

**FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**STATEMENT OF

MICHAEL D. STEVENS

MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY
(AVIATION WARFARE/NAVAL AIRCREW WARFARE)

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES

OF THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

ON

MARCH 19, 2013**

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Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

MCPON (AW/NAC) Mike D. Stevens



Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Mike D. Stevens was born and raised in Montana. He graduated from Arlee High School in May 1983 and immediately entered the U.S. Navy attending basic training in San Diego in June 1983.

Stevens attended Aviation Structural Mechanic Apprentice School in Millington, Tenn., and his first duty assignment was with Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron Two in Rota, Spain.

In October 2002, he was advanced to Master Chief Petty Officer and assigned to Fleet Composite Eight in Roosevelt Roads, P. R., as the Maintenance Master Chief and Command Master Chief. In October 2003, Stevens reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola and shortly thereafter assumed the duties as the Command Master Chief. In August 2006, he became the Command Master Chief for Helicopter Mine Countermeasure Squadron 14 in Norfolk, Va. In September 2007, he was selected by Commander, Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic to serve as the Wing Command Master Chief for the largest Helicopter Wing in the U.S. Navy. In January 2009, Stevens was selected as the Command Master Chief for Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet. Following 2nd Fleet, he served as the 16th Fleet Master Chief for Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command from August 2010 to September 2012.

Stevens' academic achievements include an Associate's Degree in Administrative Management Studies; Senior Enlisted Professional Military Education; Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education; Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government "Leadership in Crises"; and the National Defense University Keystone course. He is an honor graduate and the recipient of the prestigious Peter Tomich Award for exceptional military excellence from the Senior Enlisted Academy.

Stevens' personal awards include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Navy Commendation Medal (five awards), Navy Achievement Medal (six awards), the Coast Guard Achievement Medal with operational "O", Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist Insignia, and Enlisted Naval Aircrew Wings.

Stevens became the 13th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy on September 28, 2012.

Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Bishop, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, I am honored to represent more than 426,000 active and reserve Sailors comprising the finest Total Force in the history of the United States Navy. On September 28, 2012, I became the 13th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON). I was previously assigned as the 16th Fleet Master Chief for Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command and also served as the Command Master Chief for Commander, U.S. Second Fleet. With the knowledge I have acquired in this short period as MCPON and my years of experience as a Fleet Master Chief, I am prepared to provide you with an overview on the Quality of Life programs vital to our Sailors and their families.

Your Navy

As more than a decade of continuous war draws to conclusion and conventional ground forces reduce end strength on the battlefield, your Navy retains its expeditionary posture, poised to respond decisively to unpredictable and diverse missions around the globe. We remain ready to answer our Nation's call as we have done successfully for more than 237 years, by employing tenets emphasized in the Chief of Naval Operations' Sailing Directions:

- Warfighting First - be ready to fight and win today, while building the ability to win tomorrow.
- Operate Forward - provide offshore options to deter, influence, and win in an era of uncertainty.
- Be Ready - harness the teamwork, talent, and imagination of our diverse force to be ready to fight and responsibly employ our resources.

During the past five months, I have visited thousands of Sailors and their families in the United States and overseas. I am always inspired and humbled by their tremendous work and

valiant sacrifices. Wherever they are in the world, or whatever they do for our great Navy, today's Sailors are the best ever, performing their missions with distinction, professionalism and resiliency. It is a privilege to serve among these outstanding men and women.

Engaged in the Global Arena

America's Navy is on station around the world, forging partnerships through maritime security and cooperation, and executing our core capabilities of forward presence, deterrence, power projection, sea control, maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response. In addition to our traditional maritime missions, Navy's contributions to Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) have been instrumental in our national effort to build security abroad. To date, more than 110,000 Navy Individual Augmentees (IAs) have fulfilled OCO billet requirements, with more than 66,000 mobilization events from the Navy Reserve. Currently, Navy has approximately 18,000 Sailors in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR) supporting Navy, Joint Force, and Combatant Commander requirements; 7,100 are serving ashore.

