

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE POSTURE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND THE
FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Thursday, April 18, 2024

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ALDERSON COURT REPORTING
1029 VERMONT AVE, NW
10TH FLOOR
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6
7 U.S. Senate
8 Committee on Armed Services,
9 Washington, D.C.

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11 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 a.m.,
12 in Room 216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed,
13 chairman of the committee, presiding.

14 Committee Members Present: Senators Reed [presiding],
15 Shaheen, Blumenthal, Hirono, Kaine, King, Warren, Peters,
16 Manchin, Duckworth, Rosen, Kelly, Wicker, Fischer, Cotton,
17 Rounds, Ernst, Sullivan, Scott, Tuberville, Budd, and
18 Schmitt.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM RHODE ISLAND

3 Chairman Reed: I will call the hearing to order. I
4 thank everyone for this early start. And the floor has
5 developed so that we can proceed as we typically do with
6 opening statements, and I want to thank all of my
7 colleagues over the last few days for making special
8 arrangements, being brief and concise, so that we could
9 ensure we could get to the floor.

10 Good morning. The committee meets today to receive
11 testimony in the President's budget request for the
12 Department of the Army for Fiscal Year 2025. Witnesses
13 today are Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth and Chief
14 of Staff for the Army, General Randy George.

15 I would note that this is General George's first
16 posture hearing before the committee. Welcome, General.
17 Thank you both for your service, and please convey this
18 committee's appreciation to the men and women serving under
19 your command. This is a challenging but important period
20 for the Army.

21 Even as the Army navigates the most difficult
22 recruiting environment in half a century and the most
23 dangerous global security environment since the Second
24 World War, it is also undertaking a thorough, service wide
25 modernization effort. It is critical that this effort is

1 successful as the threats before the Army are significant.

2 We know that China seeks to challenge United States'
3 interests and leadership in the world, that Vladimir Putin
4 views Ukraine as a steppingstone in his imperialist vision,
5 and that Iran seeks to exploit the war between Israel and
6 Hamas to expel the United States and other countries from
7 the region.

8 The United States Army, the most combat credible
9 ground force in the world, is fundamental to successfully
10 deterring, and if needed, confronting these threats. It is
11 worth noting that each of these challenges I just mentioned
12 can be addressed in part through the National Security
13 Supplemental that the Senate passed more than two months
14 ago.

15 The bill would support Ukraine, Israel, and Taiwan,
16 provide humanitarian relief in Gaza, and replenish the
17 United States Army with the stocks and resources it so
18 urgently needs, and I urge the House to pass this
19 supplemental funding immediately.

20 And indeed, if we have to once again counter -- that
21 we do so immediately. In its Fiscal Year 2025 budget, the
22 Department of Defense has requested \$186 billion for the
23 Army, continuing multiple years of planned budget for the
24 service.

25 And I am concerned that inadequate investment in the

1 United States primary land component may create
2 vulnerabilities and complicate decisions about how to use
3 the funding. We risk the Army's combat strength if we do
4 not provide it with the resources it needs to continue full
5 modernization.

6 Secretary Wormuth, General George, I am interested in
7 hearing about the Army's view, its mission globally,
8 especially in the Indo-Pacific, as well as how the service
9 is adjusting its operating concepts and force posture
10 within its budget constraints. To remain competitive with
11 China and Russia, we must prioritize investments in the
12 cutting edge technologies that will define future
13 battlefields across all domains.

14 The Army specifically has been pursuing modernization
15 in key areas like long range fires, air defense, vertical
16 lift, and deep sensing, among others. These are ambitious
17 and far sighted objectives. I am also encouraged by the
18 Army's efforts on its new cross-functional team focused on
19 contested logistics.

20 This team, under the direction of Army Futures
21 Command, is addressing the need for more resilient and
22 agile logistics in dangerous environments like the Indo-
23 Pacific. I recently visited a number of Army posts,
24 including Grafenwoehr training area in Germany, and Fort
25 Sill in McAllister Army Ammunition Plant, Oklahoma.

1 I have been impressed by the work that these soldiers
2 and Army civilians are doing to not only train and equip
3 our warfighters, particularly for counter UAS missions, but
4 also the lessons and knowledge gained from our foreign
5 partners, including the tens of thousands of Ukrainians who
6 have conducted training at Grafenwoehr.

7 I would like to know what lessons and tactics the Army
8 is learning from the conflicts in Europe and the Middle
9 East, and what resources are needed to implement them. As
10 I mentioned, the Army's most valuable asset has always been
11 its people.

12 I am pleased to see this budget request places a
13 priority on taking care of our soldiers by providing a 4.5
14 percent pay raise and committing more than \$2 billion per
15 year for the next several years to improve barracks and
16 family housing.

17 The Army is also making significant investments and
18 improvements to its recruiting enterprise. For the past
19 several years, the service has fallen far short of its
20 recruitment goals, but recent program initiatives,
21 including a major new marketing campaign and expansion of
22 the Future Soldier Prep Course appear to be gaining some
23 ground. I would ask for an update on your efforts to
24 recruit a broader pool of potential recruits and grow back
25 end strength in the coming years.

1 Finally, the Army must continue to improve its
2 readiness in the context of long term strategic
3 competition. The Army's focus on increased training
4 exercises, including Defender Europe, Pacific Pathways, and
5 its leadership in the projects' Convergence series
6 demonstrate commitment to broad experimentation and
7 regional preparedness.

8 I would ask for an update on how the Army is designing
9 exercises to support its forces on our pacing threats,
10 China and Russia. Again, I thank the witnesses for their
11 participation today. Look forward to the testimonies.

12 And as a reminder to my colleagues, there will be a
13 closed session immediately following this hearing in room
14 SVC-217. Let me now recognize the Ranking Member, Senator
15 Wicker.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. ROGER WICKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 MISSISSIPPI

3 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the
4 witnesses for being here today and for briefing so many of
5 us before this hearing.

6 The chair mentioned that this is General George's
7 first testimony before the committee in this capacity. It
8 is noteworthy that Secretary Wormuth actually administered
9 the oath of office to the General via cell phone while he
10 was visiting the 11th Airborne in Alaska.

11 Since then, these two leaders have worked together to
12 reform their service branch, and I commend both of our
13 witnesses for their shared leadership. In October, the
14 Army announced a series of overhauls to its recruiting
15 structure and strategy in an effort to combat the
16 recruitment crisis. I hope to learn more about this today.

17 When implemented, the entire Army recruiting
18 enterprise will reside under a single three star commander.
19 This person will serve for four years and report directly
20 to the Secretary of the Army. The service is now targeting
21 prospective candidates in the college age range, embracing
22 modern data collection methods and professionalizing the
23 Army recruiter role.

24 So, I look forward to hearing an update from the
25 Secretary about these reforms, as well as current

1 recruiting progress. These recruiting overhauls directly
2 impact the new total Army analysis released in February.
3 The Army rightfully reduced force structure to align better
4 with the number of soldiers in its formation.

5 The service plans to stand up a new counter UAS
6 -- some new counter UAS batteries, fire protection
7 battalions, and multi-domain task forces to adjust to
8 current trends in warfare. While I support these
9 decisions, I remain cautious about the reductions in
10 Special Operations forces, and we would like to hear from
11 General George about the service's proposed force structure
12 changes.

13 All of the units and soldiers in the total Army
14 analysis will rely on current Army modernization efforts.
15 I am encouraged that the Army's Fiscal Year 2025 budget
16 request contains more than double its purchase year over
17 year of precision strike missiles, a critical capability in
18 the Indo-Pacific.

19 Further, the Army tripled its request for coyote
20 counter drone interceptors to help protect our soldiers in
21 overseas bases from Iranian attack drones. I also thank
22 the witnesses for using Congressionally provided multiyear
23 procurement authority to procure both GMLRS and Patriot
24 missiles.

25 However, I must say it is disappointing to see

1 additional Patriot and Stinger missiles on the unfunded
2 requirement list rather than fully funded in the base
3 budget. Unfortunately, the Biden Administration has again
4 done a disservice to the Army in the Fiscal Year 2025
5 budget submission. When accounting for inflation, this
6 year's budget is more than a 2 percent cut compared to last
7 year.

8 Madam Secretary and General George and members of the
9 committee, I appreciate the chairman of the committee just
10 a moment ago, expressing concern that we are not providing
11 adequate resources to the Army to get the task done.

12 General George submitted a list of over \$2.2 billion
13 worth of unfunded priorities the Army needs, including more
14 counter UAS capabilities like roadrunner and reconnaissance
15 systems. I think that is a low figure. I am convinced the
16 Army actual unmet needs far exceed this \$2.2 billion.

17 And so, General, I am going to ask you to comment on
18 that. U.S. Army Pacific has \$430 million of unmet needs,
19 of which only \$100 million are covered in the unfunded
20 list. Plus, we know of significant shortfalls elsewhere,
21 such as nearly \$1 billion missing to update the Army pre-
22 positioned stocks this year.

23 The Army plays a leading logistical role in the
24 Western Pacific, and I would like to hear from both of our
25 witnesses about what else we can do to improve our ability

1 to operate there. Tell us what you need, please, and we
2 will try to get it for you.

3 Congress must correct this budget request to ensure
4 the Army has the resources to meet the needs and meet our
5 nation's challenges. Thank you to my teammate, Mr.
6 chairman.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Wicker.
8 Madam Secretary, please.

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTINE E. WORMUTH, SECRETARY OF
2 THE ARMY

3 Secretary Wormuth: Good morning, Chairman Reed,
4 Ranking Member Wicker, distinguished members of the
5 committee. Thank you, first of all, for your continued
6 support of our soldiers, their families, and our Department
7 of Army civilians. General George and I appear before you
8 this morning at a period of profound transformation for the
9 United States Army.

10 We are transforming our capabilities, our force
11 structure, and our recruiting enterprise to ensure that the
12 Army is ready and able to defeat evolving threats, keep
13 pace with technology, and attract the very best talent.

14 As we pursue this transformation, we are also taking
15 care of our people, ensuring that our soldiers and their
16 families have the quality of life they deserve to sustain
17 our readiness now and in the future.

18 This is my fourth year before the committee, and like
19 last year, the Fiscal Year 2025 budget continues to support
20 the most ambitious modernization effort the Army has
21 undertaken in over 40 years. We are making significant
22 progress transforming our capabilities by staying
23 consistent in our goals and meeting key milestones for
24 development and fielding.

25 The next generation squad weapon, integrated battle

1 command system, the mid-range capability, and the precision
2 strike missile are examples of just some of the critical
3 new systems we have recently delivered.

4 As we bring new systems into our inventory, we are
5 also transforming our force structure to meet the
6 priorities of the National Defense Strategy. We are
7 building out new formations, like our multi-domain task
8 forces, to make sure that they are equipped with the
9 capabilities we need to conduct large scale combat
10 operations against advanced military powers.

11 And we are shrinking excess force structure so that
12 the units we do have are manned and ready. While these
13 force structured decisions will bring down authorized troop
14 levels by about 24,000 spaces, our goal is to increase the
15 Army's authorized end strength from 445,000 to 470,000 by
16 Fiscal Year 2029.

17 To meet that goal, we are working around the clock to
18 overcome our recruiting challenges. Building on successful
19 initiatives like the Future Soldier Prep Course, we are
20 fundamentally transforming our recruiting enterprise to
21 better compete in the 21st century job market. Most
22 significantly, we are redesigning our recruiting workforce
23 by creating new permanent talent acquisition specialties
24 for both enlisted soldiers and warrant officers.

25 And actually, the assessment and selection of the

1 first cohort of warrant officers is complete, and the first
2 group will be going out into the field later this summer.
3 But while we transform, we can't afford to lose sight of
4 our soldiers and their families and what we need to do to
5 take care of them.

6 A key part of that responsibility is providing safe,
7 high quality housing and barracks. And over the next five
8 years, as the chairman I think noted, the Army is going to
9 invest an average of \$2.1 billion annually in the
10 construction, sustainment, restoration, and modernization
11 of barracks for our soldiers.

12 This investment will include barracks sustainment at
13 100 percent for the first time in years. We are also going
14 to leverage the expertise of the Army Corps of Engineers to
15 stabilize our project cost as much as possible, and we will
16 be hiring civilian barracks managers so that our soldiers
17 can focus on warfighting.

18 Physically and emotionally healthy soldiers are more
19 resilient, higher performing, and less likely to engage in
20 harmful behaviors. To build resilient soldiers, we are
21 expanding our health and holistic fitness programs to 71
22 active component brigades. We are investing in financial
23 counseling to make sure that our soldiers and families know
24 how to manage their money.

25 And we are encouraging programs in our divisions to

1 focus on soldier well-being. Our goal has been and remains
2 building cohesive teams that are ready to fight and win.
3 Throughout this transformation, which we absolutely have to
4 do because as you all know it is a very dangerous world out
5 there, we are continuing to provide Combatant Commands with
6 what they need, trained and ready formations.

7 This year's budget seeks \$1.5 billion for activities
8 tied to the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, and we have
9 asked for \$460 million for Operation Pathways, the series
10 of exercises we conduct in the Indo-Pacific to strengthen
11 deterrence and also build regional interoperability with
12 our partners and allies.

13 In Europe, our troops are demonstrating our commitment
14 to deterring Russian aggression. The Army is leading
15 support to Ukraine. We have trained over 17,000 Ukrainian
16 troops, and we provided, as you all know well, hundreds of
17 vehicles, weapons systems, and millions of munitions.

18 In the Middle East, our soldiers are mission focused
19 and standing ready to provide further support for Israel's
20 defense and to enhance broader regional stability. The
21 chief and I strongly urge the passing of supplemental
22 appropriations that will maintain this critical support to
23 Ukraine, support partners in Asia and the Middle East, and
24 invest in our own readiness, all while creating jobs for
25 Americans all around the country.

