

RECORD VERSION

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Introduction

Chairwoman Gillibrand, Senator Graham, Distinguished Members of this Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of America's Army. As the United States Army begins its 13th straight year of war, it also stands at a pivotal moment in history. Throughout our Nation's history, the United States has drawn down military forces at the close of every war. Today, however, we are in the process of rapidly drawing down Army forces before the war is over, while remaining in an unpredictable global security environment. It is imperative our drawdown efforts be conducted in a careful and responsible manner that maintains the highest quality All-Volunteer Force while ensuring the readiness of our Army for today and the future.

Our Soldiers have performed superbly during more than a decade of war, displaying the values, character and competence that make our Army second to none. We must not waver on our commitment to support all those who have selflessly served with courage, and honor. While the future Army will be smaller, the Army is implementing a number of changes in force structure and other capabilities to ensure it remains the best led, best trained and best equipped land force in the world today.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to support our personnel initiatives to ensure the sustainment and well being of our All-Volunteer Force.

Strategic Overview

The Army remains engaged in our Nation's longest conflict of more than 13 years with nearly 1.5 million Soldiers having deployed once and more than half a million having deployed multiple times. Today more than 66,000 U.S. Army Soldiers are deployed to contingency operations, with nearly 32,000 Soldiers supporting operations in Afghanistan. In addition, there are approximately 85,000 Soldiers forward stationed across the globe in nearly 150 countries worldwide. Our Soldiers, Civilian employees and Family members remain the strength of our Nation.

During this time of uncertain budget and security environments, the Army must responsibly reduce endstrength while reorganizing into a force that continues to remain

prepared to respond to new threats. To maintain an All-Volunteer Force of the highest quality Soldiers and achieve our end-strength goal, the Army must balance force shaping across accessions, retention, promotions, voluntary and involuntary separations, and natural losses. Consistent with the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, we are in the process of drawing down Active Army end strength from a wartime high of 570,000 to 490,000 – a 14 percent cut – by the end of FY15. Simultaneously, we are expanding opportunities for women in the Army by opening up previously closed positions and career paths, while ensuring all Soldiers can meet the required physical and professional standards. We continue to prioritize the response to and elimination of sexual assault and harassment in the Army, and through the combined efforts of our military and civilian leaders at all levels, we've implemented an unprecedented number of program and policy initiatives to eradicate this crime from our ranks. Our efforts to enhance individual and collective resilience and improve readiness also made strides in the fight against substance abuse, suicide and stigma reduction encouraging all to seek help. Additionally, we have made significant progress this past year in eliminating backlogs in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System and ensuring that Soldiers receive the benefits they deserve.

Over the last year, we have increased assistance to our Soldiers who transition from their military careers. This past year we successfully partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs to streamline the disability system and improve coordination for health care, compensation, and benefits for our medically separated and retired Soldiers. Our All-Volunteer Force deserves a quality transition, and this year approximately 87,000 Soldiers will leave the Active Army and approximately 57,000 will leave the Reserve Component in pursuit of other endeavors. As they reintegrate into their communities, we will ensure they are career-ready, with opportunities to use their skills and experience. As we move forward, our efforts must remain focused on our most precious resource, our Soldiers, Families, Civilian employees, and Veterans.

Drawdown / Endstrength

Under the provisions of the FY15 Budget request, the Total Army will reduce to 980,000 Soldiers – 450,000 in the Active Component, 335,000 in the Army National Guard (ARNG), and 195,000 in the United States Army Reserve (USAR) by FY17. At this size and component mix, the Army will be able to execute the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, but it will be at significant risk. However, under full sequestration funding levels in FY16, the Army will be required to further reduce endstrength to 420,000 in the Active Component, 315,000 in the ARNG, and 185,000 in the USAR by FY19. These projected end strength levels would not enable the Army to execute the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance.

