

RECORD VERSION

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
COMPLETE STATEMENT
OF
MS. KATHRYN A. CONDON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERIES
BEFORE
THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS' AFFAIRS AND
RELATED AGENCIES
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FIRST SESSION, 113TH CONGRESS

RELATED AGENCIES HEARING: ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

MARCH 13, 2013**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION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

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Bishop and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on Arlington National Cemetery. We have worked diligently to extend and institutionalize our tremendous progress made since my last testimony before this subcommittee two years ago. We continue to implement Army processes and set industry standards for best practices, helping ensure Arlington can serve our Veterans, Families and the public in the manner they deserve. I am, however, very concerned for Arlington's immediate and long-term operational future due to the fiscal uncertainty we face.

THE STATE OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Mr. Chairman, through the efforts of a dedicated and talented workforce and the support of a steadfast Army, Arlington's transformation could not be more striking. Leadership, proper equipment, established standards, training, and holding people accountable for standards have made all the difference—a difference for which the workforce and I are extremely proud. We are using industry-leading, externally-validated standards and auditable business practices to maintain fiscal accountability. By the end of April 2013, we expect to complete the final phase of our authoritative data set of all gravesites at Arlington accountability process, reviewing the dispositive records, grave marker and geospatial location of each individual interred or inurned at every location. Our workforce is now trained and finally using equipment appropriate for the rolling hills and high water table of Virginia. On March 12, 2012, Arlington National

Cemetery became the first national cemetery to geospatially (digitally) manage cemetery operations. Leveraging this technology, on October 22, 2012 we also launched *ANC Explorer*. The first version of this free, web-based application allows Families and the public to locate gravesites, events or other points of interest throughout the Cemetery; generate front-and-back photos of a headstone or monument; and receive directions to these locations. With the help of the Center of Military History, we are remaining good stewards of our Nation's history: cataloguing and helping restore and preserve 44 boxes and 846 folders of maps, pictures and papers documenting almost 150 years of Arlington's history. We are also implementing initiatives to sustain our natural resources, using hybrid vehicles, building sidewalks of recycled materials, incorporating earth- and wildlife-friendly landscaping across the cemetery's 624 acres, requiring digital staffing and briefs to reduce our paper consumption, and purchasing environmentally-sensitive supplies. Most importantly, we remain committed to maintaining the chain-of-custody for all remains in our care, ensuring that a non-negotiable standard of accountability is beyond reproach for everyone resting in solemn repose at Arlington.

Major inspections over the past two years have recognized this progress. For instance, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded in December 2011 that the Army had taken positive steps to address critical areas and implement improvements at Arlington. Since the GAO report was published, we have completed all ten management and contracting actions recommended, including publishing our strategic Campaign Plan, Enterprise Architecture, Organizational Inspection Program, and updated table of distribution and allowances based on the U.S. Army Manpower

Analysis Agency and U.S. Army Force Management Support Agency's manpower assessment. In line with the GAO recommendations, we have also formalized an expanded Contracting Support Element and updated our contract support agreements with all acquisition and contracting organizations supporting our operations. The September 2012 Department of the Army Inspector General's (DAIG) report, submitted in compliance with Public Law 111-339, also found that Arlington had completed or should continue its current efforts for all 45 of the subtasks the DAIG evaluated. And as the Secretary of the Army noted in his September letter to Congress, the changes "have transformed (Arlington National Cemetery) and the (Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery) into premier institutions of excellence capable of setting the standards for federal cemeteries across the Nation."

OPERATING IN A CHALLENGING FISCAL ENVIRONMENT

As with most Federal organizations, Arlington is facing significant fiscal uncertainties from the combined impacts of the current Continuing Resolution (CR) and the Sequestration designated in the Budget Control Act of 2011. In the event of a full year CR for FY 2013, our funding will be reduced to \$45.8 million. The President's FY 2013 Budget requested \$173.8 million and 201 employees for projects in Arlington National Cemetery. A full year CR would be a \$128 million and 31 employee reduction from the Cemetery's request. Due to sequestration, Arlington National Cemetery funding is being reduced by 5% of our FY 2013 continuing resolution level. However, the good news here is that the Secretary of the Army has decided that ANC staff will not be

furloughed, so there will be no delays in burials at Arlington in contrast to previous news reports.