End Strength

Our Sailors are the most valuable resource we have in ensuring our maritime, air and cyberspace dominance, and in supporting OCO. As of January 2013, our total force is approximately 317,000 active duty with a target of 322,700 by the end of FY13; 109,000 Ready Reserve, including IRR and SELRES; and 181,000 Navy Civilian. Currently, we have approximately 4,500 Sailors filling Individual Augmentee requirements of which about 1,700 are active duty and 2,800 are from our reserve component. While transition is manageable, it will challenge our ability to maintain sea-shore flow, for some Sailors, and to sustain manning levels across the force, in the near-term, as we execute these billet shifts.

Recruiting

We continue to recruit the best and brightest young men and women of our Nation. While only 28 percent of America's population between the ages of 17 and 24 is recruitable without a waiver, we attract some of the most talented youth in the country and still maintain our traditionally high quality standards. For new contract quality in fiscal year 2012, we attained approximately 99 percent high school diploma graduates, with more than 90 percent scoring 50 or higher on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Navy expects to continue the strong recruiting success we have enjoyed over the past years and will place added priority on accessing Sailors in the Nuclear Field and Special Warfare/Special Operator rating groups.

Quality of Life is truly the foundation of our recruiting and retention efforts. Our fundamental responsibility is to provide those who serve with the best equipment, training, and education possible. We begin developing Sailors in basic training and offer a career-long training continuum to enhance their personal and professional development. Working with Congress, we will provide the tools needed to recruit and retain the right Sailors, with the right skills, at the right time, in order to meet current and future mission requirements.

Retention

Navy continues to enjoy above average retention, including approximately 55 percent of our first-term personnel. Multiple policies and programs such as improved mentoring, leadership focus on reducing common dissatisfiers, specialized incentives, alternate career options, and work/life balance strategies contribute to increased retention in specific pay grades and skill sets.

Officer and enlisted inventory shortfalls remain in several critical specialties where operational tempo is high or pay disparities exist between military and the private sector.

Targeted special pays have a strong impact on reenlistments. Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRBs), in particular, are essential to retaining personnel in critical skills, such as the Nuclear Field, Information Dominance, and Special Warfare ratings. We continue to use SRB and quality-of-life initiatives to address these shortages, and we appreciate your continuing support for these important incentives. Over the last decade, Navy has become smaller; fewer ships, submarines, aircraft, and fewer Sailors – including fewer accessions. Navy expects that SRB will be used broadly to ensure retention remains balanced appropriately across ratings. We have the ability to transition Sailors from active duty to the reserve and back again through numerous Continuum of Service initiatives that enhance Sailors' contribution and balance family life with naval service.

Transition

As our Sailors transition from military service to civilian life, the Navy is actively working with the other Services and OSD to implement the Transition Goal, Plans, Success (GPS) Program. Providing relevant, useful and engaging curriculum for our departing service members, Transition GPS works with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Department of Labor, and Small Business Administration to educate and equip our Sailors with the tools they need to seamlessly join the civilian workforce.

Navy Reserve Force

Since 1915, Navy Reserve Sailors have played an integral part in service to our Nation. From World War I to World War II, through *Operation Desert Shield* and *Operation Desert Storm*, to 9/11 and OCO, Navy Reserve members have continually stepped up to support and defend our Nation. Since 9/11, our Navy Reserve has filled more than 66,000 mobilization requirements. As of January 31, 2013, more than 4,000 Reserve Sailors were mobilized in

support of global operational Navy and Joint requirements. Our Navy Reserve Warriors continually remain true to their motto: “Ready Now. Anytime, Anywhere.” When I travel throughout our Navy, active and reserve Sailors from all walks of life are working together as one team, one family, one Navy.

Recruiting incentives and affiliation bonuses are critical to ensuring the Navy Reserve recruits and retains the right Sailors. Affiliation bonuses help the Navy Reserve attract those Sailors who have chosen to leave active service to continue serving in the Navy Reserve. SRBs are essential to retaining and preserving critical skills for future mobilization.

Sailor and Family Readiness

The quality of life we provide for Sailors and their families is a distinct determining factor in how long many of our Sailors will serve. We simply could not succeed without the enduring support of our families. From hectic schedules to lengthy separations and frequent relocations, life in today’s military presents unique challenges.

Still, Sailors continue to reenlist, not just as individuals but as families. We are deeply committed to providing them with the best possible quality of life as they serve our Nation. As we improve Navy community support programs and services, we will become more agile and capable of meeting the needs of both married and single Sailors, while keeping pace with a smaller overall force.

