department and Veterans Administration millions of dollars by reducing hearing injuries and post-service disabilities.

So, with that said—and again, keeping this very focused—General, can you provide me or provide us with an update—or Madam Secretary—an update of what the Army is doing to fulfill the Department of Defense's policy of protecting all military personnel and noise-exposed civilian personnel from hearing loss resulting from hazardous occupational and operational noise exposure? And have you found any of these programs successful for the Army?

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, you know, certainly, we want to make sure, again, that our soldiers are protected. And my husband is retired Navy, not retired Army, but he definitely has hearing loss from his time in the Navy.

And as you said, we have a Hearing Center of Excellence, and our PEO [Program Executive Office] Soldier is always looking for new technologies to be able to make sure that our soldiers' hearing is protected. So, that is, generally, we use our Hearing Center of Excellence and our PEO Soldier to look at new technologies and to test new technologies.

I would have to take your question for the record to give you a more detailed answer on what programs we found to be successful.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 102.]

Mr. FINSTAD. General, any comments on this?

General MCCONVILLE. No, I think we have made tremendous strides from when I came in the Army in 1977 at West Point. I think, just like you said, having flown helicopters for 35, 40 years, and we probably were not as sensitized to hearing loss as we are, and if we could walk it back, we might have done things differently. But I have two sons that are pilots now. I see the active protection that they have.

We have had some problems with hearing protection over the years, when we thought we had hearing protection and we did not have hearing protection. And that is a different story.

But I do think that that is definitely part of our safety training. It is definitely part of those who are around—and trying to get that sweet spot where you can hear what is going on for situational awareness, at the same time protect your hearing, you know, is very important.

Mr. FINSTAD. Yes. So, I would just say that, with the advancement of technology, you know, there are all kinds of awesome products now that exist.

And, Madam Secretary, to your point, my wife says I have a listening loss problem, not a hearing loss problem. So, maybe that is what is going on.

But, no, I just thank you both. And I want to reiterate the importance of the Active Duty hearing protection and urge you both just to continue to work to ensure that we are providing our service men and women with adequate protection, so that they will not suffer these lifelong consequences.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Finstad, my wife says I suffer from the same disability.

The gentleman from New Mexico, Mr. Vasquez, is recognized.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Wormuth and General McConville, for taking the time to speak with us today.

My district in southern New Mexico is home to White Sands Missile Range just outside of Las Cruces, where we say, "The first mile of missile testing is free at 5,200 feet."

But this part of the country has also, historically, had some disadvantages. And it has been susceptible to extremely high winds, flash flooding, record monsoons, which can lead to power outages and other disruptions to energy systems.

Earlier this year, construction began on a microgrid system at White Sands that will be capable of providing 14 days of power for the installation's water system, should there be a wider power outage. This project is funded under the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program, or ERCIP. While this is a critical step in the right direction, it is only the beginning of a long list of important infrastructure projects that are needed at White Sands and across the country, as we have heard today.

General McConville, can you talk about how the Army is approaching energy resiliency on bases and the advantages of programs like ERCIP that use appropriated funds versus third-party financing vehicles, or even utilities privatization, as a means of achieving energy resiliency?

General McCONVILLE. Well, I look at it, as far as energy resiliency, really as a readiness factor on our camps, posts, and forts. And when I look at it, we have got to be ready to operate 24/7. So, if something happens out in the community—we have seen this happen—having the capability to do that is absolutely essential. How we do that, I would defer to those who actually make those types of decisions, what is the best path. We want to do it most efficiently, effectively, but at the end of the day, I want to make sure that our posts can operate, because we never know when we are going to get the call.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, General.

And so, would you say that, then, renewable energy projects and the complementary microgrids help greatly with the readiness of military installations, like White Sands Missile Range, and should continue to be part of the overall investment?

General McCONVILLE. Well, what I would say is, having energy resiliency at a post is very important. How we do that, I would have to take a look at each of the programs and come back with a recommendation.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 101.]

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you so much, General.

I also want to talk about three of the other Army's priorities: people, readiness, and modernization. Particularly, the first and most important is the people who serve. As the Department of Defense's premier research and testing facility, it is extremely important to me that we have service members at White Sands Missile Range that are taken care of.

Recently, my staff visited White Sands and I was disappointed to learn that members of our special ops forces are living outside in tents, and it is not temporary. They said that when the wind picks up, the tents are literally blown away, especially during this windy season in New Mexico. Even if the soldiers were in permanent housing, the barracks at White Sands Missile Range are outdated and don't meet the standards of square footage per soldier. And we have heard from many colleagues that this is a recurring issue at some of their existing forts and other military installations as well.

For us, these are amongst our most highly trained units, our special ops forces, and right now, they don't have the dignity of having a roof over their head. We have to do better, and we should do better.

Secretary Wormuth, when does the Army plan to upgrade the facilities at White Sands Missile Range to properly house the soldiers in my district?

Secretary WORMUTH. [Inaudible] call to General Jon Braga at USASOC—

The CHAIRMAN. I don't think your microphone is on.

Secretary WORMUTH. Oh, I'm sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Secretary WORMUTH. First of all, I will look into the situation that you are calling my attention to right away, and I will talk to General Jon Braga at USASOC [U.S. Army Special Operations Command].

Just as we—I went down to USASOC and heard about the barracks at Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg. They were unsatisfactory, and we got our soldiers out immediately. So, we may have a similar situation here.

I think what you have probably heard through the course of the morning is that our inventory of barracks is so enormous that we can't get to all of it that needs to be remodeled or torn down and rebuilt in just a year or two. So, we are trying to go about it in an organized, prioritized way, but I will look specifically at the situation at White Sands.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, Secretary.

And this is an Air Force issue, but, similarly, at Holloman Air Force Base, we have also heard that the prioritization of housing improvements is not made in an equitable way and doesn't consider some of these environmental factors or the requirements of training, and the hardships of training for specific missions.

So, I think we could figure out a better way to categorize the expenditures that we are going to make, based on a different priority level that helps folks like the special ops forces at White Sands Missile Range, so they aren't put to or kicked to the bottom of the list because they don't meet outdated requirements.

So, thank you for that, working on that, Secretary.

And, General, thank you for your legacy of service. I truly appreciate it.

And with that, I yield back my time. Thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, Secretary, I think that you can tell from Mr. Vasquez's questioning, and a whole host of people, is housing is one

of the big problems. And you heard from me and the ranking member yesterday this is a priority for us.

I would like for you and your colleagues in the other services to get us an aggressive plan for remedying that and let us worry about the money. Because we are serious about going after this, but help us help you.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Guam, Mr. Moylan, for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOYLAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, a key corridor for the movement of military material is from Guam's harbor to Andersen Air Force Base. Currently, this movement places a strain on our public roads and could pose a security vulnerability.

If the Department of Defense were to construct a defense access road from the harbor to Andersen Air Force Base, first, what role could the Army Corps of Engineers play, and second, would your office be open to extending this discussion and possibly supporting the funding of a study for this endeavor.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman.

I am actually going to be going out to Guam later this summer. So, I look forward to seeing the situation there for myself. I have not yet been there before.

As you know, as we continue to put the plan together for defense of Guam, there are going to be a lot of investments in Guam and the infrastructure there. I'm certain that the Army Corps of Engineers would play a critical role broadly in terms of improving the infrastructure, but, specifically, potentially, on this road.

I'm not familiar with the specific access road that you are mentioning but would certainly be happy to learn more about it.

Mr. MOYLAN. Thank you.

My next question is, I understand the Medal of Honor is a distinguished recognition provided to service members for their selfless and heroic acts. But, sadly, despite having among the highest number of enlistments in the Nation per capita, no one from Guam has ever been recognized for this at this level. This includes a hero who threw himself at a grenade during the Vietnam conflict to protect his company. While he survived, he suffered lifelong injuries until he passed away several years ago.

Now, 59 heroes made similar sacrifices during the Vietnam war and were awarded the distinguished Medal of Honor. In fact, there were 12 such heroes from World War II, 26 from the Korean war, and 1 from the Afghan war—all honored with this medal.

Would you say that a specialist from Guam whose heroic efforts, where, literally, he lost his life, but saved others, in a war he was drafted to fight in, is deserving of such an honor?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, as you probably know, we have a very rigorous process to consider individuals for the Medal of Honor. Often, particularly if the person has passed away, it can be challenging to rebuild the records. But if there is new information that has come to light for the specialist that you believe bolsters the case for him being considered for the Medal of Honor, I would be happy to have my team work with your office to submit those records, so that his package could be considered.

Mr. MOYLAN. All right. Thank you.

Actually, those records were submitted before, but as it works up the chain, somehow it always disappears. But we do have the copies and we will work with you on that to resubmit for that medal.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you. Happy to work with you.

Mr. MOYLAN. And finally, for my last question, yesterday, Admiral Aquilino testified that he needed an additional \$147 million to integrate the joint missile defense system in Guam, as reflected by his unfunded priority list. With this additional funding, would the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command be able to improve its capacity for joint coordination? And how does the Army's budget support a layer of 360-degree missile defense of Guam?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, we have made a number of investments in our budget in integrated air and missile defenses. I don't have the figure right off the top of my head. But I know Admiral Aquilino has a long list of things that he would like to see invested in in INDOPACOM.

We have an \$185 billion a year. The Chief and I try to do the best we can to take care of our people, invest in new weapon systems, and maintain our readiness. So, we have made some investments. I'm sure Admiral Aquilino would like us to do more.

Mr. MOYLAN. Yes. Thank you, Madam Secretary, but I would stress, the \$140 million is absolutely necessary. It is on top of his priority list. I think, without this, we are putting our troops at danger, and especially, our district and Guam, many U.S. lives in danger.

The more forward we get this, the more we are able to complete this, and the admiral has spoken about it, just like the completion of our forts on Guam with the additional H-2B workers. With this, it will make a great difference. Without this, it will be very harmful to our Nation's defense, and I am very concerned about our citizens in Guam, our American citizens there.

So, please, let's make sure we get that priority that the admiral has specifically said is very—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Davis, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

I also would like to thank Madam Secretary.

To the General, thank you so much and we appreciate your service.

I'm concerned, as we are fighting to maintain the freedom and security of the American people, we also, obviously, have to continue fighting for our kids here. So, I'm very much concerned about the lack of childcare development centers at many of our installations.

In North Carolina, there are numerous installations that need new or additional CDCs. At Fort Bragg, there is currently an 800-child backlog for spots at the existing CDCs on the post. The real number, who knows what that is. Because I'm sure at some point you see there is an 800-child backlog; you just say, "I give up," and not even sign up.

This is not just a North Carolina issue. I do understand it is more broader in the Army. But going beyond just staffing, what is the Army doing to help address the issue? And I'm going to ask in

a couple of ways. On the post itself? But then, off post in terms of building relationships to absorb this capacity? Because, at the end of the day, we have to provide our soldiers with sufficient access to childcare, so that their focus can be on defending the Nation.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman. And you are right, it is not just a Fort Bragg problem. It is something I hear about pretty much everywhere I go.

We are trying to do a few different things, as I think you are aware. One is to build more CDCs. We have built a number of them in the last couple of years, and we are going to be building several more in the coming years.

Part of it is about optimizing the level of staffing. We are also trying to get more families on post to participate in our family childcare center, which is, basically, sort of in-home daycare. We are trying to incentivize that, where households that have participated in that, who PCS [permanent change of station] but stay in the program, get sort of a bonus.

Because, again, we are trying to sort of thicken the capacity there.

And then, we have also increased the monthly subsidy, the fee assistance that we provide folks who go off post to get daycare. So, we have raised that from \$1,500 a month to about \$1,700 a month.

So, we are trying to get after it in as many different ways as we can.

Mr. DAVIS. Okay. And I absolutely agree with the statement provided in the testimony, that every single suicide is one tragedy too many, which brings me to another concern. Suicide prevention is an issue that I raised personally with Secretary Austin, and I'm grateful for his commitment, you know, the funding, with the workforce and the funds that we are moving through the Congress.

But when we look, specifically, at the Army, compare it to 2021, and we see a decrease by 2022, I'm just understanding, based on what you were sharing earlier, this move towards prevention, a prevention workforce. Would you attribute that as to helping to curtail—

Secretary WORMUTH. Well, Congressman, we have just started hiring the prevention workforce. So, I think the decrease that we saw last year, you can't attribute to that. I think what I have seen is a lot of our great leaders, you know, really putting a spotlight and putting their energy on this. So, General Brian Eifler up in Alaska, for example, and his team, they have been really focused on it.

I think the prevention workforce will help us. Part of what they are going to do is help us make better use of the data that we have, so that we can try to predict things and see trends better.

But I think, you know, what is working, from what I can tell—and it is hard to tell—is application of behavioral health resources, but also chaplains, military family life counselors. Trying to help soldiers—a lot of the causes sometimes you see behind suicide are relationship problems, substance abuse problems, money problems. So, giving our soldiers resources to help with their marriages, help with their finances, that helps, and just emphasizing connections between our leaders, our soldiers, their buddies, and their families. But it is a hard problem.