1 With your support, we will continue to take care of
2 our people and sustain the transformation that will keep
3 our Army the best in the world. I am proud of all that our
4 soldiers and Army civilians do and look forward to your
5 questions this morning.

6 [The prepared statement of Secretary Wormuth follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.
2 General George, please.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL RANDY A. GEORGE, USA, CHIEF OF
2 STAFF OF THE ARMY

3 General George: Thank you, Chairman. Chairman Reed,
4 Ranking Member Wicker, distinguished members of the
5 committee, thank you for the opportunity today to talk
6 about our Army.

7 The world is more volatile today than I have seen it
8 in my 36 year career, and there is clear cooperation
9 between adversaries than we have seen in a while. A spark
10 in any region could have global impacts.

11 Meanwhile, the character of war is changing rapidly,
12 which we see from what is happening on battlefields in the
13 Ukraine and in the Middle East. Our Army is as important
14 to the Joint Force as has ever been. We must deter war
15 everywhere and be ready to respond anywhere.

16 So, we are focused on providing the best Army with the
17 budget we are given. Our soldiers deserve it, the joint
18 team deserves it, and our nation deserves it. And that
19 means making some tough decisions and finding ways to get
20 better every day.

21 As the Secretary already highlighted, our planned
22 investments reflected in our Fiscal Year 2025 budget will
23 help our Army win the future fight and ensure that our
24 soldiers and their families remain ready and resilient.

25 Across the Army, we are learning from global events

1 and continuously transforming how we operate, how we train,
2 and how we equip, and I would like to highlight a handful
3 of things. We are learning that designs for things like
4 unmanned systems must be modular, adaptable, and software
5 defined.

6 We are working to get relevant technology in the hands
7 of our soldiers immediately. We are learning that counter
8 unmanned systems must evolve, as the threat does, to
9 protect our formations and critical infrastructure. We are
10 also moving out on that while being mindful of the cost
11 curve.

12 We need cheaper solutions. We are learning that in
13 some cases, the right tech already exists to support
14 transformation. For instance, the tech exists to make our
15 command and control nodes more mobile, low signature, and
16 more effective, and we are fixing our network.

17 And we are building our magazine depth and modernizing
18 our organic industrial base, because we know that wars
19 never end as quickly as we hope. They take a lot of ammo.

20 We are also transforming how we recruit, ensuring that
21 we have the right talent and right tech, and that we are
22 getting the word out about how our Army is a great place to
23 serve because of our mission and our people.

24 Finally, we are also looking at where we need to
25 reimagine our processes and where we can afford to stop

1 doing things that don't support our warfighting mission or
2 building cohesive teams. I am proud of what our soldiers
3 are doing around the world. We appreciate your support,
4 and we look forward to your questions.

5 [The prepared statement of General George follows:]

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1 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, General. Both
2 for the Secretary and Chief of Staff, the obvious point is
3 you are operating under a flat budget, essentially, and
4 that makes your decisions of how you spend the money more
5 and more critical.

6 Secretary Wormuth, the Army has made some shifts in
7 its priorities this year. Can you describe the overall
8 guidance for building this ready and modernized Army, and
9 the shifts you have made?

10 Secretary Wormuth: Certainly, Chairman. You know,
11 the chief and I are very focused on spending every single
12 dollar that we have in the most effective way. And I think
13 the broad direction of our modernization program has
14 remained the same.

15 You know, we continue, as you said in your statement,
16 to focus on investing in air and missile defense, in long
17 range precision fires, in advanced aviation and a number of
18 other categories. You know, I think we did make,
19 obviously, a significant decision in choosing to not pursue
20 further the FARA reconnaissance aircraft.

21 But in doing that, we basically came to the
22 realization looking at, you know, what is happening on the
23 battlefield in Ukraine, for example, what is happening with
24 technology. We felt we could meet that requirement in a
25 different way, and we also wanted to make sure we kept our

1 aviation industrial base healthy.

2 And so, that led us to the multiyear procurement of
3 additional but more modernized Blackhawks. But beyond
4 that, I would say, you know, again, the broader goals of
5 our modernization program are looking at the large scale
6 combat operations study that we did several years ago now.

7 I think the things that that led us to invest in,
8 frankly, have been validated to a large degree by what we
9 see happening on the battlefield in Ukraine in particular.
10 And so, we are going to continue, I think, with all of
11 those important portfolios, and they are they are going to
12 give us capabilities that we need to be able to deal with
13 the challenges in the Indo-Pacific, but also in Europe and
14 elsewhere.

15 Because, as the chief says, you know, we are a
16 globally deployable Army. We are not focused on one
17 theater.

18 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Madam Secretary. General
19 George, again, on the context of this budget and the
20 context of the strategy that the Secretary has laid out,
21 how are you maintaining ready combat formations, which is
22 essential to the mission?

23 General George: Yes, chairman. And that is, every
24 month I chair the readiness update and there is nothing
25 more important than having a ready Army. And so, we are

1 completely focused on that.

2 To carry on a little bit with what the Secretary was
3 talking about, what we are -- I mean, we owe it to get
4 every -- make sure that every dollar that we are spending.
5 And so, we are looking at processes. I will give you a
6 couple examples of -- and I mentioned up front in my
7 opening remarks about how we got to get after cheaper
8 solutions. And I think unmanned systems is a good example
9 of that.

10 Countering unmanned systems as well. We can't keep
11 -- you know, we can't afford to just keep lobbing very
12 expensive missiles out of that, so we are working on and
13 those kinds of things through R&D and then getting stuff
14 forward to do it. And then the battlefield is changing
15 really quickly.

16 So, one of the things that I have been -- that we have
17 been talking about is I think that what will help us in
18 that is having more flexible funding that would allow us to
19 make some of those adjustments as rapidly as the
20 battlefield is changing.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you. The issue of recruiting
22 always comes up. Can you give us an update, Madam
23 Secretary? I think we are making a little more progress.

24 Secretary Wormuth: We are. We still have six months
25 left to go in the Fiscal Year, so the chief and I don't

1 want to be overconfident. But right now, we are on a very
2 good pace, I think, to meet this year's recruiting goal,
3 which is 55,000 new contracts, plus 5,000 in the delayed
4 entry program.

5 So that is, you know, that is very good news.
6 February and March were very good months. The chief and I
7 actually just chaired yesterday a meeting with all of the
8 senior leaders from our recruiting enterprise. You know, I
9 think we continue to see very good success with the Future
10 Soldier Prep Course, our advertising campaign.

11 I don't know if you all saw some of the ads during the
12 March Madness basketball tournament. We, as I said, you
13 know, we have selected our first cohort of new warrant
14 officers. We are doing some things to leverage better data
15 to give our recruiters stronger leads, and we are looking
16 at how to break into the college market.

17 So, I think we are doing well. We have also, I would
18 say, we are selecting our existing recruiters in a
19 different way that is more attribute focused, looking at
20 sort of personalities. And we are also, we have overhauled
21 the curriculum at our recruiting college. About 40 percent
22 of the curriculum has changed.

23 And so, the recruiters that we surged kind of last
24 -- late last year have gone through that, and they are in
25 the field now, and I think they are part of the reason why

1 we are seeing our contracts per month go up.

2 Chairman Reed: One layer you just mentioned is
3 focusing on college students. I have always felt that
4 junior colleges are an excellent place to recruit, you
5 know, people who are mature more so than in high school.
6 And then -- I hope. And then you have also people who have
7 made a conscious decision not to go to a four year school.
8 Are you finding success there?

9 Secretary Wormuth: Well, I would say, chairman, we
10 are absolutely looking at junior colleges, community
11 colleges. You know, we are looking at kids maybe who did a
12 couple years of college but then dropped out for whatever
13 reason. I would say, candidly chairman, we are still in
14 the early days.

15 We -- actually chief and I just talked about this
16 yesterday. We really need to do some more market research
17 on that some college, college market. We just haven't been
18 focused on that market for so long, so we really need to
19 dig into that more, and we are actually going to engage a
20 private sector company to help us with that.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. Senator Wicker,
22 please.

23 Senator Wicker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General
24 George, you said I believe this is the most volatile
25 international security situation in, did you say 37 years?

1 General George: In my 36 years.

2 Senator Wicker: 36 years, okay. And also, your
3 prepared statement with the Secretary says the Army must
4 transform quickly.

5 Chairman Reed said that the budget that has now been
6 proposed is essentially a flat budget. I think he might
7 not take issue with my statement that it is a 2 percent cut
8 when you consider inflation and purchasing power.

9 I understand what the Secretary said about using every
10 dollar carefully and making sure that it is -- that we
11 squeeze every bit of value, but we are not going to meet
12 this threat simply by being more efficient with the dollars
13 that have been asked for, either in your budget submission
14 or the unfunded requirement.

15 There are \$430 million in unmet needs in U.S. Army
16 Pacific, and only \$100 million of that \$430 million is
17 covered in the Army unfunded list. We need almost \$1
18 billion to update Army pre-positioned stocks this year.
19 This budget is not adequate for this most volatile
20 situation in 36 years, is it, General George?

21 General George: I am Senator, what I was focused on
22 in the unfunded priority list, first and foremost, was
23 everything that we could potentially execute. So, there
24 was two things in the unfunded priority list that we put in
25 there, and it was very extensive process that we went

1 through.

2 One was a lot of things that were in our base budget
3 but we -- next on the list, to maximize production. So,
4 there is some of those that took us out to production. And
5 then the other example is facts of life changes. What
6 happened on October 7th and what we needed to do.

7 Senator Wicker: Okay, well, you know, we only have
8 just a brief, brief moment, but the \$330 million that
9 aren't covered of U.S. Army Pacific, you are going to need
10 that, aren't you? Are you say you can't execute that in
11 the next Fiscal Year?

12 General George: I know what was included on there was
13 specific to U.S. Army Pacific was some additional
14 campaigning that we are doing.

15 Senator Wicker: But there is a \$430 million in unmet
16 needs and only \$100 million recovered in the Army unfunded
17 list. You could use that entire \$430 million in this next
18 Fiscal Year, could you not?

19 General George: Senator, I would have to go back and
20 look. I don't know what the other, you know, additional
21 funding that you are specifically referring to.

22 Senator Wicker: Okay. Let me just say, I do
23 appreciate the fact that we have to be efficient. We have
24 got to get the absolute value out of every single taxpayer
25 dollars that we entrust with you.

1 But we are going to need -- if we are going to keep
2 the peace and have peace through strength, which has always
3 worked, we are going to have to -- we got to make sure that
4 you tell us what you need. Let me ask you this, General
5 George, the Secretary mentioned the things that we are
6 doing to help the effort of our friends in Ukraine.

7 What lessons are we learning that we can use later on,
8 should we be asked in another theater to go into combat?

9 General George: Senator, I could go on for a long
10 time. I would love to come over and talk to you about
11 lessons. We have a big work with formation that is over
12 there.

13 Senator Wicker: We will --

14 General George: And I will give you a couple of quick
15 -- I will give you some really quick examples. We are
16 learning the effectiveness of ground based long range
17 fires. We are learning that UAS unmanned systems and
18 countering unmanned systems is rapidly evolving.

19 We are learning that the EW landscape is changing
20 everywhere between three weeks and three months, and so
21 that we need to be more flexible in our approach. And this
22 is why are --

23 Senator Wicker: EW being?

24 General George: Electronic warfare. So, the
25 battlefield is changing really rapidly. We are learning

1 about how well additive manufacturing is going to work and
2 reduce our -- can help us reduce our footprint.

3 We are learning that you can be seen anywhere on the
4 battlefield, and you are going to have to become more
5 mobile, lower signature. That is why we are focused on our
6 network, because if you can be seen, you can be killed.

7 And we are doing all of those things and training all
8 of those things, and we are taking those lessons. And they
9 are not lessons learned until we have actually changed how
10 we trained, change how we operate, change how we equip, and
11 then change how we buy things.

12 Senator Wicker: General, there is no way to learn
13 that other than actually watching actual combat. Is that
14 correct?

15 General George: I think we are watching a lot of that
16 unfold, and we have got a lot of combat experience inside
17 our formation.

18 Senator Wicker: We are doing that without any of our
19 guys and gals having to actually be in combat. We are
20 doing -- we are watching someone else who is our --

21 General George: Yes. Watching. Exactly.

22 Senator Wicker: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Wicker. Senator
25 Shaheen, please.

1 Senator Shaheen: Good morning. Thank you, Secretary
2 Wormuth and General George both for being here and for your
3 service to the country. Secretary Wormuth, I am sure you
4 won't -- probably won't be surprised to know that I am
5 still focused on night vision devices.

6 This is the second year in a row in which the budget
7 has included very little for procurement of night vision
8 devices, and it makes it hard for me to understand what the
9 Army's plans are for the future. The budget for '25
10 suggests that the Army plans to both -- to buy both L3
11 Harris's ENVG-B and Microsoft's IVAS systems, but it
12 doesn't really justify how it is going to sustain both.
13 Can you give us some more detail on what you are planning?

14 Secretary Wormuth: Yes, Senator Shaheen. As you
15 know, we are planning to buy both capabilities. And I
16 think, you know, we don't see it as an either, or. They
17 each bring some different things to the table.

18 And, if I am not mistaken, I think there is more in
19 the budget this year for the enhanced night vision goggles
20 than last year's budget. I think we have money in there
21 for about 2,300 additional sets of goggles.

22 We also have money in the budget for 3,000 of the 1.2
23 version IVAS, you know, hologram headsets, as you know
24 very well because you and I have talked about this over a
25 number of hearings. You know, we are continuing to work

1 with Microsoft on that program. We have some additional
2 testing coming up this year. We are going to be doing a
3 lot of testing on the 1.2 version.

