

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

**RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III
SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY**

BEFORE THE

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Introduction

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to represent the 1.1 million men and women of America's Army. I have been in this position for less than a month, but I have served in the Army for almost 30 years, and I have witnessed first-hand the importance of the recommendations and decisions made by this committee and how that affects our Army and its ability to fight and win our Nation's wars.

I would also like to welcome all the newest members. I truly appreciate you taking on the tremendous responsibility of providing funding and support for our military. I pledge to always be a point of contact should you ever have any questions or comments about our Soldiers, equipment, training, or quality of life programs.

This committee's support over the years makes a tremendous impact on our Army. We would not be able to fight and win our Nation's wars without the continued support of those here on this committee. You have ensured the Army has the vital resources to man, train, and equip the best fighting force in the world and provide top-notch care and benefits to our Families.

I would like to begin by introducing these senior noncommissioned officers seated behind me. First, the Command Sergeant Major (CSM) of the Army National Guard (ARNG), CSM Richard Burch, who serves as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for Major General Raymond W. Carpenter. Also with me is the CSM of the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR), CSM Michael D. Schultz, who serves as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for Lieutenant General

Jack Stultz. Both of these CSMs represent more than 567,000 Soldiers who play a vital role in defending our Nation. These CSMs are a key part of the leadership team that ensures our citizen-Soldiers are trained and ready to deploy in support of the Army and our Nation.

The Army continues to prevail against insurgents around the world while protecting our country and the rights of our citizens. We have completed combat operations in Iraq by transitioning to Operation New Dawn, continuing to provide much needed support to the people and government of Iraq. We have also surged Soldiers into Afghanistan to support a new strategic direction. We have reshaped our Army to better align ourselves for the challenges of tomorrow. We have accomplished much over the last year, but there is still much to do.

We still face an uncertain future. In this era of persistent conflict, hybrid threats will certainly test our new structure. These conventional, irregular, criminal and terrorist forces will avoid our strengths and attack us asymmetrically. We will continue to reorganize, restructure, and train in full spectrum operations to respond to any future enemy threat.

Though we are still engaged around the world, our Soldiers and Families deserve a quality of life commensurate their service. As the Sergeant Major of the Army, this quality of life is one of my key imperatives and the subject of my testimony today. More specifically, I want to talk about four key areas of quality of life: restoring balance, building resilience, wellness of our Wounded Warriors, and Army Family Programs.

Restoring Balance

Soldiers and their Families have been operating at an exhausting pace for the last nine-plus years. Our Army has been out of balance, lacking the much needed flexibility to respond to other contingencies

around the world and sustain our all-volunteer force. However, the draw down in Iraq and the temporary increase of Soldiers in our ranks has helped us regain some of that balance.

Four years ago, Chief of Staff of the Army, General George W. Casey Jr., gave the Army four imperatives to restore balance to the force. He said we must continue to **sustain** the Soldier's, Families, and Civilians; **prepare** forces for success in the future; **reset** units returning from downrange; and **transform** the Army to meet the demands of this century. These imperatives are helping us meet our end of Fiscal Year (FY) 11 objective of at least two years of dwell time for every year deployed for our active force and four years of dwell for every year deployed for our USAR and USARNG Soldiers. In 2011 the Army plans to look at the benefits of increasing dwell to 1:3 for active and 1:5 for reserve and National Guard Soldiers. This may result in nine-month deployments.

Recruiting and Retention

Soldiers are the centerpiece of our Army formations. We cannot fight and win without well trained, educated, and dedicated Soldiers.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 10, the Army recruited 148,827 young men and women across all three components of the force. The active Army recruited over 74,500; the ARNG recruited over 57,000; the USAR recruited over 17,000 Soldiers. The hard work of our recruiters across the country, the support of our Army leaders, elected officials, and the support of the Nation all contributed to this huge success.

Through the first quarter of FY11, our recruiters are doing an excellent job enlisting our Nation's youth. For our active component, we have achieved 103% of our quarter goal. (14,533 of 14,100) The USAR and USARNG have also been successful recruiting our citizen-Soldiers.

The USAR has achieved 100% (4,948 of 4,939) of their goal and the USARNG achieved 109% (14,106 of 12,954) of theirs.