Sailors choose military service for a number of reasons with patriotism, dedication, and commitment at the top. They also recognize the opportunities. We thank Congress for the historical support of pay and benefit increases and quality of life initiatives. Steady gains in these areas have allowed us to retain skilled Sailors and develop them into the enlisted leaders of the future.

We cannot, however, rest on past laurels. The civilian job market searches for the same smart, motivated, and dedicated people. We continue to provide competitive pay, allowances, housing, support programs, and educational opportunities, and taking care of our wounded service members is a top priority.

Deployments are an integral part of Navy life. We have been deploying our forces throughout times of peace and conflict since we formed a Navy, but it is important not to underestimate the incredible strain that deployments impose on our Sailors and their families. The stresses associated with being part of a military family all have significant impact to the overall readiness of the unit, the readiness of the individual Sailor, and the readiness of their family.

Family Support Programs

We have robust resources to empower Navy families, providing our Sailors with the peace of mind that their families are being supported so they can focus on the job at hand. Fleet and Family Support Centers offer a number of personnel and family support programs to reduce life stressors through deployment readiness, crisis response, and career support and retention.

Deployment Readiness services include deployment support to military members and their families when the member deploys as part of a unit or individually, ombudsmen support/coordination, mobilization, repatriation of noncombatant evacuees, life skills education (e.g., stress and anger management, suicide prevention, couples communication, parenting education), and the legislatively mandated Relocation Assistance Program.

Navy Ombudsmen and Family Readiness Groups (FRG) are integral components in our efforts to facilitate effective relationships between family members and commands, and to better prepare both groups for the challenges associated with deployment. Navy Ombudsmen are

dedicated volunteers who form a vital link between commands and families. Ombudsmen serve as a liaison between the command and command families on a wide range of issues including pay and compensation, deployments, child care, and housing. They keep the command informed regarding the overall health, morale, and welfare of command families.

FRGs are comprised of family members, Sailors, and civilians associated with the command and its personnel. They support the flow of information, provide practical tools for adjusting to Navy deployments and separations, and serve as a link between the command and Sailors' families. FRGs help plan, coordinate and conduct informational, care-taking, morale-building and social activities to enhance preparedness, command mission readiness, and increase the resiliency and well-being of Sailors and their families.

For our Reserve Sailors, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) has been a tremendous success in caring for service members and their families before, during, and following deployment. The YRRP provides reserve members and their families with information, services, referral, and proactive outreach opportunities via informational events and activities that facilitate access to services supporting their health and well-being.

Crisis Response provides non-medical clinical counseling and non-medical case management for special needs families, emergency preparedness and response, and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (i.e., prevention/education, 24/7 victim advocacy response at all locations, sexual assault case management, and victim care coordination). The legislatively mandated and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) funded Family Advocacy Program, includes family abuse prevention education; clinical assessment and intervention; domestic abuse victim advocacy; and home visitation services for at-risk expectant and new parents. Career

Support and Retention includes the Family Employment Readiness Program, Personal Financial Management, and Transition Assistance Program.

Navy offers quality services to prepare families for the absence of their loved ones and to promote healthy and resilient families. Through resources such as Afterdeployment.org and Military OneSource, our Sailors and their families are informed about the resources available to them. Another success in communication has been the use of smart phone applications such as 'Navy Life' and 'Navy IA' as well as social media web sites such as Facebook and Twitter to connect with Sailors and families. Navy leadership is committed to using social media because it is another opportunity to connect with our Sailors Navy-wide and a great tool in our outreach efforts for getting information out in a timely manner to our entire Navy family.

Child and Youth Programs

Child Care programs continue to be mission-essential for our Sailors and families to help reduce the conflict between their responsibilities as parents and their mission as Sailors. In today's military, many of our Sailors have working spouses or have the responsibility of being single parents who depend heavily on our military child and youth system of care, which includes Child Development Centers (CDC), to provide quality child care. An important facet that stands out in the quality of our child care programs is the continuity of service from location to location as we operate a standardized worldwide program. Additionally, our programs are among the most affordable. Commercial programs charge parent fees based on the age of the child while our programs base fees on total family income. This model is critical to the economic viability of our families. Children under the age of three are the most costly to care for due to the lower child-to-staff ratios, and typically our most junior enlisted families have children in this age group.