4 We did -- the last test that we ran looking at IVAS
5 was much more successful. The soldier feedback we got was
6 much better. You know, the form factor for the headset was
7 more comfortable. They weren't having as much neck strain.

8 And I think the resolution on the -- for the vision
9 piece was better. So, we are planning to continue with
10 both programs, but of course we are going to look and see
11 what the results are for the 1.2 version later this year,
12 before we decide further on the IVAS.

13 Senator Shaheen: And according to the budget
14 justification materials, the IVAS system heads up display
15 is designed to work within their network to provide
16 situational awareness and synthetic training environment
17 capabilities. I am quoting, so hopefully I am going to get
18 that correct. Are all Army situational awareness devices
19 interoperable with the IVAS network? Do we know that?

20 Secretary Wormuth: Well, what that means, really, and
21 it has been a little while since I have actually worn IVAS,
22 but the -- you know, one of the things that is unique about
23 IVAS is that it allows our soldiers to have sort of a
24 virtual training environment so that they can plan, you
25 know, tactical missions, for example, wearing the headsets,

1 and also to use that for training.

2 That is not a capability that we have right now on any
3 of our other systems. So, it is -- that is why it is a bit
4 of a pathfinder in wearable technology for us, and one of
5 the reasons why we are interested in it.

6 Senator Shaheen: Well, I certainly look forward to
7 seeing more of what the experiment and the record shows
8 that IVAS can do. General George, in your opening
9 comments, you talked about wanting more flexibility for
10 budget.

11 What specifically -- I know we have we have done a
12 lab, the multi-year procurement, but are there other things
13 that you are suggesting that you need in order to better
14 manage the funding that you have?

15 General George: Senator, yes, first, the multi-years
16 for 155 GMLRS, PAC-3 have been extremely helpful to us. On
17 the -- there is three areas and I kind of mentioned those
18 briefly with Senator Wicker, but how we are changing in
19 unmanned aerial systems or unmanned systems overall and
20 encountering those and EW is, the battlefield is changing
21 in weeks and months.

22 And so, the point is for our systems -- and I will
23 give you an example. When October 7th happened, Hamas
24 attacked Israel, situation changed in the Middle East, and
25 we needed to do additional things with counter UAS. We did

1 not have the flexibility because of a continuing resolution
2 to move money, make adjustments, go from R&D to procurement
3 for certain systems.

4 And so, I do think in those three areas just is how
5 fast -- and I am we are not talking big systems. That we
6 need more flexibility in those areas because of how things
7 are changing. And I am confident that we could do that in
8 a way where we would notify and wait, and to tell inside
9 those systems. So those are the three areas that I think
10 we would need the flexibility.

11 Senator Shaheen: But just to clarify, the fundamental
12 problem there is budget certainty and making sure that you
13 are not operating on a continuing resolution on an ongoing
14 basis.

15 General George: That is -- right. That was -- we
16 could not make adjustments and we couldn't up our
17 production level for Coyote, for example, and had to go to
18 things. But I do think in those three areas that we do
19 need some flexibility. For counter -- like counter UAS
20 systems, we are in R&D and have the ability to procure some
21 of those. I think it is also going to help for a lot of
22 the small technology firms that are doing great things here
23 in the States.

24 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Shaheen. Senator

1 Fischer, please.

2 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you
3 both for being here today. General George, your unfunded
4 priority list included several counter UAS systems that you
5 just touched on with Senator Shaheen. Can you tell us why
6 it is important to acquire these systems in Fiscal Year
7 2025, if not sooner?

8 General George: Senator, I think that you have seen
9 with just what happened last weekend with a number of, you
10 know, systems and unmanned systems in one way attack and
11 loitering munitions.

12 I think every formation out there is going to have to
13 operate these unmanned systems inside of our own formation,
14 and we are going to have to be able to counter them.

15 And so, we need to -- I think that is one area where I
16 think we are going to have to speed up, and we are
17 attempting to do that, wanting to do that inside the Army.

18 Senator Fischer: Well, I appreciate it that you put
19 it on your unfunded priority list because it is extremely
20 important, extremely helpful. As you said, we just
21 witnessed some of that last week.

22 General and Madam Secretary, we have seen the unmanned
23 aerial systems, we have seen the counter UAS systems to be
24 used to great effect. And we have seen them particularly
25 in Ukraine.

1 So, how is the Army taking what it has learned
2 specifically in that conflict about drone warfare and
3 incorporating those lessons learned into the development of
4 new tactics, techniques, and procedures for soldiers?

5 Secretary Wormuth: Sure, Senator Fischer. First of
6 all, we are aggressively collecting lessons learned from
7 what we are seeing in Ukraine across the board.

8 I was actually in Grafenwoehr in February and saw some
9 of the training we were doing with the Ukrainians, and
10 frankly, I felt like our soldiers might have been learning
11 more from them than they were learning from us.

12 What we are doing is, you know, taking all of those
13 lessons and infusing them into our combat training center,
14 so at Fort Irwin and at Fort Johnson, and you are actually
15 seeing what we call the OPFOR, you know, the opposition
16 force that our brigades train against.

17 They are attacking our brigades that are in the box
18 with drones and with drone swarms. So, we are already, you
19 know, testing our brigades against the kinds of things that
20 we are seeing in Ukraine. And they are -- that is causing
21 them to adjust their tactics, techniques, and procedures.

22 As the chief said, they are having to move their
23 command posts, you know, more frequently. They are having
24 to camouflage them. We are having to find ways to reduce
25 the footprint, both physical and sort of signature.

1 But we are very much trying to learn those lessons.
2 As someone said, you know, a lesson observed is not the
3 same thing as a lesson learned.

4 Senator Fischer: Thank you. Also, all of the data
5 that we are seeing indicates that military recruiting
6 remains a challenge. You also touched on that in your
7 openings. I do appreciate the efforts that you have made,
8 those ongoing efforts, and to help create solutions so that
9 we can maintain our all-volunteer force.

10 Madam Secretary, your joint written testimony outlines
11 the Army's plan for transforming the recruiting enterprise,
12 in part through a focus on innovation. How will the Army
13 work to quickly take the successful approaches and
14 incorporate them into a wider recruiting enterprise?

15 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we are creating an
16 innovation essentially cell or directorate that will be
17 part of U.S. Army Recruiting Command. And they are doing
18 everything from helping us, you know, figure out how to
19 develop the pipeline to train the new, what we call Forty-
20 Two Tango. That will be the kind of specialized enlisted
21 recruiters that will come in.

22 So, they are involved with curriculum development.
23 They are involved with helping us figure out how to apply
24 artificial intelligence and machine learning to, again,
25 looking at large data sets of potential prospects and

1 really trying to help our recruiters focus on the most
2 -- the best leads, if you will.

3 They are helping us look at basically what we would
4 call the recruiting station of the future. We really think
5 we need to sort of fundamentally relook everything from
6 sort of the storefronts to kind of how our recruiting
7 stations operate. So those are just a few examples of how
8 the innovation cell will help us.

9 Senator Fischer: You know, I am really concerned
10 about what I perceive as a growing distrust of institutions
11 in our society, and especially with our younger generation.
12 Are you looking specifically at ways to address that as
13 well and to be able to communicate better about the
14 strength of a commitment and dedication and how important
15 that is -- and just the value of the institution?

16 Secretary Wormuth: We are, Senator. You know, I
17 share your concern about the decline of trust that our
18 young people have, and frankly, a lot of Americans have in
19 our institutions.

20 You know, I think what we can do in the Army is, you
21 know, continue to do more to talk about the value of
22 service and what it means to be part of an institution that
23 is about something larger than yourself and about
24 protecting this great country.

25 But I think, frankly, is something that we need your

1 help on, all of you, because I think we need more voices in
2 leadership talking about the value of service. It can't
3 just be -- you know, the fact that 83 percent of our
4 recruits come from military families, that is wonderful in
5 many ways, but it is also a little concerning.

6 You know, we need to -- we can't rely on just military
7 families to give their kids to the Army. So, the more all
8 of you, I think, can talk about the value of service, that
9 will help us.

10 Senator Fischer: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Fischer. Senator
12 Hirono, please.

13 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you
14 both for your testimony. Secretary Wormuth, the Army is
15 negotiating renewals for several training, very important
16 training area land leases in Hawaii, particularly for Koloa
17 on the Big Island.

18 And that training area, that would be the Army and the
19 Marines, not to mention our civil -- our civilian people.
20 So anyway, we are in the midst of negotiating, although
21 those leases do not expire for a number of years, but we do
22 need to be already in the process.

23 The lands that this training area, and particularly
24 Koloa, hold cultural significance to the Native Hawaiian
25 community and it is imperative that you and your team

1 conduct frequent and respectful engagements with the local
2 community leaders, especially the Native Hawaiian
3 community, because truly we need to avoid a situation where
4 there is major conflict in terms of our ability to extend
5 these leases.

6 So, I included a provision in last year's NDAA that
7 requires the Secretary of Defense to designate an official
8 responsible for coordinating these negotiations. Has that
9 individual been identified, and could you provide an update
10 on the lease renegotiation efforts and community outreach?

11 Secretary Wormuth: Certainly, Senator Hirono. I am
12 tracking that requirement in the last NDAA. I do not
13 believe that OSD has yet hired that individual. I know
14 that, you know, we have had discussions with them about the
15 attributes that would be helpful in that kind of person.
16 You know, obviously someone who has deep ties to the
17 community and relationships with all of the different
18 stakeholders.

19 But I think OSD is still working to identify the right
20 person for that. You know, we certainly think it would be
21 helpful to have someone be a single belly button, if you
22 will. What we are doing in the Army is really to try to
23 have exactly the kinds of conversations that you are
24 referring to, with all of the different stakeholders. So
25 General Flynn has been very engaged.

1 My Assistant Secretary, our Assistant Secretary for
2 Installations and the Environment, Rachel Jacobson. We
3 have had our General Counsel, Carrie Ricci, has been out to
4 Hawaii to have conversations.

5 And, you know, as you said, the leases don't expire
6 until 2029, but we need to be having discussions about what
7 the options are. And I think there are discussions
8 informally with the Department of Land and Natural
9 Resources, for example. So, we are trying to continue to
10 stay focused on that.

11 Senator Hirono: I cannot overstate the importance of
12 finding the right person to be that liaison with the
13 community. Let me give you an example. The Maui wildfires
14 has resulted, and the family of -- what I describe as the
15 family of Federal agencies there, over 1,000 Federal people
16 have been there on Maui, and FEMA, of course, is very much
17 there.

18 And as FEMA is conducting its cleanup operations and
19 all of that, they have hired dozens, dozens of cultural
20 advisors to be there when they are actually cleaning out
21 individual lots. That is how critically important the
22 sensitivities are.

23 And I would say that if we do not renegotiate these
24 leases successfully, that is going to have a major impact
25 on the continuing presence of the military in Hawaii, and

1 therefore our National Security.

2 So, we have talked a lot about recruiting, and all of
3 the services are having recruiting challenges, except
4 possibly the Air Force. So, some of the new things that
5 you are doing, is this something that is being shared with
6 the other services, because they are all facing recruiting
7 challenges?

8 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. I am proud to say the Army
9 is leading the way in this space and our sister services
10 are taking, you know, a page from our playbook.

11 So, I believe the Navy, for example, has started their
12 own version of the Future Soldier Prep Course. Secretary
13 Austin has regular conversations with the service chiefs
14 and secretaries, and we are sharing our lessons learned and
15 what is working for us, and what is not working in some
16 cases.

17 Senator Hirono: Well, when you noted that we can't
18 continue to rely on the recruits coming from military
19 families, over 80 percent, and that the value of service,
20 it needs to be something that all of us talk about and
21 express our support for.

22 Civic education is, I would say, very much a part of
23 all of this. And as you are recruiting, I assume that you
24 are recruiting from a diverse population. So, frankly,
25 diversity, equity, inclusion, those are important aspects

1 of what I consider to be the military's approach to how
2 they are going to -- how you are going to successfully
3 recruit even as we are facing challenges to exposing our
4 military people to DEI.

5 So, I am among those who are very much support of the
6 DOD's efforts to expand populations who are
7 underrepresented I would say. One more thing, I am focused
8 very much on the need for repairing our frankly crumbling
9 infrastructure in the military. And the Indo-Pacific
10 region, U.S. Army Pacific estimates the total cost of
11 repair of all of their facilities runs in the billions.

12 And while I am encouraged to see the Army's overall
13 budget for military construction has increased by \$1
14 billion this year, there is still obviously a lot of more
15 work we have to do. So, what is the Army's long term plan
16 to replace our -- and repair our crumbling infrastructure
17 in Hawaii and the Indo-Pacific?

18 Secretary Wormuth: Very briefly, Senator, we have
19 \$200 billion a year in this year's budget request for
20 infrastructure, specifically in Hawaii. As you noted, that
21 is a down payment, I would say. And the -- you know, the
22 Army has an enormous inventory of infrastructure worldwide.

23 And so, we don't have the resources to tackle
24 everything everywhere, all at once. And we use our
25 facilities investment planning process every year to try to

1 help us prioritize, and that is a 15 year plan. But we are
2 -- we do have a focus on infrastructure in Hawaii.

3 Senator Hirono: Well, one of the things that I notice
4 is that although --

5 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

6 Senator Hirono: Oh, I am sorry. I will send some
7 questions for the record.

8 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Hirono.
9 Senator Ernst, please.

10 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you,
11 General George and Secretary Wormuth, for being here today.
12 And I do appreciate your leadership and your dedication in
13 maintaining the readiness of our great United States Army.

14 We know we are in a very tough security environment,
15 so thank you both for being here. General George, I will
16 start with you, and it is going right back to Iowa. As you
17 know, the Iowa Army ammunition plant means a lot to our
18 Iowans, and we are proud of the men and women who served
19 there daily.