Army retention programs remain a huge success story for this past year. The revision of the Retention Control Points (RCP) for Staff Sergeants and below supports the leader development and reinforces our Army Leadership Development Strategy (ALDS) principles from a continued service perspective. During FY10, we engaged in establishing the new policy and have since completed the action with an effective date of 1 June 2011.

Through the first quarter of FY11, our retention rates remain high. The active Army achieved 223% of its first quarter mission. The USAR achieved 112% and the USARNG achieved 110%.

As the Army begins to draw down from our Temporary End Strength Initiative, we must do so responsibly and deliberately. It is imperative we do not sacrifice our combat experience and unit cohesion by cutting large numbers of Soldiers to quickly reduce the budget. The Army is in the planning phase of this deliberate process.

Building Resilience

The last nine-plus years have been extremely tough on our Soldiers and our Families. The stress and strain of multiple deployments can manifest into alcohol and drug addiction, suicide, sexual assault, and reckless behavior as Soldiers try to cope with issues and problems without the proper help. The Army has worked hard over the last several years to institutionalize programs such as Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and the Army Campaign for Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention. These programs will teach Soldiers, Families, and DA

Civilians coping skills for dealing with the stress of deployments and everyday life.

Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention Report

In July 2010, the Army released the Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention Report (HP/RR/SP). This report was the result of a focused 15-month effort to better understand the increasing rate of suicides in the force.

According to the report, the Army has experienced an erosion of adherence to existing Army policies and standards and degraded accountability of disciplinary, administrative and reporting processes. These have prompted us to take a hard look at the way we conduct our day to day business while back at our home stations.

With the release of the Report, the Army took numerous actions in 2010 to stem high risk behavior and suicide. In October, the Army produced and released the interactive “Home Front” training video which included scenarios for Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members. The same month, the Army produced the “Shoulder to Shoulder: No Soldier Stands Alone” training video which included testimonials from real Soldiers and Families on dealing with thoughts of suicide and suicide attempts.

The Army also expanded its behavior health services across all components and implemented confidential alcohol and treatment programs at six installations across the United States. Also, we implemented policies to improve the medication management for Soldiers who have been prescribed four or more Medication with at least one a controlled substance or psychotropic medication. The policy requires a clinical pharmacist to conduct a comprehensive medication review for these Soldiers or for Soldiers displaying high risk behavior.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness

The Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program is the Army's flagship program to help Soldiers, Family members, and DA Civilians build resiliency and strength. CSF is a holistic program focused on developing the five dimensions of strength validated by the World Health Organization: Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Family.

We have incorporated CSF education across all professional military training and education programs. New recruits receive strength and resilience training as part of their Initial Entry Training (IET) prior to reporting to their first permanent duty station. Throughout the Soldier's career, all phases and levels of professional military education have strength and resilience training integrated in each curriculum. The CSF program focuses on prevention and building strength and resiliency versus providing treatment after a problem occurs.

Sexual Assault

During FY10, the total number of reported sexual assaults dropped by 6.5% from the previous year. One sexual assault in our Army is one too many and is not keeping with the Army's Values or Warrior Ethos. We are all a band of brothers and sisters and the negative impact a sexual assault has on the unit is immeasurable.

Preventing sexual assault comes from leadership and discipline. Our leaders are committed to preventing sexual assault and harassment. The Army's Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program promotes a climate in which sexual assault, sexual harassment, or sexually offensive language or gestures are not tolerated, while providing sensitive care and confidential reporting for victims of sexual assault and accountability for offenders.

The Army continues to implement its sexual assault prevention campaign with several near-term initiatives including: interactive decision-making vignettes; revised Professional Military Education focused on preventing sexual assault and harassment, and strengthening the partnering of SHARP with the Army Soldier Show, Army Concert Series, and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) programs.

Suicides

Last year, 303 Soldiers committed suicide. Though the active duty suicides are down, the overall number of suicides continues to rise, especially for our USAR and USARNG Soldiers.

We have found that today's Soldiers are experiencing a lifetime of stress during their first six years of service. Our high operational tempo dictates that leaders are primarily focused on the next mission or deployment. It is important for our Leaders to promote resiliency, teach coping skills, enforce good order and discipline, and stress help-seeking behavior across our Force.

Because of the heavy demands of war, we allowed an increase in enlistment waivers and thus, had an increase of high-risk recruits. Adding the stress of combat to Soldiers who exhibit high-risk behaviors increases the chances of suicide.