Mr. DAVIS. Going back to the prevention workforce, do you see it helping or is there any way of gauging how it may actually help?

Secretary WORMUTH. I think, you know, as we hire more of the prevention workforce and sort of have them fan out across our major installations, we will be better able to see how it is helping. Certainly, our intent and our belief is that having people who are able to help us focus on stopping harmful behaviors before they happen will help us.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you so much again, and we do yield back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. That was an excellent line of questioning.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from—is it Missouri next? Mills? All right. Mills from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, I know that we are talking a lot about the Army budget. And one of the things we continually talk about is support and buildup for our industrial base. You know, I have had the unique pleasure of not only serving on this great committee, but also as a United States Army combat veteran and a defense owner of a business who has real understanding of what we face today, whether it is through Picatinny, PEO, or any other procurement arms.

The thing that I continue to see time and time again, and this really impacted us when we went to that lowest cost, technically acceptable bid, but, then, failed to understand that we still had a best and final offer approach, that if a person who had qualified for BAFO—meaning they meet the technical acceptabilities, but was outside of the 20 percent competitive range—even though they would save taxpayers money, they would be removed from the bid.

And when I was recognizing this and it was tailored more towards the primary, large defense business industry, there was another creation that had occurred with a Mentor-Protégé Program, which, essentially, became something that was utilized by the larger companies to do nothing but utilize the smaller ones for tax shelters or to ensure they didn't get a certain amount of revenue which would have actually allowed them to show profits.

So, I look at the fact that, while I do agree this is the time when we need to be focusing on not just our industrial base buildout, but I really truly believe that we need to also be looking at procurement reform, where we are slowing down our ability. And right now, it is about keeping the fastest pace.

And I think that what we need to be looking at is true procurement reform that not only supports the things that we need to put into field, but also ensuring that the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls, when it comes to the weaponization or the dismissals from our DSP-5 and DSP-83s, the timeliness of how we do our approvals, really needs to be reviewed.

And so, my question for you, Madam Secretary, is, do you support procurement reform with regards to how we are conducting things now?

Secretary WORMUTH. Certainly, Congressman, I'm always in favor of looking at how we can develop and acquire and field new capabilities more efficiently and effectively.

Mr. MILLS. And the other thing that I notice is that, while we look at things—and I will just utilize the Iowa Army munition factory as an example—you know, most of these facilities are GOCO-run facilities, where it is a government-owned, corporate-operated facility, which, actually, in turn, is not the most cost-effective. And in many cases, the way that it is laid out and designed, it makes it very ineffective.

The example of that is, when the Iowa Army munition factory was bidding to try and support the buildout for the Australian Defense Force, the ADF, they actually couldn't get the quality to exceed that of a smaller, private company, even after billions of dollars in investment.

And so, one of the things that I looked at, and the reasoning for this, that these companies kept being able to run these GOCOs, is that there is a bit of a conflict of interest that has been established, whereby many of the members who are within the contracting department don't have the necessary moratorium time. And so, as soon as they actually start contracting operations, they, in most cases, are just thinking about whether or not they can go sit on the board of that company right after they retire.

So, do you support a moratorium that would enable, that we could kind of reduce or deconflict some of that that is going on within the contracting agencies?

Secretary WORMUTH. Congressman, I would certainly be open to looking at what kinds of policies can be put in place to avoid conflicts of interest. You know, as a political appointee, I certainly have a 2-year window. And I think looking at those kinds of policies is appropriate.

Mr. MILLS. And I think that one of the things that has been abused for far too long is that there is a kind of 1- to 2-year icing period. But what happens in the loophole is that I, for example, am not allowed to talk directly with you because we may have contracted. But what I can do is ask my great colleague, Mark Alford, to go ahead and call and say, "Hey, tell Ms.—tell the Secretary that I said hello from me, Cory Mills." And immediately, they'd know that I'm at that company, and now I have not directly contracted and discussed anything with you, but we know that that is the loop way or the loophole that kind of is worked around.

So, I want to tell you that I am all in favor, 100 percent, of supporting the Army and what you are trying to do, as well as for the entire defense industry and building our capabilities to meet our adversaries. But I want to ensure, as a United States Congressman, that we are always being good stewards of the taxpayers' money.

And so, we have a lot of great challenges that we must face. I know that you guys are dealing not just with the industrial base, but recruitment efforts. And I think that a lot of that that you are addressing right now is to improve the quality of life of our soldiers, which is truly important, which will get our recruitment up. Taking care of the spouses; getting the necessary counseling that is needed; making sure childcare is there; making sure that our salary increases reflect what is necessary for them to not have to worry about their spouse when they are abroad.

So, I commend you on the efforts to try and do this and hope that we can look more stringent when it comes to our procurement process.

With that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Alford, for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ranking Member, thank you.

Just to clarify, Mr. Mills, I am not going into business with you anytime soon.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ALFORD. All right. We have an important job to do here.

Well, thank you so much for being here. I know we are at the end of the day. You get the front row here, but we are almost done.

We have talked a lot in this committee about the unprecedented recruitment crisis in the military. As you know, the Army has very much struggled, missing its 2022 recruitment goals by 15,000 soldiers, roughly 25 percent.

I believe that part of the issue is improving our barracks, making it more livable for our men and women who are willing to serve, who are willing to die for our country. It is going to help in our recruitment efforts.

I recently visited Fort Leonard Wood, which is in our district. We train some, or they train some 80,000 personnel each year—a great, fantastic facility. But they have some problems down there—problems with their housing. We need to prioritize this for phase two of the advanced individual training barracks and modernization, and we need to modernize some of our ranges down there.

I was in one of the barracks that was built some 50 years ago, and they are doing the best they can, making this thing run on duct tape and baling wire, basically. I saw cracks in concrete, not a danger right now, but time is of the essence and getting some places for our men and women to live, that they are not looking for a palace or a Taj Mahal. They are looking for someplace that is safe and operational.

And I understand money is tight, very tight. And I do appreciate the funding dedicated to family housing for Fort Leonard Wood in the President's 2024 budget. I want to make sure that our soldiers and their families have the best possible housing—and again, not luxurious, but something they can be proud to live in as well.

As you know, it is going to take significant investment over multiple years to address the challenges. And I'm committed to working with you and working with the bases to make sure that happens.

First question for Secretary Wormuth and General McConville. On February 1st of 2023, I sent a letter to both of you detailing our request to prioritize the advanced individual training barracks, phase two, at Fort Leonard Wood. In the President's budget, or at least in the Army's unfunded priorities list, since this funding was not included in either, can you please talk about why, despite planning and design funding being appropriated in fiscal year 2022, this barracks project was not included in fiscal year 2024 budget request, the Army's unfunded priorities list, nor the 5-year Future Years Defense Program? Ma'am, I'll start with you.

Secretary WORMUTH. Thank you, Congressman, and I'm actually going to be going to Fort Leonard Wood in a couple of weeks. I look forward to that and I will certainly go and look at the barracks that you are mentioning.

As I think you have heard us say in response to a number of great questions about housing, the inventory of barracks that we have in the Army that need renovation or need, frankly, just total teardown and rebuild, is larger than the amount of the budget that we have in any given year or two to be able to spend. And so, we have a very thorough process called the Facility Investment Plan that allows us to work with commanders, work with the commanding general at Fort Leonard Wood, to try to prioritize how we are going to go about that work.

And we refresh that every year because sometimes we come to realize that barracks are in worse shape than we thought. And if so, we move projects up. But, at the end of the day, it boils down to we just don't have the money to do everything all at once.

But I will certainly look forward to seeing those barracks—

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you.

Secretary WORMUTH [continuing]. And see for myself whether we need to move them up in the plan.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you.

And would you, also, please visit one of the ranges there? I believe it is Range Number 8. We were there. It is not even operational. We went out there and it is sad. It is built on old seventies technology. The targets cannot ascend to where they can be shot at. And so, they are losing. And I'm really worried at a surge capacity, we are not going to have the training necessary to get our young men and women ready for active battle.

Secretary WORMUTH. I will visit that while I am there, sir.

Mr. ALFORD. Okay. Thank you.

General, I think the Chinese spy balloon highlighted the need to ensure that we have a collective domestic response, should an attack on the homeland happen. Can you take a minute to speak to the importance of homeland defense mission and how the Army contributes to something that can—and we only have 20 seconds; I'm sorry.

General McCONVILLE. No, I think we protect—we exist to protect the Nation. That is both home and abroad. And we have great forces here that provide, and some of the forces on the chemical, and all those types of things that happen, come out of Fort Leonard Wood. And we have great soldiers doing that every single day. And that is what we exist to do.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back and thank you for this great hearing, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And I think that the witnesses heard a theme today, and we are going to help you go after that.

I really appreciate your service to this country. General, I wish you well in your retirement.

Secretary, we are not through with you.

[Laughter.]

Secretary WORMUTH. I'm not going anywhere.

The CHAIRMAN. That is right. Thank you all for your time. And we are adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 1:00 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

APRIL 19, 2023

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 19, 2023

RECORD VERSION

**STATEMENT BY
THE HONORABLE CHRISTINE E. WORMUTH
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY**

AND

**GENERAL JAMES C. MCCONVILLE
CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES ARMY**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

FIRST SESSION, 118TH CONGRESS

ON THE POSTURE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

APRIL 19, 2023

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE COMMITTEE**

Enduring Army Priorities

For nearly 248 years, the United States Army has dedicated itself to fighting and winning the Nation's wars. As old threats evolve and new ones emerge, the Army is making decisions and prioritizing investments that not only contribute to current readiness but will also pay dividends on the battlefields of 2030 and beyond. That is why we are especially grateful to Congress for providing the funding necessary to produce highly trained and lethal forces ready to meet an array of challenges at home and abroad. Our ability to maintain continuity through crisis is a testament to our solemn commitment to the Army's three enduring priorities: people, readiness, and modernization. The Army's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 of \$185.5 billion supports these priorities and will enable us to deliver the Army of 2030 in support of the National Defense Strategy.

Ready to Fight and Win

America's Army exists to protect the Nation by fighting and winning our wars as a member of the Joint Force. There is nothing more reassuring, and no greater deterrent, than American soldiers on the ground, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our Allies and partners.

Linchpin of the Joint Force in the Indo-Pacific. From Washington and Alaska, to Hawai'i and Guam, to Japan and South Korea, there are currently 71,000 soldiers serving in the Indo-Pacific theater. The Indo-Pacific is not just an air and maritime theater, but a joint theater with joint problems that require joint solutions. The Army is the linchpin Service, enabling and sustaining our joint and Allied partners. Our fundamental goal is to deter conflict in the region. Thus, the best way to avoid fighting a

war is to make it very clear that the Joint Force, in concert with our Allies and partners, can and will win such a war. To that strategic end, the Army contributes to deterrence by campaigning, which plays three important functions in the Indo-Pacific: complicating Chinese decision making; enhancing U.S. access to the region; and placing combat-credible and interoperable land forces forward to create interior lines for the Joint Force.

This year is going to be one of historic modernization for our force posture in the Indo-Pacific. We are working closely with our regional Allies and partners to secure greater operational access and basing arrangements in strategic locations to enable adversary-focused training and exercises. In terms of logistics, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command in Hawai'i will oversee the delivery of supplies, fuel, munitions, and activity sets for U.S. Army Pacific's (USARPAC) joint and multinational training and exercises. Strengthening our ability to operate across the theater requires not only logistics at scale, but also the resiliency to operate in contested environments.

It has been a consequential year for the Army in the Indo-Pacific. USARPAC completed its inaugural iteration of Operation Pathways, representing the Theater Army's new posture paradigm to build and thicken Joint Force interior lines. This gives USARPAC the operational endurance to see, sense, and understand regional threats; sustain, protect, and command and control (C2) large-scale operations; and conduct maneuver and fires. USARPAC demonstrated those capabilities by offloading APS afloat in support of exercise Salaknib in the Philippines. USARPAC, alongside our Indonesian partners, expanded exercise Super Garuda Shield from a modest bilateral venture to a major regional undertaking with 14 partner nations and 4,000 combined forces. Next, we established the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center, bringing

the first combat training center to the Indo-Pacific with inaugural rotations at our Hawai'i and Alaska campuses, along with an exportable capability we employed in Indonesia.