20 They continue to indirectly support our efforts
21 alongside those of our allies and partners all around the
22 globe, including Ukraine and Israel. And as we recently
23 discussed, the Army introduced a significant modernization
24 plan to the facility in Middletown, Iowa.

25 How confident are you that these initiatives will

1 adequately meet the Army's and our future needs, and serve
2 as a foundational step in and harnessing our domestic
3 industrial base from Iowa?

4 General George: Senator, I think if there is a silver
5 lining in all the -- what has been happening in the world,
6 is that we have realized that we need to improve our
7 organic industrial base, and we are moving out on that. I
8 have been to the Iowa ammunition plant. We are going to
9 -- it is planned to invest \$280 million to modernize.

10 It is a good example of what we need to do. And I was
11 recently down in Radford. The same thing. You can
12 modernize, have the same workforce, but you can greatly
13 expand your production, which is what we need to be able to
14 do. And we are really proud of our OIB workforce
15 everywhere we go. They are just so patriotic, and those
16 communities are so patriotic, and we need them.

17 Senator Ernst: Absolutely. And it is, for those that
18 might be watching or catching this later on, the Iowa Army
19 ammunition plant produces the 155 munitions that are so
20 talked about through the news today. General George, I
21 would like to focus on commercial technology as well.

22 So, we just recently saw the cancellation of the FARA
23 program, our future attack reconnaissance aircraft, and
24 that came as a big surprise to a lot of folks. But the
25 lessons that we are learning in Ukraine are really

1 demonstrating the significance of embracing a much lighter,
2 more agile, and cost effective aerial reconnaissance
3 solution.

4 And again, for perspective, what we are seeing in
5 Ukraine with smaller unmanned drones, it makes sense. And
6 this is one of those times that I know we have spent a
7 couple billion dollars on this program, but I would rather
8 see it stop right there if it is not going to meet the
9 needs of tomorrow.

10 So, General George, can you describe innovative ways
11 that Army partners with the commercial sector to field and
12 leverage commercial technology, technology that will work
13 for us tomorrow?

14 General George: Senator, there is a lot of examples.
15 And I think what we are seeing in the world today is that
16 there is a lot of areas where commercial tech is outpacing
17 what we are doing in the military. You look at unmanned
18 systems and Amazon, Home Depot, people that are building
19 these things. The network is another example and -- of how
20 we can do with transport and satellites.

21 So, we are trying to embrace all of that. And I think
22 the biggest changes that we are doing are with our network,
23 what we are doing to reduce the systems that we have, make
24 sure that we are more mobile, more low signature, and we
25 are doing that with a lot of commercial off the shelf

1 capabilities, because you can now have a tablet with apps
2 and software. It is also cheaper than to update that.
3 Unmanned systems is another one that we are doing.

4 And I think we are getting to the point because other
5 people are out there, you can also 3D print. So, we want
6 modular open systems, architecture systems that we can
7 adjust sensors with. And a lot of that is happening, you
8 know, the actual -- or the UAS commercial technology is
9 moving very rapidly on that. So, I think we can learn a
10 lot from that and pull that into our formation.

11 Senator Ernst: Right. I appreciate that. And I
12 think it is important that we take a look at the
13 constrained budgetary environment that we operate in today
14 and try and do more with what already exists out there.

15 And we are seeing this in many instances with the
16 constrained budgetary environments that we see in Ukraine,
17 in Israel, and other places around the world. So, I am
18 running out of time, but Secretary Wormuth too, I really
19 appreciate you asking all of these great folks to be a
20 voice as well.

21 There are a lot of really incredible young men and
22 women that are out there. We need to be able to reach them
23 and encourage them into service. But thank you both very
24 much for your service, and I appreciate you. Thank you.
25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Ernst. Senator
2 King, please.

3 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like
4 to start with three data points, \$10,000, \$4.3 million, and
5 \$12. \$10,000 is the high end estimate of the cost of the
6 drones that Iran and the Houthis are using. \$4.3 million
7 is the cost of one SM-6 missile -- \$4 million for the
8 Patriot. \$12 is the cost of a directed energy shot that
9 can take down one of these drones.

10 And yet, the entire Defense Department has cut its
11 directed energy budget in this budget. The Army has cut
12 its directed energy budget in this budget. Every agency
13 and department in the Department of Defense has cut its
14 directed energy budget in this budget. What in the hell
15 are you people thinking?

16 Secretary Wormuth: Senator King, as we talked about,
17 we are pursuing directed energy --

18 Senator King: Why the budget cut?

19 Secretary Wormuth: I will have to look at the
20 specifics of whether we have made cuts. I know you know,
21 we have shifted money from RDT&E into procurement because
22 in many cases a lot of our systems are coming online now.

23 And so, we are not -- this year's budget doesn't show
24 as much in RDT&E, but we are -- our four prototypes for our
25 directed energy M-SHORAD system are out in CENTCOM right

1 now. General Kurilla is testing them in that environment
2 for exactly the reasons that you allude to. You know, they
3 have a lot of promise in terms of being much more cost
4 effective --

5 Senator King: We are shooting down \$10,000 drones
6 with \$4 million missiles. They can drain our bank account
7 on that ratio in not too long. The same thing with -- in
8 Israel. I mean, three of the conflicts we are observing
9 right now are -- indirectly engaged in, Ukraine, Iran, and
10 the Houthis are all about air defense.

11 And yet I just can't understand the Defense Department
12 not having its hair on fire about directed energy. And
13 since 2023, the directed energy budget has declined
14 Department wide. And I appreciate that you are testing
15 some of these units, but this ought to be one of the
16 highest, most urgent priorities, both in terms of cost but
17 also in terms of effectiveness.

18 General, would you be able to effectively use directed
19 energy if it were available to take down some of these
20 aerial attack vehicles?

21 General George: I think what we are looking at,
22 Senator, is a lot of different options to include high
23 powered microwave lasers. I mean, we are looking at -- it
24 is going to be a layered defense of what we are doing.

25 As the Secretary mentioned, we have put the prototypes

1 that we have -- we are sending everything that we have
2 available over to the Middle East and testing it in those
3 kind of environments. And we are still working through, I
4 will tell you, you know, some of this stuff on the directed
5 energy --

6 Senator King: Unfortunately, there is a naval
7 facility called Helios and that is being tested off of San
8 Diego instead of in the Red Sea. I just don't understand
9 why this isn't a higher priority.

10 And budgets are policy, and if the budget for directed
11 energy in the Department has gone down substantially over
12 the last four or five years, that is an indication of a
13 policy that I just don't understand.

14 Let me move on to a couple of other topics, more
15 specific. I hope that you will continue research on the
16 effects of blasts on your people. We had a tragedy in
17 Lewiston, Maine last year, and it turns out that the fellow
18 was a munitions test instructor. He experienced blast
19 after blast after blast.

20 Analysis of his brain indicates that it was severely
21 damaged. So, please attend to that risk because it is now
22 clearly contributing to the tragedy that we had, but also
23 suicide, and long term damage to our soldiers.

24 Secretary Wormuth: Senator, I would say, a couple of
25 things on that. One, starting this June, we will be doing

1 a cognitive assessment on every new soldier coming into
2 basic training so that we set --

3 Senator King: You have baseline.

4 Secretary Wormuth: To set a baseline, exactly, to
5 what -- you know, to where they are before they start
6 getting exposed as they go do training --

7 Senator King: High school football teams have been
8 doing that for years, by the way. It is nice that we
9 are --

10 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we are going to start doing
11 it this June, again, every single new soldier. We are also
12 looking at what additional personal protective equipment we
13 can provide to our folks, especially instructors and others
14 who are routinely exposed to blast pressure.

15 We are also looking into wearable gauges that would
16 allow us to continuously track what soldiers are being
17 exposed to. The challenge we have had to date is we
18 haven't been able to find sufficiently ruggedized gauges,
19 so we need to do some more work on that. But I --

20 Senator King: If the gauges can't stand the blast,
21 what does that say about the soldier's brain?

22 Secretary Wormuth: Well, it is more that the gauges,
23 as I understand it, you know, didn't do very well in sort
24 of field environments. But I know, Special Operations
25 Command has some wearable gauges on their UPL list, and I

1 think we will be looking at sort of what they are hoping to
2 invest in. But we are very attentive to the brain induced
3 injury issues.

4 Senator King: I am very delighted to hear that.
5 Thank you very much and keep up that emphasis. Thank you,
6 Mr. Chairman.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator King. Senator
8 Tuberville, please.

9 Senator Tuberville: Thank you very much, Mr.
10 Chairman. Thanks both of you for your service. I am
11 worried more about our people.

12 You know, I came from a team oriented background, and
13 we are going to have the weapons. We are borrowing \$80,000
14 a second right now to pay for all those weapons, so I don't
15 know what our kids are going to have to do in the future,
16 but we need to protect us, our country, and our allies.

17 But I am very concerned about the people that are
18 within our military. I have had a chance to go to bases
19 all over -- in country and out of country, all over the
20 world and I try to ask for kind of a group session with
21 officers and noncommissioned officers and talk to them. A
22 lot of good things.

23 A lot of things that are not so good. A lot of them
24 concerned in the last few years about some of their fellow
25 service members that didn't make the cut because they

1 didn't take the vaccine.

2 Secretary Wormuth, we lost 1,861 service members and
3 200 people that basically were mechanics in the military.
4 Did we have a backup plan for that, especially for the
5 mechanics that we lost, going -- you know, that we very
6 desperately need in times like this?

7 Secretary Wormuth: Senator, I think, you know, again,
8 one way we try to deal with shortfalls in any particular
9 MOS is to increase our recruiting in that area. You know,
10 obviously, none of us anticipated the pandemic.

11 None of us anticipated many of the different effects.
12 But the percentage of soldiers who were released from the
13 Army because they didn't take the COVID vaccine was very,
14 very small out of our formation.

15 Senator Tuberville: Yes. Well, 2,000 people is a lot
16 of people, as we look at it today in recruiting, and I
17 think it is important. We need to look at our shortfalls
18 when it comes to that. Also talk to a lot of our service
19 members that are out of the military as we speak, a lot of
20 special ops, a lot of rangers.

21 A lot of them are very disgruntled about the things
22 that they were being taught at the end of their service,
23 DEI. If I had to use DEI when I was coaching, I would have
24 been fired a long time ago. I don't think you can run a
25 military off of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

1 I think you do it with the best, the meanest, the
2 people that are -- that we need to train to fight to defend
3 this country. What is your thoughts on that, General
4 George?

5 General George: Senator, I would --

6 Senator Tuberville: Be honest about this now.

7 General George: Yes --

8 Senator Tuberville: We are in trouble.

9 Secretary Wormuth: I will tell you, and you can ask
10 any of the formation we go out and I am talking to them, we
11 are focused on building warfighting, you know, increasing
12 lethality in our units and building cohesive teams.

13 So, as you know from being a coach, when you are
14 bringing everybody together too, you also bring -- you got
15 we got people coming from all over the country. So, I have
16 been, you know, talking and talking about building cohesive
17 teams since I was a brand new private, when I was
18 instructed on that coming right out, all the way of being a
19 leader.

20 So, I think that those are the two things that we are
21 focused on. It is obviously different in every form -- you
22 know, in different formations that I have been in different
23 levels, but that is what we need to be focused on.

24 Senator Tuberville: Yes. And you are finding out
25 that it is hard to bring people from different backgrounds,

1 put them together to make them mesh as a unit, as a team.
2 And their lives are at stake. It is not a football player,
3 you know, playing to win or lose a game. It is, you know,
4 their loss in the military is losing their life.

5 And I just want to make sure we -- you know, we live
6 in a dangerous world, as we all know. I think that I would
7 love to be giving you all this \$100 billion that we are
8 getting ready to send overseas to our military, to the
9 people -- to try to get more people in the military.

10 I think we need to look more at us than we do at other
11 people. I can understand why we are doing this, but I
12 think we are going to have shortfalls in the long run when
13 it comes to that. General, are we taking illegals into our
14 military -- in the Army?

15 General George: You know, I think what we are taking
16 in -- you have to be a legally -- legal permanent resident
17 or a resident of our country to enlist in the Army,
18 Senator.

19 Senator Tuberville: Do you know, Ms. Secretary? Are
20 we taking illegals -- in the Army?

21 Secretary Wormuth: As the chief said, you have to be
22 a lawful permanent resident or a resident of the United
23 States to join the military.

24 Senator Tuberville: Resident or a citizen?

25 Secretary Wormuth: Lawful permanent -- you know, I am

1 not the State Department, but lawful permanent resident, I
2 think is an immigration status that is not full
3 citizenship, but it is certainly not an undocumented
4 person.

5 Senator Tuberville: Yes. Well, I would just hope
6 that we would take people that love this country. I know
7 there is probably a lot of people come across the border
8 that is going to end up loving our country. I can
9 understand that.

10 But, you know, having people that really understand,
11 you know, what that flag means is pretty important in our
12 military. So, I would hope that we would really consider
13 the options, you know, if it came down to that. So, thank
14 you. Thank you. Thank you, both.

15 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Tuberville.
16 Senator Kaine, please.

17 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you
18 to our witnesses. General George, I appreciate our visit
19 to Radford a couple weeks back, looking at that World War
20 II era old facility, but cutting edge work is being done
21 there.

22 You spoke with Senator Ernst a bit about this but talk
23 about the need to increase our capacity to produce
24 munitions. General Cavoli was here the other day and was
25 talking about the European nations upping their production

1 capacity.

2 But talk about what we are doing in the Army to
3 increase munition production.

4 General George: Senator, same as in Iowa. What we
5 are, you know, down the patriots that are down there in
6 Radford.

7 For example, what it does down there just with
8 energetics and explosives is critical not only just to the
9 Army, but really the Joint Force. So that all of our base,
10 organic industrial depots and arsenals are critically
11 important.