There is no single force shaping method among the choice of accessions, retention and separations that will achieve the Army's end strength goals, and we will be required to use involuntary separation measures. Reduction programs will focus both quantitatively on Soldier populations where projected inventories, by grade and skill, exceed future requirements, and qualitatively by assessing Soldiers' potential for future service. The FY12 and FY13 National Defense Authorization Acts provided several authorities to help the Army shape the force over the drawdown period, along with the flexibility for application against specific grade and skill requirements. To date, we've separated 239 retirement eligible Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels using a Selective Early Retirement Board, and approximately 1100 non-commissioned officers using the Qualitative Separation Program. An Officer Separation Board and Enhanced Selective Early Retirement Board are currently in session and will select up to 2,000 Captains and Majors for separation. While we will lose some combat-seasoned Soldiers through involuntary separation boards they are required along with reduced accession levels, competitive selection boards, and precision retention to ensure the Army will balance the force, achieve end strength goals, and retain our most talented Soldiers for the future.

As the Army implements its drawdown strategy to balance the force and sustain capability and readiness, we are extremely sensitive to ensuring that we treat our All Volunteer Force with dignity and respect recognizing the service and sacrifices of our Soldiers and their Families. While the Army will not be able to achieve sufficient

reductions in end strength through natural losses and normal attrition alone, the Army's priority remains retaining Soldiers with the greatest potential for continued service while encouraging quality Soldiers transitioning from the Active Component to continue to serve in the Reserve Components.

Recruiting and Retention (Officer and Enlisted)

Our ability to meet the challenges of the current and future operational environment depends on our ability to recruit and retain the All Volunteer Army. Our recruiting mission is currently at 57,000 – the lowest level possible to maintain readiness. As we drawdown the Army, we continue to bring high quality men and women into the force to grow our future leaders while retaining the most talented Soldiers with the experience and skills necessary to meet our future needs. Our recruiting operations, however, will face greater challenges as the percentage of America's youth ineligible for military service continues to grow. In today's environment, fewer than one in four 17-24 year-olds are eligible to serve in the Army.

Despite the current challenges of ongoing conflict, future drawdown plans, and budgetary constraints, the Active Army and the USAR once again exceeded their enlisted retention missions in FY13. The ARNG achieved 86% of their FY13 retention mission. The Guard is on track to achieve the FY14 reenlistment mission due to rejuvenated emphasis on retention by senior leadership, streamlined retention counseling and other business processes.

The active component (AC) achieved its FY13 recruiting mission and accessed more than 98% high school diploma graduates, with the lowest number of Armed Forces Qualification Test Category IV enlistments ever, at just .17%. The Army also achieved over 99% of requirements for each Military Occupational Specialty. In addition, 62.4% of recruits scored between 50-99% on the Armed Forces Qualification Test, exceeding the DoD standard of 60%, while recruits who scored in the lower range (30% and below) were at a record low in FY13 of 1.2%.

Although we are currently on track to achieve the FY14 recruiting mission, with the exception of the USAR mission, recruiting is expected to become increasingly difficult. The primary concern in recruiting for the USAR is the difficulty in finding Prior Service Soldiers willing to serve in units that are in remote geographic areas where vacancies exist. Our strategy to attract Prior Service Soldiers is to engage those Active Component Soldiers earlier in the transitioning process by appealing to their sense of service and valued contribution through continued service and remaining a "Soldier for Life." We are changing the paradigm in how we share opportunities available for Active Component Soldiers who want to transition to the Reserve Component (RC) by allowing recruiters to speak with Soldiers 365 days prior to their planned transition date.

The USAR is also placing renewed emphasis on their Employer Partnership Program to attract Soldiers. Employers in the program (including Fortune 500 companies) offer Soldiers interviewing and hiring preference. The USAR is focusing an advertising campaign (pilot) on the program in Elwood, IL, the city with the most USAR Vacancies, in an effort to evaluate the program's effectiveness as a recruiting tool.