However, high operational tempo is not the sole reason our Soldiers commit suicide. Around 50% of our USAR and USARNG suicide deaths have no deployment history. Our citizen-Soldiers are affected by economic pressures and other stressors and because of their geographic location, have no immediate access to behavioral health professionals.

Leaders across the Army have taken aggressive steps to improve the health of the force, decrease high risk behavior and stem the increasing rate of suicides in our formations.

Wellness of our Wounded Warriors

The Army has a duty to provide world class care to those Wounded Warriors who have fought for our country. Through the Warrior Care and Transition Program and its Warrior Transition Units, our wounded have a central location for care management and are provided the necessary guidance and advocacy to empower wounded, ill, or injured Soldiers Veterans, and Families to successfully reintegrate either back into the Army or into the community.

Wounded Warrior Care

The Army continues to provide top care for our Wounded Warriors and their Families through 29 Warrior Transition Units across the United States and Europe. Currently, WTUs provide healing, rehabilitation, and reintegration to more than 10,000 wounded, ill or injured Soldiers, up about 11.5% from last year. In addition to the 29 WTUs are nine Community Based Warrior Transition Units (CBWTU) that allow recuperating Soldiers to utilize health care facilities in their home communities, while working at local U.S. Army armories and reserve centers. To better support the housing of our Wounded Warriors, the Army has completed six Warrior Transition Complexes with 18 currently under construction.

Through the Wounded Warrior Program, almost half of those Wounded Warriors enrolled return to the Army and half are separated from Service. So far, over 33,500 Wounded Warriors have spent time in the WTU.

In order to streamline the thousands of Medical Evaluation Board cases, the Army has implemented the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) at 15 locations. This system is designed to decrease the average length of the board process and provide our separating Soldiers a seamless transition to civilian and veteran status.

Through the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2), the most severely wounded, ill and injured Soldiers receive personalized support, regardless of location or length of care. More than just medical care, AW2 advocates assist Warriors and their Families with career and education opportunities, benefit information, and local resources. There are more than 8,000 Soldiers enrolled in the program, up 24% from last year.

Behavioral Health

Our Army Medical Command continues to meet the increased behavioral health demand of our Soldiers and Families. Even with the influx of behavioral health providers, the Army has seen a range of operational-related stress reactions including post-traumatic stress (PTS) disorder, depression, anxiety, alcohol and substance abuse, Family and relationship problems, increased risk taking behavior, compassion fatigue and suicide behaviors. Over the last year, Soldiers diagnosed with PTS dropped from 10,200 to approximately 9,300.

The Army has rolled out the Comprehensive Behavioral Health System of Care Campaign Plan (CBHSOC-CP). This plan is a comprehensive, and integrated behavioral health system that fosters optimal physical, emotional and spiritual wellness. It delivers coordinated care to our Soldiers and Families through effective education, prevention, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, documentation and follow up. This process includes development of standardized screening instruments

across the Army Force Generation cycle, standardization of a behavioral health data system and tele-behavioral health support.

Soldiers, leaders and Family members will receive behavioral health training and debriefings throughout the Army Force Generation cycle. This includes resilience training during pre-deployment; in theater psychological debriefings and integrated resilience training, reintegration resiliency training and post deployment psychological debriefings and resiliency training three to six months post deployment. Programs such as the embedded Behavioral Health teams, tele-behavioral health, Child, Adolescent, and Family Assistant Centers, School Behavioral Health and Specialty Behavioral Health care all play a major role in the CBHSOC campaign plan.

Our Soldiers receive top-notch behavioral health care, but access to this care is impacted by shortages of behavioral health professionals. Since 2005, the number of behavioral health visits has doubled, from 900,000 to more than 1.8 million. We continue to maximize the use of authorities that Congress has provided us to attract both military and civilian behavioral health providers to the Army. We have had some success hiring behavioral health professionals, increasing our staff by 65%, but we are still about 400 professionals short of our goal. Finally, the Army has lacked a standardized resiliency promotion program, which is a key component of psychological health. Through Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, the Army's Campaign Plan for Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention, and Warrior and Community resiliency training, the Army is closer than ever to standardizing resiliency for Soldiers from all three components.

Overall, the Army has implemented over 45 initiatives to fix or change access to care, resiliency, quality of care and surveillance. This

FY, we have asked for \$193 million for these programs, up from \$168 million last year. We have shifted our focus to providing care and support for those serving in Operational Enduring Freedom and have expanded our tele-behavioral health and automated behavioral health clinics. We are working hard to increase our behavioral health care providers for all components by approximately 1,000 across all components between 2012 and 2017.