12 And it is important -- a lot of what is in the
13 supplemental is actually going to go back to improving
14 those facilities, which we need to do. So, we are
15 investing in our own base. I think we have \$640 million
16 that is in there to get after projects.

17 And I know there is one down at Radford, but we have
18 to modernize those. And we are starting to do a little bit
19 of that at Radford, but we got more work to do.

20 Senator Kaine: You raise a good point. The
21 supplemental isn't just about overseas support. About \$130
22 million in the supplemental is going to Radford for
23 munitions production, and there are similar investments
24 being made at munitions facilities around the country.

25 I do want to start by recognizing the men and women of

1 the 7th Transportation Brigade at Joint Base Langley-Eustis
2 in Virginia. They are on their way to answering the call
3 and deploying into the Mediterranean in support of the
4 humanitarian aid efforts on the pier construction in the
5 Eastern Mediterranean, and I just wanted to mention them.

6 Future Soldier, I want to ask you, Secretary Wormuth
7 and we have talked about this before. Share a little bit
8 more about this program. As I understand it, and you
9 really are, the Army is leading in this way, taking folks
10 who want to be in the military but who may not meet some of
11 the physical criteria.

12 But you are doing good work in designing this pre-
13 course that enables somebody to meet the physical criteria
14 to enter the Army. What are you finding out about their
15 ability to not just meet, but then sustain the physical
16 capacity as they have enlisted?

17 Secretary Wormuth: Thanks, Senator Kaine. Yes, there
18 is -- first, there is two tracks in the Future Soldier Prep
19 Course. There is an academic track for young people who
20 haven't quite scored high enough on the test that we use.
21 And then there is a physical track if you are not quite
22 within the body fat standards.

23 So, young people can take one or the other. We now
24 have expanded it, and they can take them in parallel. We
25 have graduated, I think, almost 18,000 young people out of

1 this program. It is like a 95 percent success rate. They
2 often are going into basic training and taking on sort of
3 leadership roles in basic training.

4 So, it has been very, very successful so far. And we
5 are doing a longitudinal study to follow graduates from the
6 prep course, you know, as they go to their first duty
7 station and have their first set of assignments to see how
8 they perform.

9 But right now, it has been a very good program at both
10 Fort Jackson and Fort Moore.

11 Senator Kaine: Excellent. We had a hearing about a
12 year ago sticking on the recruiting, and the Army had done
13 a really good survey of reasons people will join or not.
14 And one of the things that surprised me was the sort of top
15 listed reason why someone might not join the military is
16 the fear of falling behind their peers.

17 There is sort of an attitude of, look, I am an 18 year
18 old, I have got some friends maybe going off to college or
19 others that may be starting careers. I would like to serve
20 my country. I see that it has a patriotic advantage, but I
21 worry that 5 or 10 years down the road when I exit the
22 military, or 20 years down the road, my peers will have
23 moved farther ahead, and I won't.

24 And so, making the case to young people that a
25 military career isn't a cul de sac or detour from life

1 success, but it enhances possible future careers, seems to
2 be really, really important. As you are approaching
3 retooling, recruiting, how are you kind of factoring that
4 in?

5 Secretary Wormuth: Well, one of the things we are
6 trying to do is really get the word out in part through our
7 marketing about, you know, how that is basically a myth
8 that you are going to be left behind.

9 I mean, we have the GI Bill. We have certification
10 programs so that soldiers can earn, you know, certificates
11 that are marketable when they leave. And what we have
12 really tried to do is to have some of our marketing efforts
13 really focus on that and kind of getting that information
14 out there, and that is obviously something that we make
15 sure that our recruiters are well versed in so they can
16 talk to young people, and frankly, their parents and other
17 important influencers about all of the benefits to joining
18 the Army.

19 Senator Kaine: Great. Thank you. I yield back, Mr.
20 Chairman.

21 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Kaine.
22 Senator Rounds, please.

23 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary
24 Wormuth, General George, thank you for being with us today.
25 We appreciate your service to our country.

1 Secretary Wormuth, the Army will play a pivotal role
2 in the Western Pacific as the Department lead for the
3 contested logistics problem set. Congress has been
4 providing bipartisan support and funding for Project PELE
5 Micro Nuclear Reactor.

6 Does the Army have any plans to transition the PELE
7 technology and regulatory approach for either operational
8 or installation energy resiliency solutions?

9 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we certainly are very
10 focused on energy and resilience at our installations and
11 being able to operate in a more resilient manner.

12 We are interested, I think, in the potential of micro
13 nuclear reactors, and I am familiar with the Project PELE
14 project. I think, you know, we are looking at and I think
15 we will soon be entering into some discussions, some
16 informational discussions with industry to learn more about
17 what might be possible.

18 Because certainly, to the extent that we are able to
19 have a reliable source of energy, if we have -- you know,
20 if the electric grid in many of our communities goes down
21 for some reason, it certainly would be appealing to have
22 something that is dependable and reliable.

23 So, we are interested in exploring that, but I would
24 say we are still in the early stages.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you. General George, can you

1 describe for the committee how the Fiscal Year 2025 budget
2 request takes into consideration the Army's lead role in
3 addressing the contested logistics problem for the
4 Department and the Joint Force's sustainment needs?

5 I am thinking particularly with regard to the year
6 2027. I would like your professional military opinion. Do
7 you see -- do you believe that the Army will be able to
8 fulfill its role and meet those requirements?

9 General George: Senator, I do. Obviously, this is
10 something that we are working on very diligently. We are
11 increasing -- we just stood up a watercraft company, for
12 example, over in Japan throughout this next TAA, Total Army
13 Analysis.

14 We are looking at two additional. We are investing in
15 the LSV, you know, some of the same capability that is
16 getting ready to go over -- that is out in the
17 Mediterranean right now. I will say that this is a joint
18 mission that we are -- you know that we are getting after
19 with that, just like we are doing that mission. We have
20 rehearsed those.

21 So that is I think the other thing that we have to do.
22 We have -- in this next budget, 200 percent increase in our
23 exercising, obviously testing, doing all these things.
24 Through exercises is where we learn. We are going to be
25 also doing it with partners and allies. And then we are

1 also taking a look at overall what we need to do with, for
2 example, on watercraft, what can unmanned systems provide?
3 What can we do with leasing?

4 Pre-positioned stocks is a part of this. So, I think
5 we are looking at this holistically. And we have stood up
6 here this -- just this last fall, a contested logistics
7 cross-functional team that is really focused on that for
8 the whole Army.

9 Senator Rounds: How about with regard to the
10 different nations involved in the status of forces
11 agreements and so forth, are those coming together?

12 General George: Are you talking, Senator, like where
13 we would maybe station something or what our forward
14 posture would be?

15 Senator Rounds: Yes. And I am curious whether the
16 -- with regard to the agreements themselves and so forth.
17 The Army takes a role, but does the State Department
18 participate in those discussions as well?

19 General George: Obviously that would -- a lot of that
20 is going to be led by the Ambassador, by the State
21 Department. It is going to happen across the interagency.
22 And I think, you know, a good example of, you know, a great
23 partnership that we have right now is what -- you know, how
24 we have expanded with the Philippines or what we have
25 continue to do with those partners, but --

1 Senator Rounds: Those particular agreements and so
2 forth are in line for being able to meet the needs by the
3 year 2027.

4 General George: Obviously that is our focus, is
5 moving out quickly in all of those. And I think that is
6 -- I know it is a Department led and INDOPACOM, and -- but
7 really it is the whole interagency, Senator.

8 Senator Rounds: Very good. Thank you. Secretary
9 Wormuth, the Army established the Joint Counter Small
10 Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office back in 2019 to coordinate
11 counter UAS development across the force.

12 The top two items on your unfunded priorities list are
13 the counter UAS items. Now, Senator King makes a really
14 good point when he talks about the costs involved. Can you
15 share any information about the JCO's role in General
16 Brown's Counter UAS Task Force?

17 Secretary Wormuth: Sure. First of all, I want to
18 say, you know, since 2020, the Army's invested about \$3
19 billion in counter UAS. So, we are very focused on that.
20 We have spent more than any other service. The Joint
21 Capabilities Office is really -- their job is to go out for
22 the whole Department and work with industry to kind of
23 bring forward what is possible so that we can start
24 investing in sort of the best available technology, and
25 then each service decides what they want to buy. But it is

1 playing a key role. We are also standing up a joint
2 counter UAS University at Fort Sill in Oklahoma, again to
3 help us learn. And I would let the chief speak to sort of
4 the UASs that are on his unfunded priority list.

5 General George: Yes, Senator. So, what we did
6 -- again, I mentioned up front on the unfunded priorities
7 list, it is stuff that is executable, and specific to the
8 counter UAS, it is what we have seen change since October
9 7th, last fall. And, you know, we have had some
10 advancements in some of that.

11 We know that that environment and those systems are
12 changing very rapidly. So, there was one system on there
13 specifically that we wanted -- was Roadrunner. We want to
14 -- there is additional missiles that we need, like Coyote
15 missiles that we know are very, very effective, but we need
16 to increase our magazine depth. So those are the kinds of
17 things that were on there.

18 Senator Rounds: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rounds. Senator
20 Warren, please.

21 Senator Warren: So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our
22 military families sacrifice a lot to serve their country
23 and to keep Americans safe. And one thing they shouldn't
24 have to worry about is whether they are going to have a
25 safe and affordable place to live. We provide basic

1 housing allowance and other assistance to make sure that
2 military families have what they need, but often that is
3 just not enough.

4 For example, the Commander at Fort Carson in Colorado
5 has 26,000 people working on post, but he is able to offer
6 only 3,100 family housing units. What is available off
7 base is often very expensive or requires a very long
8 commute to get there, all because we simply don't have
9 enough housing for our people.

10 So, Secretary Wormuth, you oversee everything for the
11 Army, from personnel to equipment. Do you think that
12 meeting military families' housing needs is important both
13 for recruiting and retaining a strong military?

14 Secretary Wormuth: Absolutely. It is very important.

15 Senator Warren: Okay, I agree with you. And that is
16 why Congress created the Defense Community Infrastructure
17 Program to help communities address, and I am going to
18 read, deficiencies in community infrastructure supportive
19 of a military installation.

20 Now, DCIP provides grants to local governments for
21 transportation, building, and other infrastructure
22 projects. Secretary Wormuth, would you support using this
23 program to build more housing in communities near bases in
24 order to help us continue, excuse me, to attract the best
25 and brightest to serve in our military?

1 Secretary Wormuth: Senator Warren, this is a program
2 that is run by OSD. And like you said, it is Generally
3 grants to community. So, I know we do use it for things
4 like assessments of utilities and things like that in
5 partnership with communities where we have our
6 installations.

7 You know, I think additional authority for housing is
8 always helpful. The real challenge, though, with housing
9 is money. You know, at the end of the day --

10 Senator Warren: I understand that. But you don't get
11 what you don't ask for here. So, let's start with the idea
12 of recognizing we are in a housing crisis. And making this
13 a priority in terms of getting funding in for housing for
14 our military, does that work for you?

15 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. And we are certainly trying
16 to find -- you know, for example, with our privatized
17 housing partners, we are trying to find more ways to help
18 get money into that portfolio.

19 Senator Warren: Okay. I am coming to them. Let me
20 mention one other problem here. I have concerns about the
21 safety of the housing we provide to service members and
22 their families.

23 Now, Congress recently adopted reforms to address
24 housing deficiencies, including requiring the DOD to create
25 a public complaint database to put a stop to Government

1 contractors acting like slumlords and then hiding
2 settlements when they get caught. I got that bill passed
3 five years ago, five years, and today DOD still does not
4 have that database up and operational.

5 Even worse, these Government contractors continue to
6 muzzle military families by requiring them to sign
7 nondisclosure agreements. So, there is no record of the
8 mold, or the broken windows, or the water damage, or the
9 rats, or any other unsafe housing conditions that military
10 families are forced to put up with.

11 Secretary Wormuth, do you think it is appropriate for
12 Government contractors to ask military families to stay
13 silent in return for those companies meeting their basic
14 obligations to provide safe housing?

15 Secretary Wormuth: We encourage our soldiers and
16 their families to use the dispute resolution process to the
17 max --

18 Senator Warren: Yes, but the part I am worried about
19 are the nondisclosure agreements that come out of that, the
20 NDAs.

21 Secretary Wormuth: What I would say about that,
22 Senator, is I think, you know, we appreciate the provision
23 that you put in that basically requires that their soldiers
24 have 10 days before they are even asked to sign an NDA.

25 And what we do is offer a lawyer that the Army will

1 pay for to advise our soldiers and family members of their
2 rights before they contemplate signing an NDA.

3 Senator Warren: I appreciate that that is better than
4 it used to be, but it is not as good as it ought to be.

5 Last year's NDAA put in restrictions on the use of
6 non-disclosure agreements. I just think we are going to
7 have to set a much brighter line. No landlord should be
8 able to make military families sign NDAs in exchange for
9 providing basic housing, period. No NDAs on that. Before
10 I close, I want to say one other thing and I will just say
11 it quickly, and that is to you, General George.

12 There is a significant disconnect between Army
13 rhetoric and action. When you were confirmed, you told
14 this committee, "I will make every effort to honor our
15 commitment by providing quality barracks to our soldiers."

16 Sounded great. But on your unfunded priorities list,
17 the list of things that you were not willing to fight for
18 funding in your basic budget, right near the bottom of your
19 unfunded priorities list is money to repair the barracks in
20 Fort Devens, Massachusetts. You can't stand up and say you
21 care about housing your people and then not make housing
22 repairs a part of your base budget.

23 There is no surprise here. It was deteriorating and
24 deteriorating over a long period of time. So, I want to
25 work with the Army on this. I know I am over time, but we

1 got to stop playing games on this and follow through. We
2 have to deliver better housing for our people. Thank you.
3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Warren. Senator
5 Budd, please.