Employing skilled and experienced Soldiers in the USAR and ARNG is beneficial to the Army as well as Soldiers and their Families. Our focus is stressing opportunities for continued benefits, and ensuring that the Soldier remains a valued member of the Army team.

Entering FY14, the combined Active and Reserve Components will spend slightly over \$528M in enlistment and retention incentives (bonuses, loan repayment and college kickers). This is a sharp reduction over the last three years. In 2012, the Army paid \$1.08B in incentives, and in 2013 we paid \$838M. Further, as a result of prior year success, the percentage of Active Army recruits receiving a bonus dropped from over 62% of all recruits in FY09 to 3% in FY13.

Enlistment and reenlistment bonuses are only used to incentivize longer term enlistments in a small percentage of critical skills. These incentives ensure the success

of the total Army recruiting and retention missions and shape the force to meet specific grade and skill requirements. At the start of FY14, only Military Occupational Specialties 35P (Signal Intelligence Linguist) and 25S (Satellite Communications) and selected Ranger and Airborne skills receive an enlistment bonus for the Active Army. For retention, Special Operations, Rangers, and Linguists were the primary Military Occupational Skills that were targeted to receive selective retention bonuses. A tougher future recruiting environment may require additional resources for incentives.

Compensation is a critical element in the Army's ability to recruit and retain a quality All-Volunteer Force. We are extremely grateful for the high quality care and compensation our Nation has provided to our Soldiers over the last decade. As we continue to examine compensation reform, it is essential to review and consider the impact of all proposals on the future of the All-Volunteer Force. The Army supports a holistic and comprehensive approach that reforms military compensation in a fair, responsible, and sustainable way. The manner in which we treat our Soldiers and Families as we draw down the Army will set the conditions for our ability to recruit in the future.

Army Civilian Personnel

As the Army evolves, we are undertaking significant changes in the way we manage and develop our Civilian workforce. We must focus on preserving the most important capabilities of this critical element of our Total Force. The Army will continue to make investments in talent management and leadership development of our Civilian Corps as we re-size and re-shape to meet future Army requirements.

Similar to their uniformed counterparts, Army Civilian employees are required to demonstrate competence, technical proficiency and professional values to achieve mission and individual success. Over the past three years, the Army has implemented a number of changes to improve training, educational and experiential opportunities for the Civilian workforce. Functional training is critical to ensure that Army Civilian employees can successfully perform their assigned duties. Focused leader development, improvements to the Civilian Education System and continued maturity of

the Senior Enterprise Talent Management Program are all designed to build a more professional and competency-based civilian workforce. We have aligned our entire Civilian workforce into 31 Career Programs, which allows all of our Civilian employees to see a clear path and understand the competencies required for career progression. We are implementing an Army Acculturation Program for Civilian employees new to the Army, which we anticipate will increase the retention rate of these talented individuals, and we are providing opportunities for the Army's civilian workforce to benefit the Army's resiliency building programs.

As the Military force is reduced and the Army navigates an era of funding constraints, we will reduce the Civilian workforce. We are in the process of drawing down our Civilian workforce from a wartime high of 285,000 in FY10, down to an estimated 263,000 by the end of FY15, with additional reductions projected through FY19. We will use all available workforce shaping tools such as Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) to reduce turbulence in our Civilian workforce, while retaining the skills we need to meet mission objectives. The goal is to use Reduction in Force (RIF) as a last resort. Reductions are linked to changing Army workload priorities, military missions and available funding. For example, unit inactivations will drive changes to training, training support and installation support requirements supported by our civilian personnel. We will have to adjust in order to continue to invest resources into higher priority missions. Additionally, to achieve the goal established by Secretary of Defense to decrease the overhead and administrative staff in Management Headquarters Activities, the Army will continue to reduce these staffs. This work began in earnest in 2012 and will continue over the next five years. We must be certain our Civilian workforce drawdown is done responsibly, with deliberate planning, to ensure we have the best talent possible to meet future challenges.