Capitalizing on that momentum, the 5th Security Forces Assistance Brigade (SFAB) persistently trained and advised 12 of our Allies and partners across the region. The Army also activated the 11th Airborne Division in Alaska—a unit with an historic Indo-Pacific lineage that provides our soldiers with a clear purpose, identity, and mission. As part of our Arctic Strategy, the 11th Airborne Division is being tailored as a rapidly deployable operational command headquarters. Finally, USARPAC initiated the Unified Pacific Wargame Series, offering key insights on Army capabilities, posture, and contested logistics for a protracted conflict in the Indo-Pacific. In October 2022, America's First Corps certified as a Joint Task Force as part of the Mission Command Training Program Warfighter Series, with participants from Washington, Hawai'i, Colorado, and Kansas. I Corps' experimentation with distributed C2 will enable commanders to present multiple dilemmas to a potential adversary. We also activated the third of five planned Multi-Domain Task Forces (MDTF), task-organized to provide anti-access, area-denial capabilities through long-range precision fires and effects. The 3rd MDTF at Fort Shafter, Hawai'i joins the 1st MDTF at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington as the second MDTF supporting U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

Tip of the Joint Spear in Europe. Since Russia's unjust and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the U.S. Army's tactical readiness and strategic readiness have been on full display across continental Europe. The 43,000 American soldiers in Europe underscore our ongoing commitment to the region, further bolstered by President Biden's force posture announcement at the NATO Summit last June. In

Germany, we are forward stationing an air defense artillery brigade headquarters, a short-range air defense battalion, a combat sustainment support battalion headquarters, and an engineer brigade headquarters. In Italy, we are forward stationing a short-range air defense battery. In Poland, the Army has forward-stationed the V Corps Headquarters Forward Command Post—the first permanent U.S. forces on NATO's eastern flank. We are maintaining a substantial rotational force in Poland, including an Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT), combat aviation brigade, and a division headquarters. In Romania, we have headquartered a rotational brigade combat team, supporting an additional maneuver force on the eastern flank. In the Baltics, we have enhanced our rotational deployments—which include armored, aviation, air defense, and special operations forces—to reinforce Baltic security, enhance interoperability, and demonstrate the flexibility and combat readiness of U.S. forces.

We have been able to demonstrate our steadfast support to NATO thanks to years of investments in setting the European theater, where we continue to invest in and modernize a robust set of Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). Importantly, we are moving some of our APS into Poland this year to reinforce NATO's eastern flank. We are also leveraging NATO Common Funding to build a new equipment complex in Poland to house, maintain, and issue an ABCT equipment set. The XVIII Airborne Corps—America's Strategic Response Force—similarly highlighted the Army's investments in rapid power-projection capabilities. The XVIII Airborne Corps' nine-month deployment to Wiesbaden, Germany built upon years of cooperation with the Ukrainian military, providing the training and support required to aid the heroic defense of their homeland. These investments in strategic readiness would not have been

possible without congressional foresight and support. This is especially true for the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI). Total EDI funding for the Army in FY 2023 is \$2.8 billion to support 9,800 rotational Army forces in Europe, and enhance our forward posture, training, and interoperability.

The United States remains committed to supporting Ukraine's near-term combat needs and its long-term defense requirements against future Russian aggression. The Department of Defense (DOD) has established Security Assistance Group—Ukraine (SAG-U), commanded by an Army three-star general under U.S. European Command, in Wiesbaden, Germany. SAG-U is purpose-built to execute the full range of our security assistance activities in a more efficient and sustainable manner. SAG-U will reach full operational capability in Q3 FY 2023. The lessons we observe in Ukraine underscore our Army's greatest strengths: combined arms maneuver at scale; the importance of empowered leadership through mission command; and the immeasurable value of a professionalized Non-Commissioned Officer corps.

The Army continues to supply critical weapon systems, equipment, and munitions to Ukraine, including Stinger anti-aircraft systems, Javelin anti-armor systems, 155mm artillery rounds, and other items. We have provided billions of dollars of Army materiel to Ukraine through the Presidential Drawdown Authority. We are also working to execute billions in procurements for Ukraine through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative.

The Army will initiate multi-year procurement contracts for artillery rounds and artillery charges in FY 2023. For FY 2024, the Army will work with Congress to explore

additional multi-year procurement contract opportunities for critical munitions. In addition to these potential multi-year contract efforts, the request includes additional funding for a range of munitions, including Javelin and Stinger missiles, and artillery, combat-vehicle, and small-arms ammunition.

We were able to fill critical gaps in Ukraine's defense thanks to our comprehensive modernization initiatives, but we must be able to replenish these stocks. Russia's war in Ukraine is further highlighting lessons from the pandemic that military readiness depends upon a robust and modern Organic and Defense Industrial Base. The Army is working closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and our industry partners to rapidly increase production capacity and transform our processes from vulnerable supply chains to a more resilient supply fabric.

Readiness is our most effective form of deterrence. The best way to win *without* fighting is by demonstrating our ability to win decisively *by* fighting. Forward deployed combat capability, prepositioned stocks, and a resilient sustainment infrastructure will be key to future deterrence. One of the many ways we showcase our combat-credible forces in Europe is through DEFENDER-Europe, the Army's annual joint and multinational exercise series. Last year, concurrent with our support to Ukraine, and alongside our NATO Allies, DEFENDER-Europe 22 stretched across nine European countries, featuring 3,450 American troops and 5,200 multinational service members from eleven Allied nations. DEFENDER-Europe 23 will include over 7,800 U.S. troops, training alongside 15,000 multinational forces from 26 Allied and partner nations. National Guard units from 10 U.S. states will also participate, marking the 30th anniversary of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Delivering the Army of 2030

The Army continues to progress through our greatest transformation in almost half a century. Fifty years ago, Army senior leaders closely observed the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and incorporated its lessons into the emerging AirLand Battle doctrine, the creation of new Army organizations, and the development of the “Big 5” weapons systems. Today, we are not only supporting Ukraine but paying close attention to the characteristics of modern warfare as they unfold, and incorporating those lessons into new doctrine, organizations, training, and materiel. Last October, the Army officially adopted Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) as our official capstone doctrine, the most significant shift in warfighting doctrine since AirLand Battle. MDO acknowledges that the Army of 2030 will be contested in every domain—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace. Our soldiers must be ready to fight and win in multiple domains simultaneously to get from fort to foxhole in a contested environment.

The Army has been consistent and persistent in pursuing our modernization initiatives as we work to deliver the Army of 2030 and design the Army of 2040. We remain aggressively committed to our six modernization portfolios—long-range precision fires, next generation combat vehicle, future vertical lift, the network, air and missile defense, and soldier lethality—and are on track to deliver 24 new systems into the hands of soldiers by the end of FY 2023. That includes eight fielded systems, six systems issued for testing, and ten systems undergoing soldier touchpoints. Our annual Army Futures Command-hosted experiment, Project Convergence, continues to evolve and expand from the Army-centric inaugural event in 2020 to last fall's combined, joint series of experiments with the entire Joint Force, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

To succeed on the future battlefield and continue to dominate the land domain, there are six operational imperatives the Army of 2030 must do. First, we need to see and sense more, farther, and more persistently at every echelon than our enemies. That is why we are modernizing our aerial intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, to include the Multi-Domain Sensing System, Terrestrial Layer System, and the Tactical Intelligence Targeting Access Node, or TITAN.

Second, we have to concentrate highly lethal, low signature combat forces rapidly from dispersed locations to overwhelm adversaries at a time and place of our choosing. To do this, we are investing in a faster, more survivable armored fist. Upgraded tanks and Bradleys will be joined by Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicles, or AMPVs, which are already in production. The Mobile Protective Firepower System, which was just awarded for production, will provide greater protection to infantry forces without sacrificing speed or mobility.

Third, we must win the fires fight by delivering precise, longer-range fires as part of the Joint Force to strike deep targets and massing enemy forces. Since 2016, the Army has invested significantly in fire support systems, and we have made long-range precision fires a top modernization priority. We are working tirelessly to ensure that we have multiple options to service targets at ranges from 40 miles (Extended Range Cannon Artillery) to over 1,700 miles (Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon).

Fourth, we need to protect our forces from air, missile, and drone attacks. We are continuing to field Maneuver Short-Range Air Defense, or M-SHORAD, to protect our maneuver forces against a wide range of air threats. The Army is also developing an

enduring Indirect Fire Protection Capability, or IFPC, that will work together with the Army's Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System to provide an unparalleled ability to identify, track, and defeat aerial threats. Current events also highlight the proliferation and significance of enemy Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). To address this threat, we are investing in counter-UAS division sets that place fixed, semi-fixed, mobile, and portable counter-UAS capabilities in the hands of our maneuver forces.

Fifth, we must rapidly and reliably communicate and share data not just with ourselves, but with our Sister Services, and Allies and partners. The Army has demonstrated how to rapidly combine targeting data from our joint teammates and pass that information to the correct Army fires element—reducing the targeting cycle to mere minutes. The Integrated Tactical Network architecture, in fielding now, enhances classified data transfer with both better network bandwidth efficiency and resilient relay links to ensure persistent connectivity for our warfighters.

Finally, we must sustain the fight across contested terrain for both short, sharp operations as well as for protracted conflict. This will require not only standard equipment, like field kitchens, fuelers, and trucks, but also the niche, often overlooked capabilities like Army watercraft and Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore, or JLOTS. Sustainment must be at the forefront of our planning, preparation, and training—not something that we can assume will always be readily available. Army logisticians are the best in the world, and they are up to the task.

People Are Our Greatest Strength and First Priority

Recruiting Initiatives. We are experiencing the most challenging recruiting landscape in a generation. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Nevertheless, we are committed to tackling these problems head on by recruiting a force that looks like the Nation it serves. All our recruiting initiatives will be informed by first principles: 1) we will not sacrifice quality for quantity; 2) we will not lower our standards; and 3) we will invest in America's young people so they can meet our standards. The Regular Army Accessions Mission for FY 2023 is 65,500. While we are singularly focused on meeting this mission, we need help from community leaders, parents, educators, coaches, and influencers to inspire young people to serve.

The Army is implementing several important changes to improve organizational understanding, recruiter management, regional awareness, marketing, and applicant eligibility. First, we established the Army Recruiting Task Force, under the direction of a two-star general, to examine the current state of the Army's recruiting enterprise and to make recommendations to Army senior leaders for action. Second, we are overhauling how the Army recruits by selecting recruiters differently, improving recruiter training, increasing recruiter resources, and creating new incentives for high-performing recruiters. For instance, the Army recently launched a "Recruiting Scholars" program to identify, incentivize, and send top-notch captains to graduate school after completing a recruiting-company command. There are 21 talented captains in the first cohort.

Next, the Army designated 15 major cities as priority markets for FY 2023. With help from community partners, including Veterans Service Organizations, Military Support Organizations, and our Soldiers for Life, we are saturating these markets with activities and initiatives to maximize awareness regarding the benefits of Army service. Fourth, we established the Future Soldier Preparatory Course (FSPC) pilot program in July 2022 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina to support the accession of recruits who are inclined to serve but might need help improving their test scores or physical fitness. As of March 22, 2023, 4,219 FSPC recruits have graduated and moved on to Basic Combat Training (BCT). This represents a 98 percent success rate. FSPC recruits improved their Armed Forces Qualification Test score by an average of 18.5 points. Similarly, 97.6 percent of FSPC recruits achieved the Army's accessions body composition standards. Most importantly, FSPC graduates are performing very well in BCT with just a 4.8 percent attrition rate, as compared to the average BCT attrition rate of 6.1 percent in 2022.

Be All You Can Be. On March 8, 2023, the Army officially reintroduced "Be All You Can Be" as our marketing slogan. "Be All You Can Be" featured prominently in Army advertisements and marketing materials from 1981 to 2001. After a two-decade hiatus, we are excited to introduce "Be All You Can Be" to a new generation of young people. The Army Enterprise Marketing Office hosted numerous in-person focus groups and tested "Be All You Can Be" against 18 other taglines, eventually surveying 20,000 people across five target audiences: prospects, soldiers, veterans, influencers, and engaged citizens. Our extensive market research revealed that the "Be All You Can Be" slogan, once popular with Generation X, resonates with Generation Z by signaling a

sense of purpose, passion, possibility, community, and connection unique to the Army. With support from Congress, the Army will spend \$116.7 million in FY 2023 to launch this rebranding campaign across multiple media platforms. Additionally, we believe that the “Be All You Can Be” narrative will help veterans and retirees tell their Army stories and inspire a new generation of young people toward military service.

Quality of Life. Recruiting and retaining the next generation of the All-Volunteer Force requires sustained investment and quality-of-life improvements in Army housing, barracks, child care, spouse employment, health care, and the exceptional family member program.

High-quality housing and barracks are key to ensuring overall health and wellness, thereby contributing to readiness and critical for retaining Army soldiers and their families. First, the Army supports DOD’s continuous assessment of Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates, ensuring military paychecks keep pace with market conditions across the country. Average BAH rates have increased 12.1 percent since 2022. Personnel in 291 of 300 military housing areas received a BAH rate increase. Second, privatized housing companies began a six-year, \$3-billion investment plan in 2020 to improve the Army’s housing inventory, to include new builds and major or medium renovations through 2026. The Army has programmed \$1.6 billion for FY 2024-2028 to improve the government-owned Army Family Housing inventory. Third, the Army historically invests an average of \$1 billion per year in barracks for construction, restoration, and modernization across all three Army components. In FY 2024, the Army is requesting support for permanent-party barracks in Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and Natick Soldier

Systems Center, Massachusetts. Importantly, Army senior leaders remain vigilant in their housing and barracks oversight responsibilities.