6 Senator Budd: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, thank
7 you both for being here. Secretary Wormuth, I sent you a
8 letter regarding the Joint Deployment Warfighting Complex
9 at Fort Liberty.

10 You sent me a prompt response, so thank you for that.
11 It was really about consolidating the 18th Airborne Corps
12 headquarters into a single modern building.

13 The 18th Airborne Corps, it is spread out over 26
14 facilities, some 40 acres, and it really wasn't designed to
15 support the headquarters' current mission to rapidly
16 respond to contingencies around the world, particularly not
17 with the IT systems and cyber resiliency requirements that
18 we have today.

19 So, I understand this project, it is slated to reach
20 35 percent planning and design over the next six months.
21 So, my question to you is, will you commit to keeping this
22 committee updated on this project's timeline?

23 Secretary Wormuth: Yes, certainly, Senator Budd.

24 Senator Budd: Thank you. And I understand it is
25 going to compete with other Army requirements, but this is

1 a top priority not just to North Carolina and to Fort
2 Liberty, but from an operational and readiness perspective
3 for the whole of Army.

4 So, if you would, please. Thank you. General George,
5 again, thank you for being here. I appreciated our
6 discussion earlier in the week. The Army has selected Fort
7 Liberty as home of its 5th Multi-Domain Task Force. Is
8 that correct, sir?

9 General George: That is correct, Senator. Yes.

10 Senator Budd: Thank you. Can you elaborate on the
11 capabilities of these multi-domain task forces and where we
12 are in building these out?

13 General George: Yes. So, we are at various stages.
14 Right now, I was actually the Commander up at the JBLM and
15 we had the first MDTF.

16 So, what -- and the big piece that will go in and that
17 we will build, and I think will be important for 18th
18 Airborne Corps, the 82nd, really everybody that is there,
19 is the effects battalion that will go in that will have the
20 cyber, space, EW. So, all lethal targeting and non-lethal
21 that is part of that, which I think is critically
22 important.

23 Also, part of MDTFs, and we are stationing these in
24 different areas, but there is also long range fires,
25 indirect fire protection capabilities, and support

1 battalion. Liberty is really important to us. Obviously,
2 what you were just talking about with what it does to
3 support the Joint Force and rapid response.

4 And looking -- so having that capability there, in the
5 space that you have, and we also get some economies of
6 scale with all of the -- given it is a large base with all
7 the other MLs that we are going to put there.

8 Senator Budd: Thank you. You know, on a different
9 topic, we have talked a lot about counter UAS. So, to add
10 on to that, clarify for me, is it purely additional
11 resources that you need, General, or are there new
12 authorities there that would be helpful? I know we talked
13 a little bit about this on Monday.

14 General George: I think -- well, there is two aspects
15 of this. For some of the authorities, for us specifically,
16 is being able to, you know, go from research and
17 development to actually procuring things, what I was
18 talking about.

19 I think if you are coming back stateside and you are
20 looking at actually defending airfields and critical
21 infrastructure, there are some additional things. I think
22 NORTHCOM right now is doing a study kind of on what that
23 is, because there is obviously -- it is an interagency
24 challenge when you are looking at, you know, small UASs
25 that are operating here stateside.

1 But for us and forward, I think we are in a good
2 place.

3 Senator Budd: Thank you. You know, North Carolina is
4 also proud home of the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team.
5 And I am aware of planned upgrades to their Abrams tanks,
6 but also I am interested in whether we will see a
7 replacement for Bradley infantry fighting vehicles. What
8 is the status of the XM-30 program?

9 General George: I have had -- we just went through
10 the, you know, the requirement and go into this. It is
11 -- we do need to upgrade our infantry fighting vehicle. We
12 are going through the process of that. I do think that
13 that will be a significant leap forward for us. And I will
14 have somebody come over and kind of brief you the detailed
15 timeline on what we are looking at that.

16 Senator Budd: If you would, please. Thank you.
17 Madam Secretary, I would like to talk about munitions that
18 are going to be critical in the conflict in the Indo-
19 Pacific. I am thinking the precision strike missiles and
20 guided MLRS rockets. My first question is, have you
21 identified any production lines that have additional
22 capacity? And if so, which ones?

23 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we do -- you know, we are
24 using multiyear procurement authority that you all gave us
25 for GMLRS. So, I think there is more capacity there.

1 Precision strike missile, we have funding in this year's
2 budget for sort of the first wave of precision strike
3 missile. I think at this point we don't have additional
4 capacity. We are still sort of -- that program is still in
5 the beginning of its effort.

6 Senator Budd: Thank you, Chair.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Budd. Senator
8 Kelly, please.

9 Senator Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary
10 Wormuth, I want to follow up on Senator Budd's question
11 about munitions.

12 But, you know, really, you know, concerns we have with
13 our defense industrial base and, you know, industry
14 struggling to produce enough to support even the limited
15 conflict in Ukraine. In a conflict with a near our
16 adversary, we will use munitions much faster than we are
17 having to replace the ones we are sending to Ukraine today.
18 That is clear.

19 It is also clear that more needs to be done to prepare
20 our industrial base for possible future conflict. And one
21 of the keys to bridging this gap is what Senator Budd
22 mentioned, which is the multiyear procurement, which allows
23 DOD to send a steady demand signal to companies and leads
24 to long term reductions in acquisition costs.

25 The Army has been taking advantage of multi-year

1 procurement to help replenish stockpiles and ensure that we
2 are well postured for future conflicts. So, Secretary
3 Wormuth, can you talk about -- a little bit more broadly
4 about multi-year contracts and how the Army is currently
5 taking advantage of them to save money and invest in the
6 future? And General, please feel free to add anything to
7 her comments.

8 Secretary Wormuth: Certainly. Thanks, Senator Kelly.
9 We have found the multi-year procurement authority to be
10 very helpful for exactly the reason that you said, which is
11 essentially that it sends a very strong demand signal to
12 industry that there is a consistent need for that
13 investment, and they are more willing, frankly, to invest
14 in their own facilitation when they have essentially a
15 guaranteed buy, you know, over multiple years. So, I think
16 that has been very helpful with both GMLRS and the Pac-3s.

17 Senator Kelly: And what else are we buying in
18 multiyear procurements?

19 Secretary Wormuth: Right now, if I am not mistaken, I
20 think those are the two sets of munitions for which we are
21 using the multiyear. You know, we are spending over \$3
22 billion a year on munitions more broadly, but I think those
23 are the two that we have multiyear authority --

24 Senator Kelly: Do you plan on expanding that to other
25 munitions?

1 Secretary Wormuth: I think we have been in
2 conversations at the staff level about a couple more places
3 where that might be applicable.

4 If I am not mistaken, I think we have to demonstrate,
5 you know, a certain amount of cost savings. There is a
6 threshold that one has to meet to be able to get multiyear
7 procurement authority. So, I think that is kind of where
8 the conversation has been with some of the professional
9 staff.

10 Senator Kelly: And then General, do you see our
11 stocks going up at a higher rate than you would have
12 expected without a multiyear on those two items?

13 General George: I think, Senator, the multi-years are
14 definitely very helpful to us, and we appreciate it. I
15 think one of the challenges, and I will just go back to the
16 -- you know, during the continuing resolution, if we wanted
17 to increase any, you know, new productions, new starts, we
18 couldn't do -- you know, we couldn't do any of that.

19 So, we lost time with that. It is why also for the
20 Army, the supplemental is very important to them because we
21 have got, you know, more than \$3 billion worth of, of
22 munitions we need to put in there. So, I think it is a
23 combination of all of those things that are going to help
24 us move forward.

25 Senator Kelly: And then, General, another subject.

1 The Army is working to modernize its airborne ISR
2 capability, divesting in older turboprop planes and
3 investing in more, you know, some more modern aircraft.

4 The new HADES system is going to be a significant
5 increase in range and capability. It is vital that this
6 new capability is based at a location where the aircrew can
7 train for any threat environment that is similar to what
8 they would face in combat. The new signals intelligence
9 capabilities will require that your pilots have regular
10 access to ranges that can simulate the threat they will
11 face in combat.

12 So, General, do you agree that access to electronic
13 testing ranges will be vital to ensure that the continued
14 -- ensure the continued development and success of HADES?

15 General George: Yes, I agree with you 100 percent,
16 Senator. I was down -- I mean, the John R. Fox Range is
17 one of those that has incredible capability for us, for the
18 whole Army.

19 Senator Kelly: And the, you know, Fort Huachuca in
20 Southern Arizona. I mean, it is uniquely positioned to
21 support this mission. It already does RC-12 training. It
22 has got the electronic range, the electronic proving
23 ground.

24 And you don't need to go very far to train because it
25 is right there. You know, it is not like, you know, other

1 bases that I have been at. You have to, you know, make up
2 a pretty long trek to the range. I just want to get your
3 assurances from both you and the Secretary that the Army
4 will consider these factors when deciding basing operations
5 for HADES.

6 General George: We will definitely consider all of
7 those. And just on the HADES, it is from all of the COCOMS
8 are very positive about having that asset supporting them.

9 Senator Kelly: Okay. Secretary.

10 Secretary Wormuth: Same.

11 Senator Kelly: Thank you. Thank you very much.

12 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Sergeant Kelly. Senator
13 Cotton, please.

14 Senator Cotton: Secretary Wormuth, I want to return
15 to the line of questioning earlier about recruiting. You
16 have said that you don't want to be overconfident, but you
17 think we have a good shot at making that goal this year,
18 the goal being 55,000.

19 But isn't it the case that you dropped your goal this
20 year because not many people are joining the Army since you
21 joined, or since you became the Secretary?

22 Secretary Wormuth: It is true that our goal last
23 year, Senator Cotton, was 65,000. General McConville and I
24 set that as a stretch goal. That is how we characterized
25 it. So, this year, between 55,000 new contracts and 5,000

1 in the DEP, it is 60,000.

2 Senator Cotton: Last year, you forecasted that you
3 would need 62,600 for this year. Why did you cut that?

4 Secretary Wormuth: Again, we look at what is
5 possible, and we set a goal that we think is both --

6 Senator Cotton: Do you look at what is possible or
7 what is needed?

8 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we -- General George and
9 I --

10 Senator Cotton: Possible is pretty low since you
11 became the Secretary --

12 Secretary Wormuth: Actually --

13 Senator Cotton: The question was needed for our Army
14 to defend our nation.

15 Secretary Wormuth: Senator Cotton, the chief and I
16 are both committed to growing back our end strength. We
17 are aiming to get up to 470,000 by 2029, and our recruiting
18 is improving, consistently.

19 Senator Cotton: Well, if it is improving because you
20 are throwing a dart at the wall and then drawing the
21 bullseye around it. In your first full year on the job,
22 the target was 60,000. You didn't even get 45,000.

23 Last year it was 65,000. You got 55,000. You had
24 projected last year for it to be 62,600 this year, and
25 conveniently, you decided to change the goal to 55,000,

1 which is exactly what you got last year.

2 You don't think that is a little suspicious that you
3 are simply trying to avoid negative headlines once again
4 for your failure to meet basic recruiting goals, goals that
5 we have met almost every single year since 2005?

6 Secretary Wormuth: I am not focused on headlines,
7 Senator Cotton. What I am doing is doing everything
8 possible to help the Army improve its recruiting, and that
9 is what we are doing.

10 Senator Cotton: Does the Army need 7,600 fewer
11 soldiers than you expected this year, and than you expected
12 it would need last year?

13 Secretary Wormuth: The Army has been able to meet all
14 of the requirements that the Combatant Commands have levied
15 on us at our current end strength. And our end strength is
16 going to start going up.

17 Senator Cotton: What are the requirements that have
18 changed in the last year from those Combatant Commands that
19 allowed you to drop your goal, not just from the 65,000 it
20 was last year to 55,000 this year, but from the 62,600 that
21 you predicted last year that you would need this year.
22 What requirements have decreased on the Army's --?

23 Secretary Wormuth: The requirements haven't changed,
24 and we were able to --

25 Senator Cotton: You would think so since the world is

1 going up in smoke because of Joe Biden's failed policies.

2 Secretary Wormuth: Were able to meet all of the
3 Combatant Command requirements last year. We have been
4 able to meet them this year. But we are still focused on
5 growing our end strength.

6 Senator Cotton: I mean, we met our recruiting goals
7 at the height of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. You can't
8 meet your recruiting goals now without dropping them by
9 10,000 from what they were last year?

10 Secretary Wormuth: All of the services are facing
11 challenges, but I am proud to say we have --

12 Senator Cotton: Your service is acute -- the
13 challenges of your service are acute.

14 Secretary Wormuth: Yes, we because we have the
15 biggest force, and we have to recruit the largest number.
16 But we are doing considerably better this year.

17 Senator Cotton: I am looking at every single year
18 here, 62,500, 68,500, 76,500, 68,000, 61,200. This is not
19 a systemic problem until you became the Secretary.

20 Secretary Wormuth: Senator Cotton, I don't think that
21 there is a correlation between me becoming Secretary and
22 the recruiting headwinds that the entire Department has
23 been facing.

24 Senator Cotton: Okay, I want to touch on another
25 recruiting matter, or I guess a force strength matter. I

1 noticed a story in Stars and Stripes from January that
2 there is a shortage of about 250 officers in adjutant
3 General, finance, and signal corps, and the Army was going
4 to ask infantry and armor officers to transfer. Has that
5 happened?

6 Secretary Wormuth: I will have to take that for the
7 record.

8 Senator Cotton: General George, do you know any more
9 details?

10 General George: Yes, I can -- yes, typically, as you
11 know, Senator, we typically have more combat arms,
12 lieutenants --

13 Senator Cotton: So that is --

14 General George: Typically, we do VTIP. This was a
15 done a little bit earlier that we knew because of our
16 structure. We are actually growing some additional MDTF,
17 which came up earlier. Signal is, for example, is one of
18 them or MI, where you typically have more captains and
19 majors than you do lieutenants.