Child and youth programs deliver services that meet mission requirements and reinforce strong military families through activities that promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of children ages infant through twelfth grade. The Navy child care system serves children through traditional CDCs, Child Development Group Homes that offer care 24/7, Child Development Homes where care is provided by military spouses monitored by Navy Child and Youth Program inspectors; School-Age Care Centers, Youth Centers, and contracted care off-base. Programs are nationally accredited and DoD certified. Our Youth Sponsorship programs offer pre-arrival, arrival, and pre-departure services to assist youth relocating to and from the installation. And Navy School Liaison Officers support transition needs of school-aged children and families by providing families with information and referral services and facilitating communication with local school authorities.

Homeport Ashore and Bachelor Housing

The Navy is committed to ensuring our Sailors and their families have quality housing in which to live and raise families. We believe our people deserve well-built and well-maintained housing. Thanks to this committee's support, through military construction and housing privatization, we are providing quality homes for our families faster than ever before.

Investment in our Homeport Ashore program continues to provide superior off-ship housing to junior Sailors who would normally live aboard ships. Moving our single Sailors off ships remains a priority for me and for our Navy. I, along with our Junior Sailors, are very thankful for your support of the Homeport Ashore initiative.

Our Bachelor Housing supports Navy readiness by providing permanent party personnel, student, and mobilized Sailors with suitable, affordable, and safe environments in community, privatized, or Navy-owned housing worldwide. We are focused on completing Homeport

Ashore by 2016 and achieving 90 percent adequate (Q1/Q2) Unaccompanied Housing (UH) by 2022.

Family Housing

Family housing supports Navy readiness by providing Sailors and their families the opportunity for suitable, affordable, safe environments in community, privatized or Navy-owned housing. We have privatized approximately 97 percent of the homes in CONUS and Hawaii inventory. When our Public Private Venture (PPV) transition is complete, the Navy will own less than 100 homes in CONUS and Hawaii, but will retain ownership and management of all foreign assets. We have programmed funding to reduce the inadequate family housing inventory from 37 percent to 10 percent by 2019.

PPV and Homeport Ashore are examples of initiatives that have had a direct impact on the retention, morale, and the quality of life of our men and women. Young Americans deciding whether the Navy is right for them look at quality of life initiatives as indicators of the Navy's commitment to Sailors and families. Thanks to the support of this committee and members of Congress, we have improved the housing available to our Sailors through PPV. Sailors cite the PPV initiative as one of the most effective quality of life improvements in recent years, and our Navy is aggressively working with all of our PPV partners to ensure our Navy families are supported.

Continuum of Care

Health care is one of our top recruiting and retention tools for our Sailors, and I frequently hear just how important access to health care is for them and their family members. Navy Medicine continues to focus on developing an economic and quality-centric strategy for the delivery of top-quality health care to our beneficiaries and the recruitment and retention of

providers in critical specialties, allowing the fulfillment of the wartime mission while sustaining the benefit here at home.

Just as we improve the process in which we provide for the needs of our severely injured, we must apply the same level of attention to those who return from deployments whose medical needs may not be immediately apparent. Our ability to identify Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) have improved over the past year, but we must also be able to provide care and support to address the psychological toll that multiple deployments have on our Sailors and their families.

Combat Casualty Care

Combat casualty care is provided by Navy medical personnel assigned to and serving with Marine Corps units, in Expeditionary Medical Facilities, aboard casualty receiving/treatment ships and hospital ships, and in military and Veteran Affairs (VA) hospitals. Recent advances in force protection, battlefield medicine, combat and operation stress control, medical evacuation, and family support programs have led to significantly improved survival rates, healthier family functioning, and enhanced operational effectiveness.

Psychological Health

More than a decade of continuous combat operations has resulted in a growing population of service members with developing psychological health needs. Navy Medicine's Psychological Health (PH) resources support the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions, and include planning for the seamless transition of service members throughout the recovery and reintegration process.

Navy's efforts to decrease stigma with increased active leadership support and Operational Stress Control (OSC) training throughout the fleet have received positive feedback. Navy is fostering a culture that promotes resilience and wellness, and that empowers leaders to support the health and readiness of service members and their families.