With congressional support, the Army has expanded on- and off-post child-care options by increasing staff compensation and benefits, investing in facilities, growing family child care, and extending care hours. Entry level salaries are now \$17.39 per hour. We are offering recruiting and retention bonuses for child-care staff and providing them with a 50 percent child-care discount for the first child and a 15 percent multiple-child discount for additional children. In terms of off-post care options, we continue to provide Army Fee Assistance to approximately 10,000 children of the active and reserve component per month, all while exploring new initiatives and partnerships. We also increased the provider rate cap to \$1,700 per month, thereby reducing out-of-pocket expenses for hard-working Army families. Since FY 2021, Congress has funded seven new Child Development Centers (CDCs) in Alaska, Hawai'i (2), Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, and Louisiana. The Army is planning to fund more CDCs in the out years.

Army spouses—over 431,000 across all three components—play an important role in soldier and family readiness and soldier retention. Leveraging both Army and DOD programs, and partnerships with other federal and non-governmental organizations, we remain committed to improving spouse employment and career opportunities. When spouses are satisfied with their careers, employment options, access to services, and overall quality-of-life, they are far more likely to support their soldier's continued service.

There are 46,000 active-component soldiers—nine percent of the force—with family members enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), totaling 55,000 family members. We are committed to reforming the EFMP and to providing comprehensive and all-inclusive support to Army families with a family member with a qualifying condition. In August 2022, we launched the Enterprise EFMP system to improve enrollment, transparency, assignment coordination, and access to support. We have also created a centralized EFMP office within the Headquarters, Department of the Army to coordinate healthcare services, reassignment processes, and education support services. Taken together, these initiatives will help reduce the bureaucratic burden on Army families. Moreover, the Army continues its close partnership with the Defense Health Agency to ensure access to high-quality healthcare for our soldiers and their families.

Reducing Harmful Behaviors. People are the Army's number one priority. We take care of our people by building cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined, and fit, that are ready to fight and win, and where each person is treated with dignity and respect. Leaders across the Total Army are steadfastly committed to reducing the harmful behaviors that break trust with our soldiers and the American people—including sexual assault and harassment, acts of extremism, and racism, among others. To reduce harmful behaviors, we are shifting the paradigm from focusing on intervention and response to prioritizing integrated prevention activities. Integrated prevention activities address the conditions that lead to harm by reducing risk factors and increasing protective measures to preclude harmful behaviors. To that end, we are aggressively implementing the FY 2022 Independent Review Commission's

recommendations to counter sexual assault and sexual harassment within our formations, to include realigning Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Victim Advocates from the operational chain of command to the Lead SARC at each installation. This independent reporting structure will enable Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention, or SHARP, professionals to advocate for victims more effectively.

The Army is committed to working with Congress and the OSD to effectively implement the military justice reforms directed by the FY 2022 and FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Acts. In July 2022, the Army issued a General Order establishing the Office of the Special Trial Counsel (OSTC) as a field operating agency. The Senate confirmed our nominee for Lead Special Trial Counsel in November 2022 and set his subsequent promotion to brigadier general in January 2023. The Army expects the OSTC to reach full operational capability by December 27, 2023, as required by law.

Every single suicide is one tragedy too many. Exposure to harmful behaviors, such as sexual assault, harassment, or other acts of violence, may increase the risk of suicide. The Army is committed to supporting those exposed to harmful behaviors and doing everything we can to address this critical issue. Fortunately, we saw significant decreases in suicide across all Army components in 2022. The Army is leveraging a new public health approach to prevent and respond to suicide at the individual and community levels. We will publish a comprehensive suicide prevention regulation to define this new approach for the force by the end of Q3 FY 2023. Army leaders continue to employ the Health Readiness and Suicide Risk Reduction Tool across our

formations. Last year, we introduced the “Stories of Hope” podcast to raise awareness, reduce stigmas, and increase help-seeking behaviors.

50 Years of the All-Volunteer Force

As we commemorate 50 years of the All-Volunteer Force, it has never been more important to recruit and retain the talented individuals who make our Army the world’s greatest fighting force. We win through our people—our active duty, Guard, and Reserve soldiers; our families; Army civilians; and our veterans and retired Soldiers for Life. We need every American to know that the U.S. Army is an organization of endless possibilities that provides a pathway to success both in and out of uniform. Our message is clear: if you want to serve something greater than yourself, if you want to belong to the world’s greatest team, if you want to BE ALL YOU CAN BE, then join us. With the limitless talent our Nation has to offer and continued support from Congress, we will remain ready to fight and win, against any adversary, anywhere in the world.

Hon. Christine Wormuth
25th Secretary of the United States Army

Honorable Christine Wormuth was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and appointed as the 25th Secretary of the U.S. Army May 27, 2021. The Secretary of the Army is the senior civilian official within the Department of Defense responsible for all matters relating to the U.S. Army.

Prior to confirmation, she was the Director of the International Defense and Security Center at the RAND Corporation where she was a frequent writer and speaker on foreign policy, national security and homeland security issues.

Prior to RAND, she served in several roles during the Obama Administration. From December 2010 until August 2012 she was a special assistant to the president and senior director for Defense at the National Security Council. Wormuth then served as deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Forces, and led the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. From 2014-2016 she served in DOD as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, where she advised the Secretary of Defense on the full range of regional and functional national security issues.

Wormuth entered the government as a Presidential Management Intern and began her public service career in the Policy Office of the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1996 through 2002.

After leaving government, she worked in the private sector on defense issues, and then was a Senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies for five years.

Wormuth holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science and fine art from Williams College and a Masters of Public Policy from the University of Maryland.

She is married to a retired Navy officer and has two daughters.

Gen. James C. McConville
40th Chief of Staff of the Army

Gen. James C. McConville assumes duties as the 40th chief of staff of the U.S. Army, Aug. 9, 2019, after most recently serving as the 36th Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

He is a native of Quincy, Massachusetts, and a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. He holds a Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology and was a National Security Fellow at Harvard University in 2002.

McConville's command assignments include commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), where he also served as the commanding general of Combined Joint Task Force-101, Operation Enduring Freedom; deputy commanding general (Support) of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), where he also served as the deputy commanding general (Support) of Combined Joint Task Force-101, Operation Enduring Freedom, commander of 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Operation Iraqi Freedom; commander of 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); and commander of C Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division (Light).

His key staff assignments include the U.S. Army deputy chief of staff, G-1; chief of Legislative Liaison; executive officer to the vice chief of staff of the Army; G-3 for 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); J5 strategic planner for U.S. Special Operations Command; S-3 for 25th Combat Aviation Brigade; S-3 for 5th Squadron, 9th Cavalry; and S-3 for Flight Concepts Division.

McConville is a senior Army aviator qualified in the AH-64D Longbow Apache, OH-58 Kiowa Warrior, AH-6, AH-1 Cobra and other aircraft. His awards and decorations include two Distinguished Service Medals, three Legions of Merit, three Bronze Star Medals, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, three Meritorious Service Medals, two Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, the Combat Action Badge, the Expert Infantryman's Badge, the Master Army Aviator Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Parachutist Badge, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

McConville and his wife, Maria, have three children serving in the military.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 19, 2023



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution



Summary

- A CR in FY24 it would potentially impact up to \$5.3 billion
- Assuming the FY24 NDAA is enacted, \$1.8 billion of authorized military pay entitlement increases would be affected
- Impacts 44 Budget Line Item procurement new starts totaling \$510.5 million
- Impacts 25 RDTE new starts totaling \$190.7 million
- Delays 3 industrial facility projects in the ammunition portfolio for \$43.7 million and 5 projects in the WCTV portfolio totaling \$40.2 million
- Delays 35 construction projects across 22 states and territories and 4 OCONUS projects are budgeted to begin in FY24, totaling \$1.7 billion



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution
(Procurement New Starts)



FY24 Procurement New Starts		
APPN	Item Nomenclature	FY24 (\$M)
ACFT	Future UAS Family	53.453
	Degraded Visual Environment	16.838
MSLS	Mid-Range Capability (MRC)	169.519
	Army Tactical MSLS SYS (ATACMS) - Sys	7.307
WTCV	Bradley Fire Support Team (BFIST) Vehicle	5.232
	Abrams Upgrade Advance Procurement (CY)	102.440
	Personal Defense Weapon (Roll)	0.510
	Machine Gun, Cal. 50 M2 Roll	3.420
	Mortar Modification	0.423
	CTG, 50MM, All Types	28.000
AMMO	Non-Lethal Ammunition, All Types	3.281
	(See next page for Baby SSN level New Starts)	
OPA	Tractor, Full Tracked	29.878
	Family of Boats and Motors	4.785

• Tractor, Full Tracked: Procures T-9 Medium Dozers which enables Combat Engineers, Quartermaster, Transportation Companies and Vertical Construction Companies with the capabilities necessary to construct and maintain the infrastructure required to conduct activities across the range of military operations, including breaching operations, port opening operations and emplacement of standard and nonstandard Army bridging systems. These capabilities include operator armor protection, creating obstacles, shaping the terrain and repairing lines of communication resulting in increased mobility, maneuverability, deployability and sustainability.

• Family of Boats and Motors: Procures 15-Man boats and common motors in support of division wet gap crossing.



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution
(Procurement (Ammo) New Starts)



FY24 Procurement (Ammo) New Starts		
APPN	Item Nomenclature	FY24 (\$M)
ACFT		
	CTG 7.62mm 4 Ball/1 TRCR F/OHF	5.424
	CTG 7.62mm Reduced Range Ammo	1.000
	CTG 9mm Marking, M1041 (RED)	0.290
	50 Caliber Reduced Range Ammo (RRA)	1.000
	CTG 25mm Dummy (DDI), M794	2.149
	CTG 50mm, All Types	28.000
	PROJ. ARTY, 155MM C-DAEM Increment II	2.500
	Shoulder Launched Individual Assault Munition (IAM)	12.051
	Bunker Defeat Munition, 83mm Rocket & Launcher, M141	0.452
	Receiver, Radio Firing-Remote Actv MunSys (RF-Rams)	4.342
	DEMO KIT, Bangalore Torpedo, M1A3 (2.5ft)	0.495
	Charge, Demo BLK TNT 1/4LB	0.372
	Charge, Demo BLK TNT 1LB	0.590
	Charge, Demo Shaped 40LB M3	3.676
	Cord Det Inert	0.178
	Cap. Blasting Non-Elec. w/30FT Shock Tube	2.425
	Booster, Demo Charge M152 Inert	0.380
	Cap. Blasting Non-Electric, 200FT Mini-tube, M19	2.412
	Grenade, Hand Smoke, Screening, M330	2.968

FY24 AMMO has a total of 31 new starts totaling \$85.4M across 12 different P-1 program lines



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution
(Procurement (Ammo) New Starts) - Continued



FY24 Procurement (Ammo) New Starts		
APPN	Item Nomenclature	FY24 (\$M)
ACFT		
	Grenade, Hand Smoke, Red M18	3.650
	Body, Practice Hand Grenade Offensive, M112	1.123
	Grenade, Hand Smoke, White, M83	3.133
	Signal, Hand Held White Star Cluster M159	4.757
	Signal, Hand Held Green Star Cluster M125A1	0.099
	CTG, Impulse, Countermeasure, BBU-35/B	0.112
	Simulator, Target Kill, XM175	0.652
	Simulator, Chem Attacks, Yellow Smoke	0.056
	Simulator, Rocket Antitank GM Lnchd, M22 (ATWESS)	0.063
	Simulator, Launching, Antitank Guided Missile	0.476
	Simulator, Projectile Air Burst, Explosive SM181	0.473
	CTG, .22cal Ball Long Rifle Match, r/Rifle	0.055

FY24 AMMO has a total of 31 new starts totaling \$85.4M across 12 different P-1 program lines.