20 So that that was what that was. And what we did is
21 took volunteers. We just put the message out, because we
22 want to keep talent, and it is actually really good for us
23 to infuse those branches with people that have experience
24 in the combat arms.

25 Senator Cotton: Ys, normally things like signal and

1 AG are our donor branches at the lieutenant ranks to
2 infantry. But it is infantry officer ranks, whatever the
3 Army as whole. Infantry, armor officer ranks are healthy
4 right now at the company level?

5 General George: We are very healthy for lieutenants,
6 Senator. We are doing well on that.

7 Senator Cotton: Okay. Thank you. One final issue,
8 Secretary Wormuth, the Caisson Platoon. The Army just
9 acknowledged that they are not on track to get Caisson
10 operations back up at Arlington National Cemetery.

11 This has been an ongoing issue now for more than a
12 year. We directed you in the NDAA to make sure the Caisson
13 Platoon remains in existence. You fought that tooth and
14 nail last year. What is the issue here? It is horses
15 pulling wagons.

16 It has been happening since before recorded time. Why
17 can't these families who have a right to a horse drawn case
18 on their funeral expect that is going to happen?

19 Secretary Wormuth: Senator Cotton, first of all, we
20 didn't have any plans to get rid of the Caisson Platoon.
21 We have actually spent a lot --

22 Senator Cotton: You fought my amendment tooth and
23 nail about it, so I don't know what -- I mean, I don't know
24 if you have an animal rights activist from PETA on your
25 staff handling this issue. But why can't you get horses

1 pulling wagons in the cemetery?

2 Secretary Wormuth: There is a range of challenges,
3 and we can come and talk to you in detail.

4 Senator Cotton: Old guard did this for decades.

5 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. And the horses that did that
6 for decades are now old and lame.

7 Senator Cotton: They have always been old. They have
8 always been retired from other activities.

9 Secretary Wormuth: Well, we are now trying to grow
10 the herd. We have been focused on this incredibly hard.
11 We are looking at additional pasture land. We are going to
12 have to rebuild the stables that you probably remember.
13 But we are very focused on trying to get to a point where
14 we are able to offer, again, the Caisson service with the
15 funerals.

16 Senator Cotton: If the Army under your leadership
17 can't figure out horses pulling wagons, it is not a
18 surprise they can't figure out increasing munitions
19 manufacturing or drone warfare.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Cotton. Senator
21 Peters, please.

22 Senator Peters: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary
23 Wormuth, General George, welcome to the committee and thank
24 you both for your service to our country. In response to a
25 question asked by Senator Budd, it seems clear that the

1 Army knows that the future conflicts that we are going to
2 face, we are going to require some new units, with example
3 is the Army's Multi-Domain Task Forces at the very center
4 of those modernization efforts that you are undertaking
5 now.

6 And when forward positions, these MDTFs will ensure
7 freedom of operations for U.S. forces in what are going to
8 be heavily denied environments. As you stand up -- so my
9 question for both of you is, as you stand up additional
10 MDTFs, I hope that the Army will pursue a similar force
11 structure to the Security Force Assistant Brigades, SFABs.

12 Currently active duty SFABs are aligned with Combatant
13 Commands, while a National Guard SFAB is globally aligned.
14 So, my question specifically to both of you is, are you in
15 conversations with the National Guard about a guard based
16 MDTF, and if so, what additional analysis is going to be
17 needed prior to making an informed decision on future MDTF
18 force structure?

19 Secretary Wormuth: Thank you, Senator Peters. Right
20 now, our plan is to develop five multi-domain task forces,
21 as I think you noted. We aren't currently thinking about
22 yet having an MDTF in the Guard.

23 The MDTFs are very, very new. I think the first MDTF
24 had come online right as I became Secretary, you know, more
25 than three and a half years ago. We have -- it has been a

1 journey. We have been learning.

2 You know, right now we think the five is what we are
3 going to need, but we are very much a total Army, and we
4 are always in conversation with our colleagues in the Guard
5 about, you know, changes to their force structure as well.

6 So, I think it is something that we will remain open
7 minded to, but right now our plan is for the five in the
8 active.

9 Senator Peters: So, there are no active discussions
10 beyond that?

11 General George: Can I jump in?

12 Secretary Wormuth: Sure.

13 General George: Yes, I would not -- I think the
14 Secretary exactly -- you know larger MDTF just because of
15 what we require. What we are -- I have had some
16 discussions, and I would say these are initial discussions
17 with a lot of the Guard leaders is there is a lot of space
18 capabilities, cyber.

19 I mean, we get, you know, a lot of capability from
20 that, not just for MDTFs, but in the Guard and Reserve, and
21 COMPO 2 and COMPO 3. How do we maximize that capability?
22 You know, how could we have plugs?

23 For example, when I went over to Afghanistan as a
24 division commander, I took -- there was a large number of
25 National Guard folks that were -- that built out our intel

1 and targeting just because of their expertise. So that is
2 what we are talking about.

3 And I would just say that those have been preliminary
4 conversations because we know we have capability in the
5 Guard and the Reserve, how could they maybe augment some of
6 this stuff that we are doing already.

7 Senator Peters: Yes. Great. And that is important.
8 A lot of these members of the Guard have extensive civilian
9 experience and some very high level of skill sets that they
10 can bring to their duties.

11 So, it is good to hear that that is happening.
12 Secretary Wormuth, last week, the EPA issued Federal
13 drinking water standards for six PFAS chemicals. These
14 standards include PFAS chemicals previously used by the
15 Army and National Guard in firefighting foams at many
16 installations across the country, but one in particular
17 that I am focused on is Camp Grayling in Michigan, where
18 PFAS contaminated drinking water is a serious and real
19 concern for the local community -- something that folks
20 around the country are dealing with right now.

21 So, my question for you, ma'am, is what is the Army's
22 plan and timeline for conforming with these new EPA
23 standards? And when can impacted residents, in Grayling,
24 Michigan in particular, expect to see some action to
25 conform to these new EPA standards?

1 Secretary Wormuth: Thanks, Senator Peters. Yes, I am
2 broadly aware of the new standards that the EPA has set for
3 PFAS. And I think, you know, we have already been working
4 closely with folks at Camp Grayling, which is a great
5 training area, by the way, to work on eradicating PFAS at
6 the previous levels.

7 And I think what I would say is I would love to send
8 our installations and our environment team over to talk to
9 your office in detail about sort of how we will be
10 approaching the new raised level and what the timelines
11 associated with that will be.

12 But we want to continue to be proactive with you all
13 about getting into compliance with the EPA standards.

14 Senator Peters: Well, it is good. Could we arrange
15 that meeting sooner rather than later?

16 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. Happy to do that.

17 Senator Peters: Right. We appreciate that
18 commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Peters. Senator
20 Duckworth, please.

21 Senator Duckworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
22 morning to both of our witnesses. I am glad we are having
23 a conversation about the role of the Guard and the Reserve,
24 because I think they are an important part of our overall
25 force.

1 And right now, as you have already acknowledged,
2 National Guard and Reserve service members have specific
3 qualifications and specific skills that are highly needed.
4 And yet those who have specific qualifications are only
5 paid a fraction of what their active duty counterparts are
6 paid in incentive pay, although they maintain the same
7 skill sets.

8 I have consistently advocated for fixing this problem
9 and passed legislation to address this incentive pay
10 disparities several years ago, and we even updated it in
11 last year's NDAA. Bottom line, you get the same two
12 paratroopers who make their three jumps in a single day.
13 The active duty one is going to get a full month's worth of
14 incentive pay.

15 The guard or reservist will get 1/30th of that
16 incentive pay for the same three jobs that they took. This
17 is fundamentally unfair. Last year's update, Section 612
18 of Fiscal Year 2024 NDAA, was meant to clarify Congress's
19 intent that special and incentive pays should be paid
20 equally to members of the active and reserve components.

21 If these pays are intended to encourage reserve
22 component service members to maintain a skill or
23 proficiency identical to that required of the member in the
24 active component, or to compensate the reservist for
25 exposure to hazards or risk identified to hazards or risk

1 faced by an active duty service member.

2 My update from last year requires the Service
3 Secretaries to go back and review each type of special and
4 incentive pay individually and certify that those pays that
5 meet this criteria to be paid out to members of the reserve
6 component equally, if doing so will not hurt retention. It
7 is starting to feel like I am being slow rolled.

8 We need to get these paid. I mean, these folks have
9 earned it. They should get the same amount of pay as the
10 active duty folks. The pilots who go out there and
11 maintain their minimum flying hour requirements that are
12 the same as active duty pilots should get a full month's
13 worth of pay.

14 Those paratroopers, they should get a full month's
15 worth of jump pay, just like the active duty troops do.
16 Secretary Wormuth, do you commit to completing this review
17 to ensure that service members within the Army reserve
18 components are paid the same special and incentive pays as
19 their active duty counterparts when they maintain the same
20 critical skills or face the same risk. And what is your
21 timeline for doing so?

22 Secretary Wormuth: Thanks, Senator Duckworth. Yes,
23 we are working with RAND right now to basically help us
24 develop a framework to be able to assess -- you know, as
25 you know very well, there are many different types of

1 special pays and incentives, but there is also many
2 different types of duty statuses for Guard and Reservists.

3 So, we have been working with RAND to come up
4 essentially with a framework that is going to be a tool for
5 us to be able determine which special pays and incentives
6 may qualify for the full pay. I will have to take for the
7 record the exact timeline when the RAND work will be
8 completed, but I can assure you, we are not trying to slow
9 roll.

10 Senator Duckworth: All right. I will get back in
11 touch with you in 90 days to get that timeline. Secretary
12 Wormuth, in your opening statement, you communicated you
13 would continue to prioritize the Indo-Pacific.

14 The Indo-Pacific region is also a priority for me.
15 And as the Army continues its modernization efforts, I am
16 ready and available to lend my support to ensure the Army's
17 resource and postured for any future conflicts in the
18 region.

19 In fact, along, with Senator Sullivan we will be
20 leading a CODEL to the Shangri-La dialogs that are coming
21 up in just over a month. The Army would need to operate in
22 a distributed but a connected manner for survivability,
23 placing greater demands on enablers such as logistics,
24 force protection, and command and control.

25 The Army's current backbone of its intra-theater lift

1 in the Indo-Pacific, consists of Army watercraft systems
2 like the LSV and the MSB. But I am concerned that the Army
3 is not dedicating enough funding to these platforms in its
4 Fiscal Year 2025 budget, which can only lead to a capacity
5 gap in our intra-theater sealift.

6 Secretary Wormuth, how does the Army plan to fund and
7 continue to modernize Army watercraft systems over the next
8 few Fiscal Years?

9 Secretary Wormuth: Thanks, Senator. As you noted,
10 first of all, we have a composite watercraft company in
11 Japan. I am actually going to get to see that in July
12 myself. We have money in the budget for the MSB Lite
13 version that I think will begin fielding, if I am not
14 mistaken in Fiscal Year 2028.

15 We also have a requirement for a heavy version of
16 that. And as the chief alluded to earlier, we are
17 exploring with Army Materiel Command, what we can do in
18 terms of offshore supply, vessels, things that the
19 commercial sector is using that may be more cost effective
20 for us, because we do see the requirement for contested
21 logistics as substantial.

22 But as is the case with many things, our challenge is
23 having enough resources to be able to do that, but then
24 also invest in air and missile defenses and other things
25 that we need. But that is broadly the outlines of our

1 plan.

2 Senator Duckworth: I am all for buying off the shelf
3 if it is cheaper and it could work, and it is to keep our
4 troops safe and accomplish the mission. General George, I
5 am going to pass it over to you.

6 Can you describe the Army's current capabilities for
7 intra-theater sealift in Indo-Pacific? And how is the Army
8 working with other services, and Combatant Commands like
9 TRANSCOM, to develop a unified intra-theater sealift
10 strategy for the Indo-Pacific?

11 General George: Thank you, Senator. You kind of
12 summed it up at the end there. These, you know, any time
13 we are going to do any anything out there, it is going to
14 be a joint mission. We are going to have to work with
15 everybody. Just, and I know the Secretary got to see the
16 JLOTS when it went in for Talisman Saber down in Australia.

17 So, we are looking at all the different aircraft or
18 the watercraft, and we are looking at how the oil industry,
19 for example, send stuff. They do a lot of unmanned systems
20 and leasing. I also think this gets after also what are we
21 doing with 3D print. It is the whole contested logistics.

22 How are we doing tele-maintenance, what do we have for
23 pre-positioned stock, where we are doing it. And then the
24 other thing I just wanted to highlight that you kind of set
25 up front as far as being distributed. A big part of that

1 too is making sure on our network that we are also low
2 signature.

3 You know, this is important for all of us, and that
4 will tie all of that together. And our contested
5 logistics, CFT, we would love to have them come up and
6 brief you, on what they are doing in advancing all of these
7 areas, was stood up last fall, and they are getting after
8 all of this.

9 Senator Duckworth: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, just one
10 quick thing. I would like to submit for the record a
11 question for -- on aeromedical evacuation in the Indo-
12 Pacific. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Chairman Reed: Thank you. Senator Duckworth.
14 Senator Schmitt, please.

15 Senator Schmitt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General
16 George, I do want to give you a shout out here. I think
17 that looking for those new and innovative ways to recruit
18 is sometimes a challenge but always welcomed.

19 And I saw recently that the Army has entered into a
20 partnership with the UFL, which is the new spring football
21 league. I am a little biased here. The Saint Louis Battle
22 Hawks have the highest by far and away, highest attendance
23 numbers. They averaged 35,000 people at these games.