Transition Assistance Program

Our Nation entrusts its best and brightest to the Army to support the All-Volunteer force. Therefore, the Army has a responsibility to help our transitioning personnel prepare for

post-active duty life by providing the training and tools to enable their success. With thousands of Soldiers possessing diverse skills, and scheduled to depart over the next few years, the Nation has a motivated, disciplined and work-ready force to employ. The Army's Transition Assistance Program (TAP), known as the Army Career and Alumni Program, or ACAP, made tremendous strides this past year to improve the assistance services provided to transitioning Soldiers. The Army developed a Transition Campaign Plan that provides the blueprint for Army Transition over FY14-15 and incorporates "preparation" for Transition, "connection" to meaningful employment and education opportunities during transition.

To support this expansion of transition services, we hired 65 education advisors, bringing the total number of Army wide transition-related service providers to nearly 700. We established a new ACAP center in Kuwait and created 21 regionally-located transition support teams to assist the USAR and ARNG.

In FY13, the Army transitioned 144,000 Soldiers under the new, re-engineered ACAP. This marks the first year the program was able to record an entire year's worth of data in order to analyze trends and allocate resources accordingly. Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 requirements for all transitioning Soldiers include: receiving Pre-separation counseling, including attending two VA Benefits Briefings, and participating in the Department of Labor Employment Workshop, unless exempt. Our VOW compliance is rapidly increasing each month as the program reaches across the Total Force and our additional resources are fully emplaced.

Soldier 2020

As the Army looks to the future and recruiting challenges increase, we must take advantage of the best talent, without regard to gender. To ensure the success of our Soldiers of 2020 as we expand opportunities for women, the Army is proceeding with an integrated, incremental, and scientific approach that preserves unit readiness, cohesion, and morale. The Army is committed to ensuring all Soldiers are provided full career opportunities to reach their highest potential and enhance overall Army readiness. This

initiative will positively impact readiness tremendously by allowing men and women to have the same career opportunities across a broad spectrum of units, positions and occupations.

Over the last year, the Army opened to women approximately 4,500 positions within 17 active component Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and 9 Army Guard BCTs. In November 2013, the Army opened approximately 3,600 13A (Field Artillery Officer) positions in the Active Army and Reserve Component. As of March 10, 2014, women have been assigned to 169 officer and 477 enlisted positions that opened within 26 BCTs. The United States Special Operations Command opened approximately 1,500 positions to women within select aviation specialties in Special Operations Aviation Regiment. On January 17, 2014, the Secretary of Defense notified Congress of the Army's intent to open approximately 33,000 positions in 132 already open occupations to women.

In April 2013, the first female Soldiers completed training as Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) Crewmembers, with the best female graduate scoring 100% on all examinations – the highest score to date for any Soldier. Female Field Artillery Officers have been assigned to MLRS and High Mobility Artillery Rocket System units since 2012, and recently 10 women have been assigned to cannon battalions in Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). Women are proving themselves in positions that have been opened to them.

Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program

The response to and prevention of sexual assault and harassment are top Army priorities with a goal to reduce and ultimately eliminate this crime from our ranks. Through the combined efforts of our military and civilian leaders at all levels, we've implemented an unprecedented number of program and policy initiatives designed to improve our Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program. These initiatives are aligned with the Army's five imperatives to (1) prevent offenders from committing crimes, provide compassionate care for victims and protect the rights and

privacy of survivors; (2) ensure every allegation is reported, thoroughly and professionally investigated and appropriately acted upon; (3) create a positive climate and environment of trust and respect in which every person can thrive and achieve their full potential, and continually assess the command climate; (4) hold every individual unit and organization and every commander appropriately accountable for their behavior, actions and inactions; (5) ensure the chain of command is fully engaged and centrally responsible and accountable for solving the problems of sexual assault and sexual harassment within our ranks and for restoring trust of our Soldiers, Civilians and Families. Some of the key initiatives include the following:

- Changing culture is essential to our success. To change culture at the lowest level, the Army now requires SHARP goals and objectives in all Officer and NCO evaluations; requires Army leaders to assess Command Climate and requires 360 degree assessments as an additional tool for raters to conduct developmental dialogue with O5 and O6 level commanders. These three significant changes will enable leadership at various levels to remain engaged in the conduct of their subordinates and will improve accountability throughout the chain of command.
- The Army established more stringent screening criteria and background checks for those serving in positions of significant trust, including Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs), Victim Advocates (VAs), drill sergeants, Advanced Individual Training platoon sergeants and recruiters. The new processes and procedures are designed to enhance the Soldiers' professionalism and ensure commanders are actively selecting those who are best suited for their roles and responsibilities. To date, we have reassigned or removed 588 Soldiers who were not best-suited to serve in these positions of trust.
- The Army enhanced its capability to investigate and prosecute sexual offenses by establishing a Special Victim Capability Program which is comprised of 23 special victim prosecutors, 22 sexual assault investigators and 28 special victim

paralegals at 19 installations worldwide. We've also trained 105 active duty and more than 120 reserve judge advocates through our Special Victim Counsel Program, which was established in October 2013. We've conducted three live courses and one distance learning course, each involving about 22 hours of training, and we have begun to receive extremely positive feedback from victims.

- The Army implemented new policy to ensure that any final decision to retain a member convicted of a sex offense is fully informed and determined at the Secretariat level. This same policy also prohibits the overseas assignment or deployment of any Soldier convicted of a sex offense.

In addition to ensuring compliance with the 2013 and 2014 National Defense Authorization Acts and Secretary of Defense directives, these initiatives are reinforced at every Professional Military Education (PME) school that a Soldier attends throughout his or her career.

We are seeing the results of our efforts to achieve a cultural change in the Army. Based on preliminary data, in FY13, there were 2,149 reports of sexual assault, representing an increase of 51% over FY12 numbers (85% were restricted; 15% were unrestricted). We believe this unprecedented increase in reports is due to a growing level of confidence in our response system and a sign that victims have increased confidence in their chain of command and in the Army's commitment to treat and care for them.

Our assessment of increased confidence is supported by the fact that there are a growing number of reports made by victims about incidents that took place prior to joining the military. For example, in FY13, approximately 5.3% of sexual assault reports from Soldiers were for incidents that occurred prior to their military service. In FY12, the reporting of sexual assaults prior to military service was 2%. Additionally, in FY13 more than 15% of reports were made more than a year after the assault occurred.

The Army continued its efforts to place full-time Military and Civilian SHARP professionals at brigade and equivalent-level units. During the past year, we hired 174 new Civilian SHARP personnel to augment military personnel serving in brigade-level

SARC/VA positions. To date, more than 12,800 individuals have been credentialed to serve as a SHARP professional in accordance with the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. Additionally, the Army SHARP Program is in the process of transitioning from contract-led mobile training teams to Department of Army Civilian-led mobile training teams. We now have 12 Department of Army Civilian trainers assigned and anticipate hiring 34 more this year.

We have realized the need to professionalize our personnel serving in SHARP positions. To ensure we do so, the Army has piloted a centralized SHARP Schoolhouse in FY14, with the intent of standing up a permanent schoolhouse at the end of FY14 or beginning of FY15. The SHARP Schoolhouse incorporates instruction from the Army's Criminal Investigation Division, Office of The Judge Advocate General, Office of The Surgeon General and others, to better prepare full-time SARCs and VAs for the situations they typically encounter. The comprehensive eight-week training at the SHARP Schoolhouse develops high quality personnel who can establish and maintain the confidence and trust of the Soldiers they support. The SHARP Schoolhouse graduated its first class of 32 individuals this month.

Additionally, we are assessing the efficacy of this year's new initiatives as well as ones that were previously implemented. Through a combination of data collection, metrics, and field interactions to include troop visits, focus groups, inspections, panel discussions and surveys, we're putting into place the right tools required to effectively evaluate our efforts.