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution
(Organic Industrial Base (PROC) New Starts)



FY24 WTCV Production Base Support New Starts	
Item Nomenclature	FY24 (\$M)
Watervliet Arsenal (WVA), NY	
Tri-Chrome Conversion	9.400
Joint Systems Manufacturing Center (JSMC), Lima, OH	
Building 351 Outside Utilities Replacement	6.857
Replace (2) Turret Machines (TM) TM006/TM007	7.909
Building 147 South Side Underground Infrastructure Improvement	8.570
Rock Island Arsenal – Joint Manufacturing & Technology Center (RIA-JMTC)	
Large, Multi-Axis Machining	7.500
Total	40.236
FY24 AMMO Industrial Facilities New Starts	
Lake City APP, Automated Contaminated Waster Plant	10.000
Iowa AAP, Direct Fire Production Facility Design	26.700
Scranton APP, Electrical System Upgrade Phase 1	7.000
	43.700



Above list does not include projects under \$6M which according to Army OGC opinion could similarly follow the MILCON rules for minor and unspecified construction which allows for continuation/initiation of projects under \$6M as part of the Continuing resolution



List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution
(RDTE New Starts)



BA	RDTE Project Title	FY 2024 (\$K)	CFT	BA	RDTE Project Title	FY 2024 (\$K)	CFT
02	Modular RF Communications Technology	5,986	Network	04	NAVWAR SA	2,260	
02	Adaptive Avionics Technologies	1,005	FVL	04	Installation Resilience	3,013	
02	Fire Control Lethality Technology	1,462		05	30mm MMPA M-SHORAD INC 3	18,936	AMD
02	Quantum PNT & Radio Frequency Sensing	2,612		05	Unified Network Technology Trans & Integ (UNTTI)	7,898	Network
02	Enabling Long Standoff 3D (ELS3D) Tech	2,058		05	CI and HUMINT Equipment Program-Army (CIHEP-A)	2,170	
02	Sci & Analysis for Autonomous Sys & Counter-Auton	2,133		05	Operational Medicine Information System	4,241	
02	Airborne Threat Defeat	5,794		05	Joint Target Integrated Cmd & Coordination Suite	9,290	
02	Adv Beam Control Component Development for C-CM	8,286	AMD	05	Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD)	1,050	
02	Understanding Environment as a Threat Tech	1,010		05	Advanced Threat Detection System (ATDS)	27,571	
03	Technical-SAVVY Soldier Advanced Research	627		06	West Desert Test Center	64,110	
03	Future Armaments Scalable Technologies	2,313		07	AMPV Improvement Program	12,354	NGCV
03	Enabling Long Standoff 3D (ELS3D) Adv Tech	1,045		07	Army Power Systems Modernization	2,411	
03	Pathfinder 3D Advanced Technology	1,045	APNT		25 RDTE New Starts	190,680	

 List of Programs Affected by a Potential FY24 Continuing Resolution (MILCON New Starts) 			
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY (MCA)			
PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	STATE	FY24 (\$K)
Substation	Redstone Arsenal	AL	50,000
Cyber Instructional Facility (Classrooms)	Fort Gordon	GA	163,000
Automated Multipurpose Machine Gun Range	Grafenwoehr Training Area	GY	10,400
Simulations Center	Hohenfels Training Area	GY	56,000
Water Storage Tank	Altanamu Military Res	HI	20,000
Aircraft Maintenance Hangar	Fort Riley	KS	105,000
Multipurpose Training Range	Fort Campbell	KY	38,000
Barracks Addition	Soldier Systems Ctr (Natick)	MA	18,500
Ground Transport Equipment Building	Detroit Arsenal	MI	72,000
Barracks	Fort Bragg	NC	50,000
Automated Record Fire Range	Fort Bragg	NC	19,500
Barracks	Fort Bragg	NC	85,000
Guided Missile Maintenance Building	Letterkenny Army Depot	PA	89,000
Rail Yard	Fort Bliss	TX	74,000
Component Rebuild Shop	Red River Army Depot	TX	113,000
Barracks	Joint Base Lewis-McChord	WA	100,000
16 MCA PROJECTS			1,063,400
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NATIONAL GUARD (MCNG)			
PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	STATE	FY24
National Guard Readiness Center	Surprise	AZ	15,000
National Guard Vehicle Maintenance Shop	Jerome	ID	17,000
National Guard Vehicle Maintenance Shop	North Riverside	IL	24,000
National Guard Readiness Center	Bellefontaine	MO	28,000
National Guard Vehicle Maintenance Shop Add/Alt	Littleton	NH	23,000
National Guard Vehicle Maintenance Shop Addition	Rio Rancho	NM	11,000
National Guard Readiness Center	Camp Perry	OH	19,200
National Guard Readiness Center	Hillsboro	OR	26,000
National Guard Readiness Center	Hermitage	PA	13,600
National Guard Readiness Center	Alton	SC	20,000
Automated Multipurpose Machine Gun (MPMG) Range	Camp McCrady	SC	7,900
Aircraft Maintenance Hangar	Sandston	VA	20,000
National Guard Readiness Center	Viroqua	WI	18,200
13 MCNG PROJECTS			242,900
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVES (MCAR)			
PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	STATE	FY24
Army Reserve Center/AMSA/Land	Birmingham	AL	57,000
Area Maintenance Support Activity	Ritterhouse TS	AZ	12,000
2 MCAR PROJECTS			69,000
ARMY FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION (AFHC)			
PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	STATE	FY24
Family Housing MHPI Equity Investment	Fort Gordon	GA	50,000
Family Housing New Construction	Baumholder Fam Hsg	GY	78,746
Family Housing Replacement Construction	Kwajalein Aboli	KW	98,600
Family Housing MHPI Equity Investment	Fort Leonard Wood	MO	50,000
4 AFHC PROJECTS			277,346

*35 construction projects totaling \$1,652,646 across 22 states and territories and OCCONUS

**WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING
THE HEARING**

APRIL 19, 2023

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. WITTMAN

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army continues to invest in our current watercraft fleet of 70 systems to extend their service life, while creating modernized designs for future acquisition. This year's budget invests \$180 million for watercraft including two development efforts for the Maneuver Support Vessel Heavy and Light vessels, as well as investment in the forementioned service life extensions for our current vessels.

We are investing nearly \$100 million dollars in fuel, water, and aerial delivery programs to address the challenges of contested logistics in INDOPACOM. Army Futures Command and Army Materiel Command are in the initial stages of developing a Contested Logistics Cross-Functional Team to address the need for more resilient and agile logistics in the Future Operational Environment. We have activated a new formation, the Composite Watercraft Company, in Japan as a mission command headquarters for current and emerging watercraft capability, established a Terminal Battalion Headquarters also in Japan, and are looking at adding a second INDOPACOM Composite Watercraft Company in the near future. Combined, these efforts mark a deliberate shift from divestment toward investment based on requirements in the pacing theater. Army Watercraft transformation has produced: an increase in authorizations in INDOPACOM in both personnel and current fleet, decreased key communication integration gaps in the current fleet with the addition of the Modernized Integrated Bridge System, and set conditions to actively procure the next generation of Maneuver Support Vessels deliberately designed to support the Army and enable the Joint Force.

The Army is equally concerned with the status of the Ready Reserve Force (RRF). As the prime customer for Strategic Sealift, it is absolutely critical that sufficient capability be provided by the United States Transportation Command to project Army forces from the continental United States to any Theater of Operations. This is essential for both Army Combat and sustainment forces. Army Watercraft are not a substitute for Strategic Sealift, but a complementary capability required to integrate with power projection assets to move forces and sustainment into the operational area.

This is a capability the Army is investing resources and structure in to meet Army and Joint Force requirements and with continued Congressional support we will achieve our goals. [See page 18.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. KIM

Secretary WORMUTH. As of April 20, 2023, there are 5,666 children (ages 0–5) on the total Army Child Development Center waitlist. [See page 33.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. VASQUEZ

General MCCONVILLE. Yes, renewable energy projects, when integrated into microgrids, help ensure the readiness of military installations. Multi-domain operations require Army installations to have secure and reliable access to energy to achieve mission objectives. The Army energy investments are directed to mitigate the risk of energy supply disruptions to critical military facilities—whether caused by extreme weather, cyber operations, or kinetic attack. Energy generation from renewable sources, like solar photovoltaics, located behind our fence line greatly reduces our reliance on the external grid or supply chains for fuel that can be stressed in emergency situations. When this onsite renewable energy is coupled with energy storage and control capabilities, combined into a microgrid, these capabilities can be used to create an “island” effect—enabling the Army to disconnect from the commercial electrical grid and sustain our critical missions during an outage.

Because of their role in critical defense missions and preparing and deploying forces, Mission Assurance Installations, Power Projection Platforms, and Mobilization Force Generation Installations have priority for energy resilience investments such as microgrids. The Army has 28 operational microgrids along with 9 under con-

struction, 26 in design, and many more in planning. This includes a project at White Sands Missile Range, funded through DOD's Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program and currently under construction, that will install a 700kW solar array, generators, and batteries configured into a resilient microgrid system to maintain critical water system operations in the event of a power outage. [See page 55.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. FINSTAD

Secretary WORMUTH. Over the past decade, Army metrics regarding hearing-related injuries continue to improve. Since FY13, hearing-related injury rates in Soldiers and Department of the Army (DA) civilians demonstrated a general decline. The rate of hearing loss across all Army Components decreased from 20.5% in FY13 to 16.4% in FY21. Hearing loss across the DA civilian population also trended downward from 45.4% in FY13 to 43.3% in FY21. While no one program can account for the improvement, multiple programs facilitated regular opportunities for preventive services.

This is a result of the comprehensive Army Hearing Program approach which seeks to optimize hearing as a key sensor involved in mission performance while reducing noise-related injuries. The Army Hearing Program is comprised of four key elements.

First, the Army is focused on hearing readiness. The Army utilizes a health readiness surveillance software to track soldiers ensuring they have adequate hearing capability. The medical surveillance software also ensures soldiers have the required personal protective equipment and education to perform their duties.

Second, the Army provides clinical services. Army audiologists ensure those whose surveillance tests are abnormal have further evaluation to target the cause and treatment for their loss to maintain fitness-for-duty.

Third, the Army is focused on operational services. The Army Hearing Program focuses on detecting and preventing noise exposure at the point of injury while enhancing communication in the operational space.

Lastly, the Army is focused on hearing conservation. Specifically, targeting DA civilians, hearing conservation is a garrison-based prevention service to include monitoring compliance with annual testing and ensuring passive hearing protection for noise-exposed DA civilians.

In addition to the aforementioned lines of effort, the Army remains committed to providing our Soldiers with the best equipment available to protect our Soldier's hearing. In May 2022, the Army approved a new requirement for Tactical Communications—Hearing Protection (TAC-HP). TAC-HP will provide Soldiers with improved communications, hearing protection and auditory situational awareness capability than current systems. The Army is currently in the process of evaluating material solutions to meet this requirement. [See page 54.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

APRIL 19, 2023

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. ROGERS

Mr. ROGERS. How does recompeting the LOGCAP Task Orders provide value to the government when compared to the cost of multiple years of recompetes/protests/transitions knowing this contract will immediately transition to LOGCAP 6?

General McCONVILLE. Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) 5 has seven years of performance remaining before it transitions to LOGCAP 6, and the U.S. Government is acting in accordance with the approved acquisition strategy which states "Within five years, task order competitions will be conducted to replace the initial competed task orders for known performance requirements." The LOGCAP 5 base contracts fully comply with the Competition in Contracting Act, which encourages competition, even within established programs as task orders expire. Competition remains a critical tool to achieve the best technical approach, solutions, and cost on the LOGCAP requirements. The current LOGCAP 5 performance task orders will expire over the next two to three years and were already scheduled for a recompete action in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations 6 and 16. The task orders competed under LOGCAP 5 since contract award received no protests and the associated transitions were completed in under 90 days with no impact on Army operations. Additionally, many of the task orders under the original contract award now include requirements that were added and awarded non-competitively to the incumbent due to urgency of need. Conditions and requirements have changed since the original contract and task order awards. Recompeting task orders will allow the U.S. Government to leverage competition to achieve technical advantages and better pricing for the U.S. Government, versus negotiating with an incumbent in a sole source environment. It also allows the U.S. Government an opportunity to assess and optimize contractor performance.

Mr. ROGERS. What value does the Army perceive in a recompete where the only competitors are the four LOGCAP incumbents. How does this lead to more competition?

General McCONVILLE. There is value in a recompete among the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) prime contractors because it allows the Army to leverage known and capable LOGCAP contractors globally across the entire contract portfolio in a way that maximizes benefit to the U.S. Government. The U.S. Government acknowledges that execution of LOGCAP 5 recompetes does not lead to more competition beyond the prime contractor awardees, however, it does retain a level of competition among those awardees that is more beneficial than continuation with an incumbent via a sole source award, where the U.S. Government's only mechanism to improve performance and better pricing is through negotiation with weak leverage. In competitively awarded multiple award contract vehicles, as was done with LOGCAP 5, initial competition amongst the prime contract holders ensures the U.S. Government pays fair, reasonable, and competitive prices for the requirements, often seeking or receiving better technical solutions. The LOGCAP 5 base contracts were competitively awarded to the strongest offerors. Subsequent task order competition amongst these primes on requirements provides the U.S. Government an opportunity to select the best offeror to perform the required services.

Mr. ROGERS. With theaters engaged in specific Deterrence Operations (EUCOM and INDOPACOM) what is the Army's plan to mitigate Operational and Strategic risk associated with a major relief in place of large Base Operations and Contingency contracts? What input was received from the GCC and ASCC Commanders and do they concur with this strategy?