Families Overcoming Under Stress

Families Overcoming Under Stress (FOCUS) is a family-centered resilience psychological health program that uses evidenced-based interventions to enhance understanding of psychological health and developmental outcomes for highly stressed children and families. In Fiscal Year 2012, FOCUS provided services to more than 91,000 military family members. Outcomes have shown statistically significant improvement in anxiety and depression for both children and parents.

Reserve Psychological Health Outreach

The Reserve Psychological Health Outreach Program (PHOP) serves both Marine Corps and the Navy Reserve to provide a safety net and improve the overall psychological health of Reserve Sailors and their families. Embedded PHOP teams of licensed mental health professionals provide consultation and support, psychological health outreach, education/training, and information/referrals (including warm handoffs and followup) to local resources for issues related to employment, finances, psychological health, family support, and child care. During Fiscal Year 2012, PHOP provided more than 11,000 outreach contacts to returning service members and provided behavioral health screenings for approximately 1,000 Reserve Sailors. PHOP teams made nearly 600 visits to Reserve units to provide training and conduct psychological health screenings.

Safe Harbor

The Navy's Safe Harbor Program is the Navy's lead organization for providing the highest quality non-medical care to all seriously wounded, ill and injured Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, and their families. Non-medical care management support includes, but is not limited to, support services for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)/PTSD, pay/personnel issues, invitational travel orders, lodging/housing adaptation, child/youth programs, transportation needs, legal/guardianship issues, education/training benefits, commissary/exchange access, and respite care. Safe Harbor enrollment includes combat-related wounds or injuries, shipboard accidents, off duty accidents, and serious medical and psychological conditions, such as cancer and severe PTSD.

The program has expanded its outreach/awareness efforts to include engaging media outlets such as Fox News, Lifetime Network, CNN, and ESPN. In May 2012, Safe Harbor assisted in fielding a team of 35 Navy and Coast Guard members to compete in the Third Annual Warrior Games; 30 individual medals were awarded to enrollees.

Safe Harbor has worked closely with the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment to leverage some of the capability of this program. We continue to look for innovative ways to meet the needs of our severely injured Sailors and their families.

Suicide Prevention

Our efforts to stem the tide of suicide within our ranks continue unabated through a multi-faceted approach of communication, training, and command support.

We continue in our pursuit of developing and enhancing programs designed to detect suicide behaviors early and identify and mitigate suicide risk factors while simultaneously focusing on our programs that target key suicide-risk factors such as substance abuse prevention,

financial management, positive family relationships, physical readiness, and family support. We have identified key intervention opportunities - Navy Defense Counsels and Transient Personnel Unit leaders, and developed specialized training for these entities to better identify and respond to high risk Sailors in transition. We are increasing our understanding of the issues surrounding suicide to ensure that our policies, training programs, interventions, and communication efforts are meeting their intended objectives.

In conjunction with our suicide prevention efforts, we have opportunities to build resilience, intervene early when risk factors are present, and create connections that help sustain us in times of challenge. Most of these efforts fall within our broader family readiness and health promotion activities. All suicide prevention is ultimately local, so our program works to equip and empower local action. Increasing numbers of shipmates, leaders, and family members are noting warning signs and reaching out to Sailors to get them the help they need.

Navy has expanded surveillance and analysis for Navy active and reserve suicide deaths and attempts; supports command prevention and stress control programs with printed resource and interactive training materials; provides training worldwide to suicide prevention coordinators and first responders; and is a partner in DoD, VA, and other cooperative efforts. All Navy web sites have the 'Life is Worth Living' logo that links to the VA crisis line which includes a confidential chat option.

Navy's approach to suicide awareness and prevention has evolved to include active collaboration with the other Services and the VA, and we are now extending our efforts to engage more in proactive resilience building training-and-intervention. We have established two Mobile Training Teams, based in Norfolk and San Diego, to accelerate delivery to the fleet of command resilience (Operational Stress Control) and suicide prevention training.

Suicide prevention is an all hands evolution, all the time. The Navy has promoted the acronym ACT (Ask, Care, Treat) to help Sailors respond when they see a shipmate in trouble, helping them address stress, depression, and thoughts of suicide within themselves and help others who have demonstrated signs of excessive stress. ACT means, Ask-Don't be afraid to ask; Care -Listen, offer hope, don't judge; and Treat -Take action, get assistance, and follow up. Ultimately our message to our Sailors is that life counts, and they our embracing the message with action. As a result of our training and awareness efforts there were more than 1,800 interventions on Sailors with suicide related behaviors.