The Chief of Staff of the Army has led SHARP Senior Leader Summits with the Army's top Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. In June 2013, the Summit focused on achieving cultural change by reducing, with a goal toward eliminating, sexual assault from our ranks. The January 2014 Summit served as a follow-up progress report on Commands' efforts, with a focus on victim advocacy.

I am confident that our efforts are putting the right processes and procedures in place to ensure a climate of safety, trust and respect for every member of the Army Family.

The Integrated Disability Evaluation System

In FY13, the Army made significant progress across the IDES by eliminating backlogs at the Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs) and the Physical Evaluation Boards (PEBs). To address the backlog, the Army surged manpower, increased the availability of resources, improved processes, and clarified policy. We are now meeting timeliness goals for all stages under Army control while processing approximately 80% more cases per year than we did in any year before the inception of IDES.

We continue to partner with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to further improve IDES. As expected, as we reduced the backlogged cases under Army control, the backlog moved to the VA-controlled stages. We continue to support the VA as they strive to eliminate their backlog and meet joint timeliness standards by October 2014. VA is a great partner, as we work together to improve this system. Moving forward, it is of key importance that we retain and improve the quality medical and administrative care afforded our Soldiers and Veterans as we improved the timeliness of the IDES process.

One of our significant improvements is the fielding of the IDES Soldiers' and Commanders' Dashboard in August 2013. The dashboard compares Soldiers' progress through the IDES process against both joint DoD/VA goals, and the average of others who have moved through the system over the most current 90-day period. This provides Soldiers with an estimate of when they will transition from the Army allowing them to better plan for their future.

Since the beginning of FY13, the Army has processed more than 40,500 cases through the Disability Evaluation System. Of the completed cases, 3% returned to duty; 67% were separated; and 30% were placed on the Temporary Disability Retired List. As of January 2014, there were 23,586 Soldiers in the IDES process.

In January 2014, 82% of all MEB cases were completed within joint DoD/VA IDES standards, compared to 35% in October 2012. We've had similar success with PEBs, averaging 71 days against a goal of 90 days.

The surge of cases completed since the beginning of FY13 increased the number of Veterans on the Army's Temporary Disability Retired List (TDRL) from 12,079 at the close of FY12 to 17,177 at the close of January 2014. Historically greater than 98% of those placed on TDRL do not return to active status. The Army is working with DoD to see if the current use and structure of the TDRL best suits the Services requirements. As VA continues to reduce its backlog we expect we will meet the DoD/VA goal of completing the IDES process in 295 days.

Ready and Resilient Campaign

The Army implemented the Ready and Resilient (R2) Campaign in March 2013 to build upon the demonstrated inherent strength of our Soldiers, Family members and Civilian employees. This effort provides members of the Army Profession the encouragement, programs, resources, tools and training to further develop the skills, behaviors and attributes which help build resiliency and strengthen them personally and professionally. We have implemented numerous institutional changes that will yield enduring cultural transformation and create an Army environment that supports and develops our members to perform at their optimum level on a daily basis, and enables them to recover and grow from adversities. By building the resiliency of our people, and emphasizing the performance triad of sleep, activity and nutrition, we increase the readiness of our Total Force.

Focus areas in the campaign include: 1) comprehensive resilience training that develops coping skills and behaviors and increases capability, 2) education about and the promotion of preventive measures that encourage self-awareness, deter high-risk behaviors, and support healthy alternatives that produce positive outcomes, 3) increased emphasis on leadership involvement, empowerment and accountability, 4)

program capability assessment to appropriately align support programs and resources, and 5) a scientific process for measuring success.

During FY13, we integrated resilience training into existing training and deployment requirements. Through our approach to Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2), the Army makes available hands-on training and online self-assessment and self-development tools to the members of the Army Team. Soldiers, Family members and Army Civilian employees have access to scientifically-validated tools to help them build their overall resilience. The CSF2 program has, to-date, trained more than 20,000 Master Resilience Trainers, to include volunteer Spouse Master Resiliency Trainers. The Army established 16 Training Centers at installations across the country to provide resilience expertise tailored to the needs of the local Army community.