General McCONVILLE. The Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) in these two theaters establish requirements, for the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs), for base operations and contingency contracts for any given fiscal year. In the case that a "major relief in place" were to occur during a given year of execution, the Army provides support, through the respective ASCC, to the GCC to assure no interruption in the respective contracts occur during a transition period. GCCs and the ASCCs provide the Army with their Campaign Plans and Posture Plans annually to address potential risks. For a known transition that requires balancing risk with changes in operational contracting support, our ASCCs represent the Army to the GCC in identifying the requirement, then managing the eventual execution of

the contract. With a “relief in place” there will be a transition period that may generate friction or disruption in services, however, we mitigate this risk through deliberate planning by the ASCC up to the Army Staff ensuring that there is a clear articulation of requirement linked to the service provided through the contract vehicle.

Mr. ROGERS. How does recompeting the LOGCAP Task Orders provide value to the government when compared to the cost of multiple years of recompetes/protests/transitions knowing this contract will immediately transition to LOGCAP 6?

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Mr. ROGERS. With theaters engaged in specific Deterrence Operations (EUCOM and INDOPACOM) what is the Army’s plan to mitigate Operational and Strategic risk associated with a major relief in place of large Base Operations and Contingency contracts? What input was received from the GCC and ASCC Commanders and do they concur with this strategy?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) in these two theaters establish requirements, for the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs), for base operations and contingency contracts for any given fiscal year. In the case that a “major relief in place” were to occur during a given year of execution, the Army provides support, through the respective ASCC, to the GCC to assure no interruption in the respective contracts occur during a transition period. GCCs and the ASCCs provide the Army with their Campaign Plans and Posture Plans annually to address potential risks. For a known transition that requires balancing risk with changes in operational contracting support, our ASCCs represent the Army to the GCC in identifying the requirement, then managing the eventual execution of the contract. With a “relief in place” there will be a transition period that may generate friction or disruption in services, however, we mitigate this risk through deliberate planning by the ASCC up to the Army Staff ensuring that there is a clear articulation of requirement linked to the service provided through the contract vehicle.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. TURNER

Mr. TURNER. Ms. Wormuth: In February 2022 Russia launched its illegal invasion of Ukraine with the full strength of its military forces. In the wake of this attack, the U.S. and its allies were reminded that the right time to prepare to counter aggression is before it occurs. The U.S. and its allies have effectively supported Ukraine with aid, however, this aid has highlighted the need for a defense industrial base (DIB) with the capacity and capability to deliver critical and state-of-the-art munitions and equipment in quantities sufficient to maintain our stockpiles and supplement our allies' and partners' requirements. Given that the U.S. government is the sole producer and customer for many critical weapons and materiel end-items, the DIB is particularly sensitive to congressional decisions. One example of a critical end-item produced by our DIB is the Abrams Main Battle Tank. When Congress and the Department don't provide enough certainty to industry, it disincentivizes suppliers and producers participation in the market, driving up costs and restricting production capacity. What is the Department doing to facilitate suppliers' participation in the DIB supply and production chain for Abrams tanks, and what can Congress do to better facilitate increased production?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army continues to pursue organic industrial base investments in locations like the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center (JSMC) in Lima, Ohio; Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois; and Watervliet Arsenal, New York to ensure its ability to meet forecasted demand for Abrams tank production. Continuous, consistent, and accurate projected demand is critical to suppliers and producers' participation in the market and their ability to appropriately plan and facilitate. The Army regularly shares its demand projections for domestic and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) tank requirements with industry to support their planning and investment strategies. Continued support from Congress for Abrams tank production requirements and rapid approval of FMS requests is the most effective method to ensure consistent and reliable demand signals. Reducing fragility in the domestic supply and production base may also be achieved with further use of Defense Production Act Title III resourcing specific to the tank industrial base and focused on reducing risk associated with long-lead materials such as wiring harnesses, connectors, titanium plate, castings, and forgings.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. WITTMAN

Mr. WITTMAN. You stated in response to Mr. Kelly's line of questioning that USAR and Guard units "will get the equipment they need to do the job." With that in mind, on average USAR receives only 1.8% of the total Army procurement budget, yet personnel wise makes up for 18% of the total Army force. USAR units in Virginia currently have a budget shortfall of over \$280 million, including \$34 million for HMMWV modernization efforts for vehicles beyond their service life that pose serious safety concerns. For a force with an already small budget in comparison to that of the active force, and one that must be prepared to respond to threats and emergencies both domestically and abroad, what steps will you take to ensure that USAR and Guard units receive full funding for necessary modernizations?

General McCONVILLE. Current Equipment on Hand (EoH) rating for U.S. Army Reserves (USAR), Army National Guard (ARNG), and Active Component (AC) are all at 95%. This is an improvement of 22% for USAR and 21% for ARNG since 2002 and reflects a substantial investment in our Total Army. Critical Dual Use (CDU) EoH levels are also high for both Reserve Components (CDU is equipment used for both military and domestic purposes): USAR—96%, ARNG—95%, AC—97%.

Our approach to modernization prioritization is the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model (ReARMM). ReARMM seeks to align units and modernization levels against regional priorities and wartime commitments over time. This approach will drive how we prioritize and synchronize equipment fielding across the Army to match modernization levels against requirements regardless of component. Modernization will occur for units during ReARMM modernization windows for all components through new procurement, and equipment cascade, depending on unit priority and availability. We are committed to ensuring that formations across the Total Army remain interoperable, deployable, and sustainable regardless of component or modernization level.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SCOTT

Mr. SCOTT. The Russian-Ukraine war has shown that military forces must be prepared to conduct both offense and defense in major cities. What changes, resources

allocation, change in priorities still have to be made by the U.S. Army to ensure the U.S. Army is ready for large scale combat operations in dense urban areas?

General McCONVILLE. The Army must continue its modernization program to meet the requirements necessary to sustain the force in urban combat. Long-range precision fires, next-generation combat vehicle, future vertical lift, air and missile defense, network and Soldier lethality all inform how the Army approaches large scale combat operations in dense urban areas. Modernization programs like the Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle will provide greater survivability, reliability, and fire support while the Unified Network program will provide resilient communications and an integrated tactical network to support Soldiers conducting urban operations. These modernization programs are supported through our FY24 Budget Request.

Mr. SCOTT. Should the U.S. Army be DOD's executive agent for urban operations?

General McCONVILLE. Urban operations in Kyiv, Mariupol, and other Ukrainian urban centers demonstrate the reality of future combat in cities. The Army brings extensive urban warfare experience from operations in Baghdad during the early years of the Global War on Terror and, more recently, from the Afghanistan evacuation at Kabul International Airport, with troops deployed from the 82nd Airborne Division, the 10th Mountain Division, and the Minnesota National Guard. As the Army continues its transition to multi-domain operations, ground-based capabilities including armor units, missile defense, and logistics will be strategic imperatives for urban combat benefiting from the Army's experienced leadership.

Mr. SCOTT. What is the U.S. Army doing to collect the lessons of the Russian-Ukraine War?

General McCONVILLE. As Russia's war in Ukraine continues into its second year, the Army is continually examining the war to garner lessons learned. The Army is actively synthesizing observations from the Center for Army Lessons Learned at the Combined Armed Center, U.S. Army Europe and Africa, and the Security Assistance Group-Ukraine to inform our strategic thinking. The Army is also examining lessons and observations from allies and partners, such as the United Kingdom and other NATO members, to ensure the Army is inspecting the conflict from multiple perspectives. The Army is also partnered with the RAND Corporation in producing a study, *The Russo-Ukrainian War: Lessons for Army 2030* with an anticipated completion in Summer 2023.

Mr. SCOTT. Majors Alec Rice and Elliot Pernula wrote a February 22, 2023 article for the Modern War Institute entitled, "The Army Eliminated the Coast Artillery Corps in 1950—It's Time to Bring It Back." Do you support recreating the Coast Artillery Corps?

General McCONVILLE. The Army is focusing on modernization of the Field Artillery branch to align with the Joint Warfighting Concept and the Army's Multi Domain Operations concept. The centerpiece of this modernization is Long Range Fires Battalions that are part of the Multi-Domain Task Force. This is a perfect example of combining existing weapon systems with new ones to create a dynamic offensive capability to challenge our adversaries around the world. Advancements in U.S. artillery fire support systems and munitions provide the Joint Force the capability to engage maritime targets in the near future. These new units will be trained, manned, and supported by Field Artillery Soldiers. The Army has also invested in modernization of the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System to fire the Precision Strike Missile family of rockets which will include the capability to engage maritime targets.

Mr. SCOTT. What plans, if any, does the U.S. Army have to expand its officer education to include instruction on coastal geography, pathways, chokepoints, and the law of the sea?

General McCONVILLE. Upon the publication of Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations, in October 2022, the United States Army evolved its operational concept from Unified Land Operations to Multidomain Operations. This shift has changed the focus of warfighting for Army forces from primarily conducting operations from the land and air, and extending these operations into the maritime, space, and cyberspace domains. Today, this concept of "multidomain operations" requires the "integration of Army and joint capabilities from all domains to defeat the enemy's integrated fires complexes and air defense systems so that maneuver forces can exploit the resulting freedom of action" (FM 3-0, page ix).

In addition, Defense Secretary Austin has characterized our "pacing challenge" as the People's Republic of China, which has resulted in adjusted scenarios for officer education in the INDOPACOM theater, which has a greater emphasis on maritime operations in line with our FM 3-0 capstone doctrine.

As a result, there will be a greater emphasis on maritime issues in professional military education in the U.S. Army to address concerns such as coastal geography,

pathways, chokepoints, and the law of the sea. The depth of this emphasis will, of course, depend greatly upon where the specific education program falls within the progressive and sequential education continuum for graduates; the more senior the student body, the greater the emphasis will be. In addition to professional military education, the Army's exercise programs will also continue to have a greater emphasis on integrating maritime matters as the multidomain operations concept matures.

Mr. SCOTT. Will Army aviation be ready to play a key role in casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) during large-scale combat operations (LSCO)?

General McCONVILLE. Army Aviation utility aircraft will be ready to assist in the role of Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) during large scale combat operations (LSCO), as they have for over 50 years. The role of Army Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) aircraft will continue to provide first class medical services to our soldiers in LSCO and MEDEVAC operations will be tailored to the specific requirements of that environment.

A LSCO environment is typically defined by integrated air defense systems capable of denying access and airspace to our aircraft. We may not be able to count on air dominance like we have over the past 20-plus years of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan. MEDEVAC aircraft will still provide the primary role in evacuating and moving our injured across the battlefield, but their ability to access the most forward areas will be challenged. New tactics, techniques, and procedures are being developed to ensure MEDEVAC aircraft are able to safely operate in a LSCO environment. Upgrades to our existing MEDEVAC fleet and fielding new aircraft such as the Future Long Range Assault Aircraft will increase the speed and range of aircraft to enable faster response times and enable a wider range of operations.

Mr. SCOTT. Should all future systems include provisions for casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) from requirements determination through development? Will incorporating CASEVAC provisions during the acquisition process reduce post-production modifications?

General McCONVILLE. In large-scale combat operations (LSCO), CASEVAC becomes paramount when ground and aeromedical evacuation ambulances capabilities (MEDEVAC capabilities) are exceeded. In today's modern multi-domain environment, the high lethality and casualty rates make CASEVAC a necessary part of any operation. Army formations will use whatever transportation assets (ground, air, and maritime) available to accomplish CASEVAC whether or not those assets are provisioned for CASEVAC. Army formations have unit Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for medics, combat lifesavers, and buddy aid to render aid to Soldiers undergoing CASEVAC. Therefore, there is no need to include provisions for CASEVAC in every vehicle's requirements/development. The Army intends to include requirements for CASEVAC kits in select platforms that are likely to see heavy use in CASEVAC situations (for example, cargo trucks and cargo aircraft). If the Army anticipates which platforms will be heavily used in CASEVAC situations correctly, and includes CASEVAC requirements for those platforms early in their development, there will be less likelihood of needing to modify those platforms after they have begun production in order to make them CASEVAC-capable.

Mr. SCOTT. What can be done to enhance the stateside mission of the U.S. Army Reserve's air ambulance companies?

General McCONVILLE. The United States Army Reserve (USAR) Air Ambulance companies are among the best trained and equipped air ambulance units in the country and stand ready to accomplish any assigned mission. Units require predictable and necessary resources to allow for continued training in order to maintain this capability. Modern facilities would allow units to optimize readiness and be ready for future fleet modernization. Stateside response can be performed by USAR Air Ambulance companies with the right resources and authorities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BERGMAN

Mr. BERGMAN. My question pertains to the Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) program. I was concerned to read a recent article published in Army Times in February, which highlighted issues with the weapons' reliability, performance, and sourcing. Considering these and other previously raised concerns, I am concerned that the Army's acquisition strategy for this program may be unduly risky. I noted that the FY24 budget request includes funding to procure nearly 20,000 rifles, a substantial purchase, especially if there are unresolved issues with the program. Can you please provide me with a status report on the program, including a list of identified issues and any plans to address them? I am particularly

interested in whether the weapon systems currently meet the range, lethality, and toxicity requirements established at the outset of the program.