The Navy is one big family, and it's important for each Sailor to feel that they are valued, appreciated, and have both active suicide prevention and risk-reduction skills to combat suicide, and the coping and resiliency tools available to get through tough moments. Sailors are encouraged to visit the chaplain or medical department if they or someone they know are in need of help. Our service to our Nation, people and organizations is not a dress rehearsal; we will not be given the opportunity to go back and do it over. Everyday matters and therefore we must do our best to get it right and make each day our masterpiece.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program seeks to implement a top-down, leadership-driven effort to eliminate sexual assaults, to support sexual assault victims and to produce a maritime culture where gender respect permeates our commands. The program is built on eliminating this crime from our ranks and accountability from those who perpetrate sexual assault.

The majority of sexual assaults are service member-on-service member and it is incomprehensible that a Sailor would commit such a horrible crime, let alone against another

shipmate. It undermines teamwork, morale, unit cohesion, and operational readiness. It is imperative that all Sailors understand and trust Navy's commitment to prevent, respond to, and prosecute sexual assaults. A victim's trust contributes to their willingness and desire to participate in the legal process, which is crucial to appropriate adjudication of perpetrators.

Navy's Lines of Effort for eliminating sexual assault are education and awareness, prevention and intervention, victim care and resiliency, investigation and accountability, and program assessment.

Tailored SAPR training has been given to all Officers and Chief Petty Officers focusing on leadership's role in setting the correct tone and climate to prevent and eliminate sexual assaults. All E6 and below Sailors are receiving training that focuses on Sailor responsibility for positive changes in their command and Navy, with emphasis on bystander intervention and responsible decision-making.

The highest risk group for victims over the past several years remains E-1 to E-4, ages 20 to 24, with most incidents occurring during the weekends. In recognition of the link between sexual assault and alcohol, Navy is enhancing our anti-alcohol campaign, to include awareness of how sexual assault perpetrators use alcohol as the weapon of choice and the introduction of Alcohol Detection Devices, such as breathalyzers.

Navy is committed to providing premiere care to all victims. We actively promote the use of the DoD Safe Helpline which provides crisis support to victims via phone, chat or text, and 24/7 accessibility to local Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and Victim Advocates who ensure victims are supported throughout the process to recovery.

Navy remains committed to assessing and revising our SAPR program with the goal of eliminating this crime from our force.

Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions

The Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) provides military members of all branches with the best prevention and intervention tools to deal with issues of substance abuse, reckless driving, and other destructive decisions, while maintaining good order and discipline. CSADD assists Sailors in making life decisions to maintain positive lifestyles, in keeping with the Navy's core values. It guides Sailors away from making poor and destructive decisions, by providing them with positive and dynamic training, and to show them how to make timely, positive decisions by putting their training to use in moments of high stress and intense peer pressure.

Conclusion

For 29 years I have watched as we overcome one obstacle after another and come out on top. I am confident that with the men and women that serve our Navy, we will remain strong and our Navy will continue to play a vital role in the maritime security of the world. Sailors are the key element in our future Navy total force. Navy families share our burdens and our sacrifices. Courageous, strong, and deeply devoted to our country; they endure challenges of multiple deployments and moves, spend holidays and life milestones apart, and juggle everyday tasks while a spouse, parent, son, or daughter is in harm's way. They honor the service of their loved ones and the memories of those lost.

We must continue to ask hard questions and make hard decisions that will enable us to provide a quality of life commensurate with the sacrifices our Sailors and their families make daily. A full-year Continuing Resolution, sequestration, and associated outyear budget reductions will make it extremely difficult to continue our current and anticipated level of operations, compel us to cancel some maintenance and training, and constrain our ability to

invest in future capability and capacity. But most of all, they have a negative effect on our Sailors' and their families' quality of life and morale, though we will continue to fully protect Wounded Warrior programs and to the extent feasible, family programs.

We have the best Navy we have ever fielded and we will continue that trend well into the future. We will work the challenges and accomplish the mission. Our Sailors know that Navy leadership and Congress have their best interests at heart. On behalf of the men and women of the United States Navy and the families who faithfully support them, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your unwavering support.