Within the President's FY 2013 budget, Arlington requested \$45.8 million for its base budget, plus \$103 million for expansion projects and \$25 million for critical infrastructure restoration and modernization. Our first of three expansion projects—Columbarium Court #9, extending Arlington's above-ground interments through 2024—will be dedicated on May ninth, completed in less than two years after its ground breaking. We have reached the 65% design point with the Millennium Project, and with funding we will be ready to award the contract to begin construction in September 2013. We are also prepared to begin now the planning and design for the Navy Annex, whose buildings are scheduled to be completely removed by August 2013. Once complete, the Millennium project will extend Arlington's first interment capacity through 2035; the Navy Annex, first interments through the 2050s. However, without enacted funding consistent with the President's FY 2013 budget request, Arlington cannot move forward with either expansion project.

In addition, the \$25 million requested for infrastructure restoration and modernization is needed to complete major efforts we cannot fund using our base budget. For instance, shortly after I arrived I asked the Army Environmental Command to complete two inspections of Arlington. By the end of this month, using prioritized resources we are on schedule to complete 38 of 39 Environmental Performance Assessment System (EPAS) violations they found. The final EPAS violation, though, requires over \$10.5 million to repair and upgrade the storm drainage system in nine

burial sections across the cemetery that contribute to water pollution along the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Many of our roads are also in disrepair and crumbling after years of patching, and require replacement to allow safe operations for our ceremonial units and horses pulling the caissons, and to present the appearance required of a national shrine.

Throughout my tenure, Arlington has remained resolute to use scrupulously every dollar our Nation provided. My resource managers' meticulous efforts reconciling prior year accounts resulted in Arlington recovering over \$32.6 million, benefitting Arlington across all aspects of our mission. For instance, the Columbarium Court #9 and our Enterprise Architecture were fully funded by prior year recoveries. For burial operations, these recoveries allowed us to purchase more turf-friendly equipment, minimizing the impact of older, heavier equipment on ANC grounds and helping our workforce meet the exacting burial industry standards. These funds are enabling us to repair the John F. Kennedy Eternal Flame, ensuring this iconic memorial remains functional, safe and more energy-efficient for future generations. Recoveries have also funded critical facilities and infrastructure repair throughout the cemetery, such as rebuilding portions of Memorial Drive; replacing the Heat, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems in the Welcome Center and ANC Administration Building, both which have failed over the past two summers; and repairing 2,500 linear feet of the most deteriorated 2-inch, 6-inch and 16-inch water lines throughout the cemetery. However, as we replace these water lines, water velocity through new pipes redistributes pressure across 40,000 feet of our remaining 50-year-old water lines. This

is resulting in recurring, expensive and operationally threatening floods and stoppage of water to the Tomb of the Unknowns Sentinels and others working at the cemetery.

Arlington will continue to work diligently to complete our most needed projects and repairs. However, the requested \$25 million in this fiscal year's President Budget is critical to continue with these prioritized, larger-scale efforts that our base budget simply cannot absorb. In line with my commitment to program for and request only what is needed, we are also nearing completion of our new Master Plan, last updated in 1998, which will include a Ten-Year Capitalization Plan, and we will provide that plan upon its completion.

Conclusion

I could not be more proud of the men and women of Arlington who have worked tirelessly to restore the honor and dignity across every aspect of this national shrine. We continue to remain focused on improving our service to our Veterans and Families, even with the current fiscal challenges. Our unbreakable commitment to our Nation and its Veterans will remain as we complete this mission we are truly honored to have.