General MCCONVILLE. The Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) (Rifle, Automatic Rifle, Fire Control, and 6.8mm Ammunition) currently meets all Range, Lethality, and Toxicity requirements. Since the program's contract award for Low-Rate Initial Production, the Army has continued to monitor three primary residual risk watch-items captured from its prototype phase testing. The watch-items were Dispersion, Reliability, and Toxic Fumes. In 1QFY23, the vendor, Sig Sauer, with government oversight, conducted multiple technical test events and Soldier touchpoints. Vendor test results demonstrated that NGSW is meeting or exceeding all Dispersion, Reliability, and Toxic Fumes threshold requirements. The Army is currently executing government Production Qualification Testing (PQT) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland to validate NGSW performance against all requirements. PQT results will be briefed to the Army Acquisition Executive in 3QFY23 and will inform an Army decision to enter Full Rate Production in FY24.

Mr. BERGMAN. The Aircraft Cleaning and Deicing System (ACDS) has been a requirement since the 1990s, yet it remains unaddressed. Prior budget documents show that the ACDS demonstration had been continuously pushed further and further into out-years. Therefore, the House Armed Services Committee included a provision on "Accelerating aircraft cleaning and deicing systems for rotary-wing aircraft" in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2021 (H. Rept. 116-442) with the intention of seeing the Army move forward on corrosion prevention efforts to keep our assets flying. The Army's response acknowledged AMCOM/PEO Aviation will evaluate Commercial, Off-The-Shelf (COTS) systems and specified the Army was planning to move forward with the ACDS in Q1 FY24. FY23 Budget Justification documents confirmed the ACDS starting in Q1 FY24. However, the FY24 Budget Justification documents once again show the ACDS is being pushed out to FY27.

Please provide justification for the delay of this program—including details on how the Army is currently meeting rinse and wash requirements for rotary-wing aircraft as outlined in Operational Requirements Document #05033?

What are the rinse and wash requirements you follow when aircrafts are flown over dirt, sand, salt, or if parked in such conditions?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army possesses aircraft rinse and wash systems that allow units to meet mandated wash/rinse requirements following aircraft flights into dirt, sand, salt, or other environmental conditions. The Army continues to explore options to obtain improved and/or modernized wash and rinse systems and evaluates commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) equipment when making such decisions.

Delays in decisions to purchase and field new Army aircraft wash and rinse systems are due to the time required to test and validate equipment and overall prioritization of Army aviation modernization efforts. Prior to procurement of a COTS item, the Army must conduct a competitive selection process followed by a series of rigorous tests to ensure the equipment will meet operational, sustainment, and logistic requirements. This testing takes two years to complete. Once Army testing validates that requirements are met, the Army makes a procurement decision and begins fielding new equipment.

Aviation units currently utilize a variety of fixed base and portable rinsing systems to meet directed rinse and wash requirements rotary-wing aircraft and the requirements vary depending on the environment. Using the AH-64 Apache helicopter as an example, wash and rinse requirements are as follows: in an extremely severe tropics/saltwater environment, aircraft is rinsed daily, washed every seven days, and inspected for corrosion every seven days. In a severe coastal environment, aircraft is rinsed every 7 days, washed every 14 days, and inspected for corrosion every 30 days. In a moderate or intermediate environment, aircraft is rinsed every 14 days, washed every 30 days, and inspected for corrosion every 60 days. In a slight desert environment, aircraft is rinsed every 14 days, washed every 30 days, and inspected for corrosion every 90 days. When the area of operation is more adverse than the technical manual guidance, the maintenance officers can follow Technical Manual 1-1500-328-23, 2-2 Scheduled Inspection guidance.

"The Commander may authorize temporary exception to maintenance actions when an aviation system or aviation-associated equipment is subjected to unusual situations, such as, combat operations, matter of life or death in civil disasters, adverse environmental or weather conditions, the mission type, periods of extended inactivity, or when flight crew and/or maintenance personnel experience level overrides the consequences of continued operation. The Maintenance Officer is responsible for the scope and frequency of all maintenance inspections and actions."

Mr. BERGMAN. The Army's response to Congress stated ACDS was "budgeted to procure 170 systems through FY27" with a projected spend plan of \$3.2M RDTE and \$15.2M APA funding through FY27. Where are the budgeted funds being shift-

ed? As I understand, multiple COTS systems currently exist to address such corrosion prevention and control issues.

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army's top priority in the Aviation Ground Support Equipment portfolio is the procurement of the Aviation Ground Power Unit (AGPU) 1.1. The AGPU 1.1 replaces the legacy AGPU which is well past its economic useful life.

Mr. BERGMAN. If there are COTS solutions ready now, why is the Army again delaying this program?

Secretary WORMUTH. Prior to procurement of a COTS item, the Army must conduct a competitive selection process followed by a series of rigorous tests to ensure the equipment will meet Army operational, sustainment, and logistic requirements. This testing takes two years to complete. Once requirements are met, the Army begins procurement.

Mr. BERGMAN. If funding resources are the challenge, is \$3.2 million in RDTE funding needed to verify that a COTS product can meet the Army's requirements? Why not utilize those funds for system procurement?

Secretary WORMUTH. In order to complete selection testing, the Army requires two years of RDTE funds prior to begin procurement. Thorough testing is required to ensure the system can meet Army requirements and operate in extreme environments and combat or there is risk of spending money to acquire systems that do not perform or hold up to their stated capabilities.

Mr. BERGMAN. My question pertains to the Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) program. I was concerned to read a recent article published in Army Times in February, which highlighted issues with the weapons' reliability, performance, and sourcing. Considering these and other previously raised concerns, I am concerned that the Army's acquisition strategy for this program may be unduly risky. I noted that the FY24 budget request includes funding to procure nearly 20,000 rifles, a substantial purchase, especially if there are unresolved issues with the program. Can you please provide me with a status report on the program, including a list of identified issues and any plans to address them? I am particularly interested in whether the weapon systems currently meet the range, lethality, and toxicity requirements established at the outset of the program.

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) (Rifle, Automatic Rifle, Fire Control, and 6.8mm Ammunition) currently meets all Range, Lethality, and Toxicity requirements. Since the program's contract award for Low-Rate Initial Production, the Army has continued to monitor three primary residual risk watch-items captured from its prototype phase testing. The watch-items were Dispersion, Reliability, and Toxic Fumes. In 1QFY23, the vendor, Sig Sauer, with government oversight, conducted multiple technical test events and Soldier touchpoints. Vendor test results demonstrated that NGSW is meeting or exceeding all Dispersion, Reliability, and Toxic Fumes threshold requirements. The Army is currently executing government Production Qualification Testing (PQT) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland to validate NGSW performance against all requirements. PQT results will be briefed to the Army Acquisition Executive in 3QFY23 and will inform an Army decision to enter Full Rate Production in FY24.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. GOLDEN

Mr. GOLDEN. The Army Climate Strategy released in February 2022 calls on the Department to simultaneously modernize its infrastructure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Line of effort #2, Intermediate Objective 2.8 specifically adopts a buy clean policy for procurement of construction materials with lower embodied carbon emissions and states that "it is time to ask Army suppliers to further reduce both embodied emissions and the impact that supply chain activities have on the climate."

Mass timber is a uniquely sustainable construction option and 50% of its dry weight is carbon actively sequestered from the environment. Mass Timber systems exceed ATRP (Anti-terrorism Force Protection) requirements and installation resiliency specifications related to seismic activity, lateral wind, and fire performance. And as the Army itself saw with five privatized hotels, mass timber buildings consistently go up almost 40% faster, with fewer labor requirements, and drastically less on-site construction traffic.

Despite its sustainable attributes, however, mass timber has often faced difficulty in competing against more traditional MILCON construction materials.

Given the Army's stated goal related to sustainable construction materials, are there ways in which the Army can more fairly advance sustainable building materials, including mass timber, to fairly compete for MILCON projects? Is the Army

working to create shelf ready designs based on mass timber the same way it has them for other UFC-certified materials? If not, how can the Army resist the inertia within the MILCON design process?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army is committed to the employment of sustainable building materials in military facility design and construction. The Army is currently pursuing two sustainable building material pilot projects, a FY24 barracks project at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), which is evaluating low carbon concrete and other sustainable primary materials, and a FY25 barracks project at JBLM to be built using Mass Timber as a primary construction material. The results of the pilot program will provide data on carbon footprint, life cycle costs, resilience to extreme weather events, impact on construction timeliness, cost effectiveness of military construction, and will inform the applicability of sustainable building materials on future planning and design for military construction projects.

In accordance with Army policy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) uses Army standards for the most widely constructed Army facility types. These standards are not based on specific systems or materials, but provide uniform functional and mission requirements. Many facility types also have standard designs that feature specific materials and systems. Project teams have the flexibility to select materials that provide the best-value to the government, based on a variety of factors, such as site conditions, force protection, resilience to weather, durability, esthetics, life-cycle cost, construction timelines, and geographic availability. Life-cycle cost effectiveness is required per the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58).

The information and experience developed in the pilot project will be incorporated into the USACE standard designs as new military design and construction projects are authorized.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. WALTZ

Mr. WALTZ. How do JROTC programs positively affect recruiting? Do your recruiters face any obstacles, either statutorily or from school districts to accessing high schools?

General McCONVILLE. The mission of Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is to assist high schools in motivating students to be better citizens. The Army's JROTC program is an overwhelmingly positive youth citizenship program supporting more than 272,000 cadets at more than 1,700 high schools across the nation. JROTC's presence in high schools in areas that lack a military presence helps connect those communities with our Armed Forces. Across all programs, JROTC cadets have higher attendance, graduation rates, and Grade Point Averages than their peers, who do not participate in the program. While JROTC is not a recruiting program, approximately 44% of Army enlistees came from a high school with a DOD JROTC program. Within statute, recruiters maintain access to high schools and the Army routinely works with the Office of the Secretary of Defense to ensure the execution of that program.

Mr. WALTZ. The FY23 NDAA required you to establish gender-neutral physical readiness standards to ensure soldiers can perform the duties of their occupational specialty within 180 days of enactment. Is the Army on track to meet this deadline?

Secretary WORMUTH. The FY23 NDAA provision directed the Army to establish gender-neutral physical readiness standards that ensure soldiers can perform the duties of their respective military occupational specialties. The Army has developed gender-neutral physical readiness standards for each military occupational specialty and they are documented in the Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 611-21. The Army is prepared to brief these standards to Congress by June 21st, 2023, as required by the FY23 NDAA.

The Army implemented the ACFT in October 2022 to strengthen the Army's fitness culture while ensuring fairness in the transition to a new fitness test of record. The ACFT, which is performance-normed by gender and age groups, is based on feedback from soldiers, an independent RAND study required by Congress, review of nearly 630,000 ACFT scores, and over three years of ongoing analysis.

The ACFT became a test of record for the Regular Army and Active Guard Reserve on October 1, 2022 and for the National Guard and Reserve on April 1, 2023, just weeks ago. The Army is now collecting ACFT test results for the Active Component and is evaluating the current ACFT implementation. As the Army committed to Congress last year, we will use the ACFT governance board to help the Army evaluate potential changes to the test. Before considering potential changes to the test, the Army will want to analyze the scores for all three Army Components.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. FALLON

Mr. FALLON. Refn: Army's HMMWV Antilock Brake System/Electronic Stability Control (ABS/ESC) program

In the hearing, you stated the capacity to retrofit HMMWVs with ABS/ESC technology had expanded beyond the ability of Red River Army Depot to conduct the work causing new sites to be brought on. This is false. Red River developed a fly-away capacity to expand the reach and speed of the program. That is the alternative site you referenced. What are you doing to expand the throughput of this program beyond 700 vehicles per month at Red River Army Depot to the 1000 vehicles per month that Red River Army Depot and the supplier are capable of meeting?

Secretary WORMUTH. Current capacity to retrofit HMMWVs at Red River Army Depot (RRAD) is 130 per month on one shift given available parts and assets to retrofit. RRAD is capable of increasing capacity by establishing a second shift that would allow for production of 260 per month given available parts and assets to retrofit.

Because of the RRAD capacity constraints on site, RRAD has expanded 10 active regional retrofit Continental United States sites operated by RRAD employees. These sites have completed 4,420 retrofits to date. Each site's current capacity on one shift is 70 per month. Capacity at RRAD regional sites could also be increased by establishing a second shift. Production could be increased to 140 per month per site given available parts and assets to retrofit (total of 1400 per month).

Establishing second shifts would take approximately 60 days to hire and train additional direct labor staff to execute the increased workload.

Limiting factors to acceleration are primarily centered on additional labor funding associated with increased production quantities and the availability of additional Retrofit Kits and assets (unretrofitted HMMWVs) to support the increase in production volume. There are also additional costs and time associated with increasing throughput and shipping vehicles to RRAD as opposed to the dispersed retrofit sites.