Army Family Programs

The Army is committed to provide our Families quality of life programs that give them an opportunity to reestablish and nurture personal relationships following a deployment and making the post-deployment period as predictable and stable as possible. From providing respite care for spouses of deployed Soldiers to ensuring our geographically dispersed reserve and National Guard Soldiers receive the redeployment care they need to readapt, our Army Family programs play a significant role in preparing our Army for the next decade.

Army Family Covenant

The Army Family Covenant represents the Army's commitment to provide quality of life programs to Soldiers and Army Families, and is built upon five core commitments: standardize and fund Family programs and services; increase accessibility and quality of health care; improve Soldier and Family housing; ensure excellence in child, youth and school services; and expand education and employment opportunities for Family members.

Now in its fourth year, the commitment of the Army Family Covenant has not diminished. The Army has made significant progress in improving Soldier and Family programs, health care, housing, child, youth, and school services, recreation, education, and employment opportunities.

The Army's Soldier and Family Programs base budget request for FY11 remains \$1.7 billion. This investment shows the Army is committed to providing Soldiers and Families a quality of life commensurate with the quality of their service.

These resources focus on Soldier and Family programs that benefit our readiness and resilience, while reducing the stress and turbulence of constant deployments. Consistent funding of these programs is crucial to sustaining and preserving our All-Volunteer Force.

Army Community Covenant

The Army Community Covenant (ACC) is a formal commitment of support by state and local communities to Soldiers and their Families from all three components. Since its inception, 662 covenants have been signed in all 50 states, three territories, the District of Columbia, Korea and Europe.

The ACC targets national, state, and local organizations that provide education, employment, financial support, and support for surviving spouses, Wounded Warriors and deployed Soldiers and their Families.

The ACC website links Soldiers and their Families with community organizations supporting various quality of life needs. It also provides an opportunity for the community to support the military. The website highlights 113 national programs, 289 local programs and 221 local initiatives.

Our goal continues to be targeting specific areas where the needs of geographically dispersed Soldiers and Families are the greatest. During the recent state of the Union, President Obama said that only 1% of the nation makes up the Armed Forces, but 100% of the nation need to rally

behind the 1%. The Army Community Covenant is a great way to show support to those who sacrifice so much for this country.

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP)

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) provides USAR and USARNG Soldiers and their Families with valuable information before, during, and after deployments. Through Yellow Ribbon events, Soldiers and Families gain access to a wealth of services and knowledge that can help them prepare and handle their deployment. Yellow Ribbon spans the entire deployment cycle because there are different challenges at each phase.

The YRRP began as an initiative of the Minnesota ARNG in 2007. This past year the USARNG and USAR conducted more than 1,200 YRRP events across the Nation with more than 100,000 Soldiers and 125,000 Family members attending. The success of the program centers on a series of seven seminars designed to bring Soldiers and their Families together, to provide education on quality of life needs.

During the past 16 months, The YRRP office conducted a pilot program which placed ten Program Specialists around the country to assist the Reserve Components with YRP. As a result of this highly successful pilot program, the YRP Office has expanded this program from ten to 27 Program Specialists. They are located across the country in areas with dense populations of Reserve and National Guard Service and Family members. By expanding the program into a regional concept, these efforts can be conducted across the nation to enhance the program.

This expansion increases YRRP's ability to provide information on local, state, and federal programs and benefits available to Service and Family members throughout the deployment cycle. By dividing into four

regions, (Northeast, Southeast, West, and Central) Program Specialists form an extensive nationwide network providing uniform and streamlined information to Soldiers and their Families. It also gives additional support to Event Planners in planning and coordinating with, or identifying service providers for their Yellow Ribbon Events.

Child, Youth, and School Services (CYSS)

The Army's CYSS program supports the readiness and well-being of Army Families by reducing the conflict between on-the-job military missions and parental responsibilities. Generally, Army Families are younger than the average American Family and more geographically dispersed from extended Families in their home town and communities.

A Soldier's normal duty day begins with physical training at 6:30 a.m. This requires child care and youth supervision options for 10 to 14 hours each day. Frequently, this duty extends late into the evening and even weekends. Add in deployments and overseas assignments, and adequate care options become a challenge for the Army Family.