Also in FY13, we launched the Commander's Risk Reduction Dashboard (CRRD) to provide commanders a greater understanding of high risk behaviors and to aid them in better identifying "at-risk" and "high-risk" Soldiers. This dashboard aggregates data from multiple Army databases to enable early, proactive intervention and assistance. This effort is designed to protect Soldiers before more problems arise and curtail risky behavior.

In FY14, we will continue to analyze and assess existing programs, tools and training. Based on these results, we will identify opportunities to restructure Army systems and processes to better prioritize resources while promoting resilience throughout the Army.

Army Suicide Reduction

As of March 14, in calendar year 2013, the Army reported 302 potential suicides (245 confirmed and 57 suspected) – an aggregate drop of 23 in the overall number of suicides as compared to calendar year 2012. Although this shows improvement, we recognize that the suicide rate in the Army, like the rest of the country, continues to pose a significant challenge for which there is no easy solution. We believe this

decrease in suicides is an indicator that our resiliency efforts and increased access to Behavioral Health Services are beginning to have a positive impact on the force.

The Army continues to employ a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to reduce suicides among Soldiers, Family members and Civilian employees. We are focusing on overall health and wellness, increased individual resilience, risk reduction and enhanced individual and unit readiness. Key components to our approach are: improved leader awareness of high-risk behavior; increased resilience training; prompt access for Soldiers to quality behavioral health care; and multi-point screening and documentation of mild Traumatic Brain Injuries and Post Traumatic Stress.

Ongoing efforts to strengthen the resilience of our Soldiers and consequently reduce the incidence of suicide include:

- Partnering with the National Institute of Mental Health for the largest behavioral health study ever undertaken of risk and resilience factors among Service members (Army Study to Assess Risk and Resilience in Service members, or STARRS).
- Embedded behavioral health clinics help Soldiers improve their ability to cope with and mitigate stress related to relationships, separation, deployments, financial pressures, work-related issues, etc. This approach is in contrast to a traditional system of behavioral healthcare in which Soldiers must seek out care from hospital-based providers, embedded providers work in clinics located where combat Soldiers live and work. Embedded behavioral health services have been associated with fewer suicide attempts and hospitalizations for psychiatric conditions.
- Continuing the use of “myPRIME,” a confidential online alcohol and substance abuse risk, self-assessment tool that provides risk assessment and targeted education for remotely located (Reserve Component and deployed) Soldiers

- Expanding the random panel for military drug testing to include commonly abused prescription drugs such as hydrocodone, hydromorphone, benzodiazepines as well as synthetic cannabinoids.
- Implementing the Community Health Promotion Council (CHPC) as is an integral part of the commander's resources for identifying and mitigating root causes that affect Soldier, Family member, and Civilian employee well-being while developing the right services and programs available to increase readiness and resiliency.

We continue to exercise an aggressive training initiative to increase awareness and understanding of prevention and intervention skills. To help enable leaders' roles in reducing the incidence of suicide, we have incorporated suicide prevention and intervention awareness training into our Commander and First Sergeant Courses. We developed specialized on-line training for our Suicide Prevention Program Managers to enhance awareness of programs and available resources to support suicide prevention activities.

Additional initiatives to combat suicide across the Force include the ARNG's and USAR's funding of full-time Suicide Prevention Program Manager positions in each of its 54 states and territories, and across major commands to advise commanders and facilitate efforts to reduce risk and prevent suicides. Our Suicide Reduction Working Group provides a forum for stakeholders, Army-wide, to collaborate on policies, education and training, services and resources, and ongoing initiatives that mitigate high risk behaviors and incidents of suicide.