Mr. FALLON. Refn: Army's HMMWV Antilock Brake System/Electronic Stability Control (ABS/ESC) program

How do you justify the fact that Congress has allocated more than \$300M to this specific program for the retrofit of HMMWVs, yet you have failed to execute this funding in a timely manner?

Secretary WORMUTH. The HMMWV Antilock Brake System/Electronic Stability Control (ABS/ECS) program has reached the contract ceiling and is currently in the evaluation/audit of the follow-on contract.

The Army's current plan to execute the funding can be broken down into two parts—funding for the hardware, and funding to support installation operations at Red River Army Depot (RRAD).

For the hardware, \$57.9M of FY23 funds will be obligated to procure 6,530 Retrofit Kits in 4QFY23. Based on the Congressional Adds in 2022 and 2023, the Army's reached its current contract ceiling. In order to exceed the ceiling, a Justification and Approval was approved at the end of November to support FY23 and future year's needs. As a result of the potential high dollar value of this action (\$425M), the Government is currently executing an evaluation and audit of the proposed pricing with a forecasted scheduled award in 4Q23. The Government is also assessing accelerating parts of the award to ensure sustained production and installation. The contract mechanism will allow for immediate kit procurements funded in FY24 and beyond.

For installation funding, \$10.874M will be obligated to RRAD during 3QFY23 to begin OCONUS retrofit installation operations. An additional \$33.839M will be obligated to RRAD in 1QFY24 for retrofit installations occurring in FY24. This, combined with the previous obligations, will exceed execution goals.

Mr. FALLON. Refn: Army's HMMWV Antilock Brake System/Electronic Stability Control (ABS/ESC) program

Individuals with the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army have suggested there is an issue that the supplier of these kits is not on contract yet, forcing low-rate production. This "contracting issue" is a farce, and it is threatening soldiers' lives. You can solve this issue today. How do you plan to transition these contracts to longer-term vehicles in order to execute the money Congress has already appropriated and that will come in Fiscal Year '24?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army anticipates funding to be obligated with the 4th Quarter Fiscal Year 2023 extension. The contract extension should provide the needed scope and time to procure all remaining kit. Based on coordination with the supplier, the Army is comfortable they have the needed capacity to produce the necessary kits and the Army is sharing quantity and schedule goals for forecasting.

Mr. FALLON. Refn: Army's HMMWV Antilock Brake System/Electronic Stability Control (ABS/ESC) program

Are you aware of special interests inside of the Pentagon that prefer the purchase of new HMMWVs over the retrofit eligible 48,000 HMMWVs? How can you justify this when retrofit amounts to an \$8 billion cost savings?

Secretary WORMUTH. No, the Army is not aware of any special interest groups. The Army has a three-pronged approach to Anti-lock Brakes System (ABS)/Electronic Stability Control (ESC) capability in the light tactical wheeled vehicle fleet. First, the Army recognizes the importance of retrofitting HMMWVs with ABS/ESC kits and fully supports that effort. The Army also appreciates Congressional support for ABS/ESC procurement. Second, the Army is also procuring a small quantity of new HMMWVs that are needed due to obsolescence issues with some of our older vehicles. Newly procured HMMWVs that are equipped with ABS/ESC will also address shortfalls in the HMMWV fleet of selected armored variants. The anticipated cost of these new HMMWVs is approximately \$1.9 billion. Third, new JLTV procurement will further advance the Army's commitment to the safety and security of our soldiers as we intend to replace about half of our existing HMMWV fleet with the JLTV. All JLTVs are equipped with ABS/ESC.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. MACE

Ms. MACE. Secretary Wormuth, The SPRIRC report proposes many great recommendations such as expanding the pool of behavioral healthcare provider candidates, improving aspects of the work-life balance, housing, childcare, and reenlistment options, and improving workforce shortages across the DOD. Which of these recommendations is the Department of the Army planning on implementing?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army is committed to enhancing its suicide prevention and response efforts and subsequent implementation of DOD-approved recommendations. The Army actively participated in a DOD working group to lay out the roadmap for implementing the approved recommendations. DOD will publish the approved recommendations by June 2, 2023.

Following the release of the Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC) report the Secretary of Defense approved several immediate actions to improve suicide prevention. One of those actions is for Commanders at all levels to promote mission readiness through healthy sleep throughout the force. Research has shown that service members who report sleep disruption are three times more likely to report suicidal ideations. To expedite this immediate action, the Army has used existing capabilities such as the Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) program informed by research from the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research's Sleep Research Center.

Additionally, the Army is in the process of fielding modernized Suicide Prevention training curricula at all echelons which equips Commanders with tools to impart knowledge and skills through modular means in accordance with the SPRIRC's recommendations for frequency, intensity, and duration of education delivery.

Of utmost importance to these efforts is ensuring that soldiers know they have resources available to them and are a part of a cohesive team that will support them and ensure access to those resources within their respective units/installations. Two installations that are leading important initiatives include Fort Drum and Fort Bragg.

1. Fort Drum: "Keys to Connections" is a spiritual readiness initiative led by Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division Chaplain Section and Religious Support Team. The program focuses on the initial welcome and orientation soldiers receive upon arrival at Fort Drum. During the 90-minute sessions, soldiers are welcomed to Fort Drum as a valued member of the team. Understanding that the time in an assignment can pass quickly, the aim of these sessions is to assist soldiers in reflecting about their goals while at Fort Drum, what a successful assignment would look like, and identify potential obstacles. The event features a resource fair to aid in connection with support agencies and other resources. There has been substantial positive feedback from soldiers surrounding this event. The Army intends to continue to promote the idea that proactive outreach, communication during critical times of transition, and promoting access to resources in multiple venues has an immediate impact.
2. Fort Bragg: The installation is currently running a pilot program to reduce the number of suicides after a soldier is released from in-patient psychiatric care. This pilot program includes on-going risk assessment, communication with command, follow-up out-patient care, restriction of lethal means, and

electronic-profile recommendations. Since implementation, Fort Bragg has had zero deaths by suicide from soldiers recently discharged. This pilot is expanding to Hawaii.

Suicide is the result of complex and interrelated factors that drives the Army to take a comprehensive approach that includes awareness, research, and a combination of clinical/non-clinical initiatives to address suicide, protective factors to help safeguard our soldiers, and the high-risk behaviors undermining trust across our Force. Across the Army, there is a shift from responding to harmful events to an integrated primary prevention model. This approach also stresses the importance of continued investment in upstream prevention efforts like quality-of-life initiatives and efforts. Those include improved barracks, enhanced morale, welfare and recreation programs and facilities, development of financial literacy courses, expansion of spouse career and employment opportunities, access to quality health care and relationship and team building to help soldiers and families thrive and navigate the challenges they might face in Army life.

Ms. MACE. Secretary Wormuth, As certain medications and drugs become more legal across the country and still illegal federally, has there been a revaluations of MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Stations) drugs testing and acceptance? What about children of military families who may have had some sort of behavioral health treatment when they were younger, possibly even as a result of their parents' military service, who are now ineligible for service themselves?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army's current drug and alcohol testing regulation is aligned with the DOD policy on Drug and Alcohol Testing (DAT) at a MEPS. However, we are constantly evaluating the Army's policies concerning previous drug used and the wavier process pertaining to these issues.

Any applicant, regardless of whether their parents previously served, may be eligible for a psychiatric or behavioral health waiver. The Army takes each individual waiver request through a very rigorous process where a "whole person" approach to the applicant is used to determine the outcome—heavily informed by subject matter experts in the appropriate field or discipline.

Ms. MACE. Secretary Wormuth, Are there any plans to combine recruiting forces into a Joint recruiting effort between all the services to save costs and improve recruiting? What are some of the ways the Army can and is not yet incentivizing Soldiers to stay in the Army?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army, through participation in the DOD's Joint Recruiting Facilities Program, is co-located with the other Military Services in order to ensure adequate support of their respective recruiting missions while keeping costs down. The Army continues to thrive with retaining soldiers and is anticipating exceeding its retention numbers in FY23. To capitalize on this momentum, the Army is conducting a study using in-person focus groups to get direct feedback from soldiers on what options and incentives they feel are most valuable.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. McCLELLAN

Ms. McCLELLAN. Secretary Wormuth, in your testimony before the Armed Services Committee you mentioned that the backlog for background checks posed a problem in hiring qualified childcare providers and teachers for child development centers and schools located on Army bases. Does the Army require individuals applying for childcare and K-12 educational positions to get a background check for each job within the Army educational system that they apply to? And if so, has the Army studied making background checks portable—allowing individuals to apply for multiple childcare jobs with only one background check instead of requiring a background check for every position that an individual may apply to within the Army's childcare program?

Secretary WORMUTH. The Army requires that individuals possess a completed background check according to Title 34, United States Code, Section 20351. The law requires agencies in the Federal Government that operate a facility and hire individuals involved in the provision of childcare services to children under the age of 18 to conduct a criminal history background check on all existing and newly-hired employees. The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division's (CID) Crime Records Center supports criminal background checks by conducting a name check with the National Crime Information Center; it has no backlog on name checks and for the last 4 weeks takes an average of 1.5 days to complete name checks relating to childcare services suitability screenings at the Department of Defense Education Activity. Completed background checks require a final adjudication, which, by OSD policy, must be completed by the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency

Consolidated Adjudication Services. This adjudication process is currently backlogged.

To help streamline the process where possible, the Army does execute reciprocity from one Army organization to another organization based on Army Directive 2014-23 (AD 2014-23) and 2018 Clarifying Guidance to AD 2014-23. Individuals that have served continuously in a position and are transferring to the same position in another organization do not require a new investigation. The code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR Section 731) does require a new investigation when an individual has a break in service for more than 24 months or where there is information that the person is not suitable for a child care position.

Army installations continue to look for creative solutions to address the current challenges. For example, the Army has recently completed a two-month pilot in March conducted in three locations (Ft. Irwin, Ft. Moore and Ft. Lewis-McChord) intended to facilitate quicker movement of newly hired NAF/APF childcare providers under "Provisional Hire (PH)" status (i.e. they are unable to work in classrooms at this time), to "Line of Sight Supervision (LOSS)" status. Under LOSS status, the childcare providers are able to start working in the classrooms with children, and with someone monitoring them. Under the pilot, the G-1 Centralized Suitability Service Center (CSSC) utilized Installation Records Checks (IRC) (i.e. criminal history background information working on military installations, medical, and drug/alcohol checks), hiring documents, and fingerprint to produce an interim adjudication based on DODM 1402.05 versus including review of SF-85 security questionnaire. When the adjudication is favorable, it allows movement of the hire from PH to LOSS status.

The feedback on this process has been positive, and the pilot data has shown that the centers were able to release hires from PH to LOSS between 10-12 days for cases that require mitigation for derogatory information, compared to 30 plus days. Cases without any derogatory information showed interim determination of up to 5 days from PH to LOSS. Another significant success is the reduction of terminations of cases by 15%-20% which contributes to reduction in interim adjudication. The full results of the pilot are still being evaluated and analyzed by Army leaders and the feasibility to expand this success is yet to be determined. However, the Army will continue to prioritize solutions such as these given the direct impact it can and will have on our soldiers, families, civilians, and soldiers for life.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Secretary Wormuth, research has shown that most of a child's brain develops before the age of 5 and that when the educational programming offered in child development centers and other pre-kindergarten educational institutions does not align with the K-12 system, there can be significant loss of learning. How is the Army working to ensure that the programming of its child development centers ensures K-12 readiness, and does this include working with local K-12 systems to ensure proper alignment in educational programming and curriculum?

Secretary WORMUTH. All Army Child Development Centers enterprise-wide use the Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum. This early childhood curriculum is research-based and widely used within large school districts and most Head Start programs, along with Department of Defense Education Activity Pre-K programs. The standardized approach to the use of a single curriculum Army-wide allows for predictability when families move from one location to another.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY DR. McCORMICK

Dr. McCORMICK. Since coming to Congress, I've become aware of serious issues in the medical separation process administered by the Defense Health Agency due to wounded warriors' lack of access to their branch chain of command. At the Medical Evaluation Board phase and elsewhere, wounded warriors are unable to seek relief after instances of negligence and malfeasance nor can they meaningfully appeal questionable or erroneous decisions through their chain of command. Given all of that, would you support returning authority for the morale, welfare, and determinations of fitness for active duty for servicemembers going through the medical separation process back to the service branches?

General McCONVILLE. Each Service has and will continue to maintain authority for fitness determinations for service members in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process. The Army and sister services work as an integrated Military Health System with the Defense Health Agency to ensure healthcare delivery meets the department mission to take care of our soldiers and beneficiaries. During the IDES process, the soldier remains in their unit and has full access to the chain of command. The chain of command retains responsibility for the morale and welfare of the soldier while the medical community has responsibility for the

evaluation of the soldier's ability to meet the established medical retention standards.

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