Thanks to your support, the Army has added 128 Child Development Centers and 24 Youth Centers since FY08. Last year, we were able to meet and maintain the DOD standard of 80% of the child care demand and 35% of the youth program demand. We have eliminated CYSS registration fees which helped to increase participation in Army Child and Youth programs and added an online registration to register children for child care and youth sports. Also, Army Families of deployed Soldiers have saved \$40 million in fee reductions for child care, youth sports and instructional classes.

Last year, we enrolled more than 16,000 geographically dispersed children into Army Sponsored Community Child and Youth Programs such

as Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood and Army Youth Programs in Your Neighborhood. These programs give Families fee assistance that allows them to pay rates comparable to those charged on post. Also, more than 371,000 geographically dispersed children of deployed parents participated in Youth Outreach activities, camps and workshops offered through Operation Military Kids in all 50 states.

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children ensures our children are not disadvantaged when moving from state to state. The last thing we want is for a child to be held back because he or she moved from Texas to Georgia and did not complete Georgia State History. So far, 35 states have signed the compact into law and legislation is being actively considered in seven other states and the District of Columbia.

The Army's Child, Youth, and School Services programs reduce stress on Families by minimizing Soldier and spouse lost duty and work time. These programs play a critical role in influencing Soldier and Family decisions to remain in the Army because they provide positive developmental opportunities for their young and school age children. Most importantly, these programs demonstrate how the Army cares about its people. Our Soldiers and their Families rate CYC programs as critical and essential to their Family's quality of life and their decision for continued service. We enlist a Soldier into the Army, but we retain a Family.

As part of the Army Child, Youth and School Services Program Capabilities, the Army continues to offer from five to 16 hours of respite care per month for each child of a deployed Soldier. Respite care allows the spouse or custodial parents or guardians time to address personal needs or take a much needed break. Since the advent of respite care, more than 5.5 million hours have been used by Families of deployed personnel.

To assist Army Families with members who have special needs, we provided up to 40 hours of respite care per month, per exceptional Family member. Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) respite care provides assistance to parents caring for special needs Family members. This program provides the time to address personal needs, provide attention to other Family members, and take a much needed break from demands of caring for a child with special needs

Other Family Programs

The Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC) Program continues to play a significant role in reducing the stigma of asking for help. Through the MFLC Program, licensed clinical providers assist Soldiers and their Families with issues they may face through the cycle of deployment. Consultants provide support on a range of issues from relationships and family crisis management to reunion and reintegration coping techniques.

The chaplain-led Strong Bonds marriage and Family enhancement retreat program is focused on building and maintaining strong relationships between couples. What started in 1999 with four events and 90 couples has evolved into a projected 5,400 events and 512,000 participants this fiscal year.

Since the inception of the Army Family Covenant, the Army added almost 1,100 Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSA). The FRSA provides administrative and logistical support to commanders and Family Readiness Group (FRG) leaders. In the active component, FRSAs are authorized down to the battalion level. In the Army National Guard, they are assigned at the battalion or brigade level and in the U.S. Army Reserve, there is one FRSA per every 1,500-2,000 citizen-Soldiers.

We have refocused our Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) mission to reassure Survivors of our fallen Warriors that they are continually linked to the Army for as long as they desire. The SOS demonstrates this commitment by providing support and standardized services across all three Army components, and increasing awareness and access to SOS through outreach efforts and partnerships with non-governmental organizations. We have enhanced survivor benefits by extending housing benefits to 365 days, providing one year of basic allowance for housing for Survivors living off the installation, allowed children to remain in their current DoD stateside school until transferring, allowing Survivors up to three years to use their final move benefit, instituted the special Survivor Indemnity Allowance with the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Offset, expanded GI benefits to children, and extended TRICARE benefits to three years after date of death.

THE WAY AHEAD

In closing, I want to stress the amazing work being done every day by our Soldiers, Civilians and Families around the world. They represent what is best about our Nation. Like their predecessors of generations past, our Soldiers are making a lasting impact on our Nation and the people of the world. Our Soldiers are the best trained, best manned, best equipped and best led force in our history. Every generation has its heroes, and this one is no different.

With your support, we have made great progress for our Army Family. I am grateful for your help and proud to have your support for the future. I appreciate this opportunity to speak before you today to tell the Army story. Thank you and Army Strong.