The Army's efforts to reduce the incidence of suicide are embedded within the comprehensive approach of the Ready and Resilient Campaign. This approach is designed to strengthen our Army Professionals by enhancing their resiliency and sustaining a supportive environment that emphasizes early intervention and prevention

of suicidal behaviors. We continue to revise policy as required to promote and increase awareness of prevention and intervention skills, services, and resources.

Army Substance Abuse Program

The Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) is a Commander's program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility. ASAP provides services to the Active Component, USAR, ARNG, Veterans, Family Members, and Department of Army (DA) Civilian personnel and is an integral part of the Army's Ready and Resilient Campaign. The focus of the ASAP is prevention, drug testing, early identification of problems, rehabilitation, and the retention of quality personnel. The Army recognizes the role substance abuse plays in many high-risk behaviors, including suicide and sexual assault, and that a healthy, drug-free force is critical to maintaining a Ready and Resilient Total Army. Consequently, the Army is responding with comprehensive prevention initiatives, increased counselor hiring, confidential substance abuse treatment options, and stigma reduction campaign efforts.

The number of Soldiers enrolled for alcohol abuse and dependence decreased from 10,580 in FY12 to 9,625 in FY13. Positive screens for illicit drug use have increased very slightly (1.16% in FY12 vs. 1.21% in FY13). There remains a concern that Soldiers are abusing more prescription medications and using synthetic illicit drugs.

To assist leaders in building and maintaining resilience within their Soldiers, the Army developed "Strong Choices," a standardized four-hour substance abuse prevention-training package. A primary focus of the new standardized curricula is to educate leaders in emerging substance abuse issues and to assist leaders in taking a positive, proactive approach with their Soldiers.

ASAP Counselors are vital in counseling and caring for Soldiers who are battling substance abuse. Working closely with Soldiers and Commanders, ASAP Counselors help to maintain the health and readiness of our force. As of February 2014, the Army

has 398 ASAP Counselors worldwide and is continuing to working to recruit and retain the very best professionals for this critical mission.

The Confidential Alcohol Treatment and Education Pilot (CATEP) allows Soldiers to confidentially refer themselves for treatment without command notification if they meet eligibility requirements. In early 2009, the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 initiated the pilot of the program. In May 2013, the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army approved the CATEP for Army-wide expansion. We are beginning to see positive results with the number of Soldiers enrolled who most likely would not have sought help without this program.

Congressional Assistance

As the Army becomes smaller, we will need to work with Congress in our efforts to draw down and reform military compensation thoughtfully, accurately and efficiently while maintaining readiness. The continued support of Congress for competitive civilian and military benefits and compensation, along with incentives and bonuses for Soldiers will remain critical to the All-Volunteer Army's efforts to recruit, retain, and support the highest caliber of individuals. The Army must retain the flexibility to offer incentives to attract and retain talent. The continued funding of these programs by Congress is absolutely critical. Support for legislative proposals that will allow the Army greater flexibility as we drawdown the force is also vital. Finally, predictability in the authorization and appropriation bills that are aligned with the President's budget request would help the Army tremendously in preparations for the smaller, balanced force of the future. The well-being of our force, regardless of its size, is absolutely dependent upon your tremendous support. The Army is proud of the high caliber men and women whose willingness to serve, is a credit to this great nation.

Conclusion

People are the Army, and our enduring priority is to preserve the high quality, All-Volunteer force – the essential element of our strength. The nation faces uncertainty and, in the face of such uncertainty, needs a strong Army that is trained, equipped and

ready. We must be prepared for the next contingency that calls for the use of Army forces.

While we transform to a smaller Army, we remain dedicated to improving readiness, and building resilience in our Soldiers, Family members, and Civilian employees. The Army cannot sacrifice readiness as it draws down. We must preserve the health of the force and prevent breaking faith with the brave men and women who serve our Nation.

Chairwoman Gillibrand, Senator Graham and members of the subcommittee, we wish to thank all of you for your continued support, which has been vital in sustaining our All-Volunteer Army through an unprecedented period of continuous combat operations and which will continue to be vital to ensure the future of our Army.