24 And so, I think that is a smart way to reach a new
25 audience. I think there is going to be a lot of

1 opportunities there. Can you walk me through how this kind
2 of came to be and what you expect from it?

3 General George: Sure, Senator. The -- and I agree
4 with you. We do think it will be a good audience. People
5 love watching football. I am top of that list.

6 The part of this with the UFL that I like about the
7 comparisons are these are a bunch of last year, I think
8 there was 100 that came out of the UFL that went into the
9 pros. I mean, what we need to get out to everybody, it is
10 the same thing in the Army, you can come into the Army, and
11 you can accelerate your life.

12 You are going to advance your life. And so, they were
13 interested in this partnership with us, and we studied it
14 with our marketing agency, and we are in a one year, you
15 know, agreement to see how this works.

16 But so far, it has been really good, and we have had
17 troopers telling their stories at every one of these games
18 across all campus. I am sure we have had soldiers out
19 there on the sideline doing that, which I think is great.

20 Senator Schmitt: That is good. Yes, maybe we will
21 have to follow up and get you the -- a t shirt, the call is
22 the law, which is the call is for the Battle Hawks.
23 Anyway, all right. So, Secretary Wormuth, I do want to ask
24 you a question. You know, I enjoyed our visit at Fort
25 Leonard Wood.

1 I guess it was around a year ago. It was in August,
2 maybe. As you know, in last year's NDAA, it required
3 certain criteria and certifications be made by you before
4 the Army can relocate the Army CID special agent training
5 course or any of its training cadre. Despite that, our
6 office has learned recently that the Army is already in the
7 midst of a comprehensive overhaul of CID training and
8 composition.

9 And maybe most concerning, the Army Times reported
10 that "in the Army, the lowest retention job specialties for
11 men were criminal investigation division special agent,
12 with a retention rate of 38 percent for Fiscal Year 2023."
13 We also learned that CID agents are already flowing through
14 pipelines in the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center,
15 the FLETC.

16 So, this was one of the things that we were trying to
17 address in the NDAA, and it feels like -- and I would like
18 for you to maybe give some explanation. It feels like this
19 is an effort to get around the law because there is
20 supposed to be a process before what appears to be
21 happening is actually happening.

22 So, I wanted to give you an opportunity to walk me
23 through this because it feels like a workaround.

24 Secretary Wormuth: Certainly, Senator Schmitt. We do
25 not want to try to do a workaround. You know, I think, as

1 you know very, very well, we are in the process of
2 transforming the criminal investigative division, and it is
3 our intent to have 60 percent of those agents become
4 civilian.

5 That is a big change, and I think -- I am not
6 intimately familiar with the retention statistics for CID,
7 but I think part of what you are seeing a little bit is
8 change is hard. I am certainly aware, you know, and I know
9 that there is some anxiety from our uniformed folks about
10 the transformation.

11 But we want to comply with the law. And what I would
12 like to do is make sure that we have Director Ford come and
13 brief you on how he is proceeding. You know, certainly we
14 continue to plan to have our MPs and agents trained at Fort
15 Leonard Wood.

16 There is also, I think, some training they are doing
17 with FLETC, but what I would like to do is have Director
18 Ford come and talk with you in detail about what they are
19 doing.

20 Senator Schmitt: Okay, let's do that. Because that
21 is a very important role that Fort Leonard Wood plays. And
22 I think one of the reasons why we wanted to make sure
23 before there is any real change, that it is a real process.

24 And it appears as though maybe some things are being
25 moved away, whether it is without those certifications or

1 not. So, we will work with you on that and look forward to
2 that briefing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much, Senator Schmitt.
4 I have been informed that Senator Rosen also would like to
5 return and ask her questions, so let me take this
6 opportunity to continue the theme of congested logistics.

7 Critical to that is fuel efficiency of every moving
8 platform, together with improved maintenance. General
9 George, can you comment on the progress for making and the
10 plans you have in that regard? And then I will ask Senator
11 Wormuth.

12 General George: Chairman, I think hybridization is
13 important to us. One for the -- reduce our logistical tail
14 for our formations. So, I think we are looking at
15 hybridization for all of our vehicles that are out there,
16 specifically any of our newer platforms.

17 We are -- the other big advantage that you get with
18 this is that you also get silent watch and silent approach.
19 So, they -- also these vehicles are going to be more lethal
20 on the battlefield. So, I mean, that is really what we are
21 looking at in total with some of this effort.

22 We are looking at, there may be some sensors out there
23 that may be -- you know, that would be strictly electric,
24 because then we could do the same thing on the ground, get
25 them out there, silent approach and put them out there.

1 But I think all of those things combined are going to
2 make us more lethal and more mobile on the battlefield, on
3 lower signature.

4 Chairman Reed: Thank you. And your comments, Madam
5 Secretary.

6 Secretary Wormuth: Chairman, the only thing I would
7 add is two things, maybe one. I think an additional
8 benefit of some of the hybrid vehicles that we are looking
9 at is that in addition to fuel efficiency, silent watch,
10 they offer, in some cases, the ability to power other
11 devices that we have so we can actually hook, you know,
12 other systems that we have up to those batteries.

13 And then the second thing I would note is just, you
14 know, this is an area where the commercial sector has done
15 a lot of work. And so, we are trying to partner with
16 companies in the commercial sector to leverage all of the
17 investment they have already made to see how it can benefit
18 us in the Army.

19 Chairman Reed: And one topic that has come up in your
20 conversations, discussions is the notion of maintenance in
21 the field, employing 3D printing, and also having the
22 intellectual property to do that effectively. Is that a
23 specific goal and program you have in place, Madam
24 Secretary?

25 Secretary Wormuth: We are certainly looking at

1 everything we can do with 3D printing in terms of helping
2 us with contested logistics -- helping us get, you know,
3 parts much closer to the tactical edge, if you will.

4 And we are looking at, you know, what we can do with
5 that. You know, obviously, one of the issues there with 3D
6 printing is making sure that the components that are being
7 fabricated meet our safety standards.

8 So, there is some work that we have to do there. I
9 think another thing that we are doing is tell a
10 maintenance. You know, that is something we have seen be
11 very, very effective in Ukraine. And so, thinking about
12 how we can apply tele-maintenance for ourselves.

13 The other thing I would add, again, that we have also
14 seen with the Ukrainians is the importance of predictive
15 analytics when it comes to logistics. So, we are now doing
16 much more to be able to see where everything we need is and
17 to be able to anticipate what future requirements may be.

18 Chairman Reed: General George, you have any comments?

19 General George: Sure. I will add on the 3D printing.
20 The other thing that we can look at, I think for the
21 future, is UAS is something else that we are looking at.

22 So, whether or not you are producing kind of the bus
23 or the body part of an unmanned system, whether it was
24 ground or air or that you could also replace it. So much
25 like the Secretary said, we are -- I think we are trying to

1 look at this at scale to -- out in Rock Island, there is
2 one of the largest, you know, additive manufacturing
3 capabilities that we have in the Army.

4 So, you know, when we struggle with long lead time
5 parts, I think that that is definitely something that could
6 fill that in.

7 Chairman Reed: Thank you very much. I just want to
8 add a comment. I was out at Fort Sill on Friday and was at
9 the university designed to develop tactics against drones.

10 And I was impressed, but I think we have a long, long
11 way to go, in terms of the devices to engage them and also
12 just to tactics too. But I will commend both of you for
13 establishing that facility.

14 We are thinking ahead rather than reacting to
15 something that is facing us. So, my commendation to both.
16 Senator Rosen.

17 Senator Rosen: Oh, thank you, Chairman Reed. I
18 really appreciate you are holding it open for me. And I
19 would also like to thank Secretary Wormuth and General
20 George for testifying today and for following through on
21 your commitments to me to build Nevada's first certified
22 small arms training range so the Nevada National Guard will
23 no longer have to travel out of State to fulfill their
24 annual weapons qualification.

25 And it is at an average cost of half a million dollars

1 per unit -- \$500,000. So, saving money too. And the
2 inclusion of the range in the President's budget request is
3 greatly appreciated, because this range is going to improve
4 the readiness of the National Guard, their ability to
5 answer the nation's call at a greater convenience, and like
6 I said, lower cost to the taxpayer. And so, we have cyber
7 workforce development issues.

8 So, in the Fiscal Year 2024 NDAA, it included my
9 bipartisan legislation authorizing the Army to create a
10 civilian cybersecurity reserve to provide CYBERCOM with
11 qualified civilian personnel to serve in reserve capacities
12 to support operations in cyberspace.

13 So, Secretary Wormuth, what is the status of the
14 implementation plan for the civilian cyber reserve?

15 Senator Rosen: Thanks, Senator Rosen. And we are
16 very pleased that we were able to get that range in the
17 budget.

18 On the Civilian Cyber Corps, you know, we absolutely
19 want to make sure we are taking as much advantage as we can
20 of all of the available cyber expertise. I think what we
21 have been in discussions with USCYBERCOM is to think of
22 -- is to work with them.

23 First of all, NSA does the badging and the
24 credentialing that would be required for those civilians.
25 So, we don't control that. But I think what we can do is

1 talk to CYBERCOM about what are their requirements.

2 We can look at our requirements and see if there's a
3 way to structure a pilot to think about exactly where would
4 we need to have civilians fill in and sort of how to do
5 that. But I think we are a service that would like to have
6 a pilot to look at what can be done.

7 Senator Rosen: As a former computer programmer, I
8 would have -- now I am doing this, but in my younger days
9 and in my -- even as I got into my 40s or 50s, I would have
10 liked to have been able to serve at this point to do what I
11 did as a programmer.

12 So, I think it is important to have that. But I want
13 to move on, Secretary, with the impact of the EPA ruling on
14 Hawthorne Army Depot. And so, Hawthorne Army Depot, it is
15 in Northern Nevada, and we demilitarized one-third of the
16 Department of Defense obsolete munitions via open burn and
17 detonation.

18 As you are aware, the Environmental Protection Agency
19 recently proposed a new rule to revise regulations that
20 allow for open burning and detonation of certain explosives
21 like munition and propellants. The rule does not consider
22 the National Security implications for DOD facilities, or
23 the lack of available technology for large scale disposal,
24 and this could have serious impacts on Hawthorne.

25 And so, the rule is now open for public comment after

1 going through interagency review process. And from
2 conversations that my office has had with your staff and
3 with Hawthorne, I know the Army has serious concerns with
4 the impact of this rule on your ability to fulfill DOD's
5 munitions demilitarization requirements, should it take
6 effect.

7 And so, maybe you could speak to us about what would
8 happen if the implementation is written, as the way they
9 want to do it now. What challenges would this rule create
10 for facilities like Hawthorne to be able to accomplish the
11 critical mission we have of ensuring the readiness of the
12 munitions stockpile and also the impact on the workforce at
13 Hawthorne?

14 Secretary Wormuth: Thank you, Senator. And I am
15 broadly aware of the EPA rule that is out there right now
16 for comment right now.

17 And I would agree with you, I think it could have
18 significant implications for Hawthorne. Actually, the
19 chief and I were over on the House side earlier this week,
20 and one of your colleagues in the delegation raised it.
21 You know, we need to be able to dispose of the munitions
22 that are there that are being stored at Hawthorne.

23 There is a lot of important work that is done there.
24 And in some cases, in the past, we have been able to find
25 alternative technologies that we can use --

1 Senator Rosen: There isn't alternative technologies
2 for most of it yet.

3 Secretary Wormuth: So, yes -- so that is one of the
4 concerns that we have. So, what I would like to do is, you
5 know, do some consultations with the Army Materiel Command
6 and look in more detail at what this might mean for
7 Hawthorne, and then proceed from there. But it certainly
8 we need to have that munitions disposal capability.

9 Secretary Wormuth: I think we need to be working with
10 the EPA because once they finalize this rule, it is going
11 to be much more difficult. So, I am going to have my
12 office contact you to see how we engage in this process
13 while they are doing this, before they make a
14 determination. And we have to find some other way around
15 it. That is going to have an impact on this important
16 mission.

17 Secretary Wormuth: Certainly.

18 Senator Rosen: Thank you. I see that my time is up,
19 and I see Senator Sullivan is here. So, thank you.

20 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Rosen. Senator
21 Sullivan, if you could stay within the five minute mark
22 because we want to go and start a closed session.

23 Senator Sullivan: Mr. Chairman, I always stay within
24 the five minutes.

25 [Laughter.]

1 Chairman Reed: Your imagination is profound.

2 [Laughter.]

3 Senator Sullivan: Okay. Just, that is a little
4 inside joke here with me and the chair. Well, Madam
5 Secretary, thank you, General. Good to see you guys again.
6 I would like to get an update on the Army's formalizing the
7 11th Airborne MTOE. I know that you have been both really
8 big supporters. I think it is great we got another
9 airborne division, right.

10 Probably the best in the Army right now. No offense
11 to the 82nd Airborne Division, Mr. Chairman. But the 11th
12 Airborne Division in Alaska is gaining quickly on the 82nd.
13 It is always good to have inner service or inner Army
14 competition, but I am hoping that the MTOE will
15 -- alleviates the self-funding burden that the division has
16 shouldered since it stood up a few years ago.

17 As you know, some of the ops, some of the training,
18 some of the elements of operating in the cold weather in
19 Alaska cost more. And I think we want to make sure that
20 that unit is getting resource in a very realistic way, so
21 they are not having to kind of undertake this self-funding
22 burden on them.

23 So, can you give me either of you an update on that?

24 Secretary Wormuth: Sure. Why don't I start and then
25 turn it over to the chief, who I know has been very focused

1 on this. One thing we are doing -- first of all, I would
2 note to your comments about the Airborne, as you probably
3 know, elements of the 11th Airborne did an airborne drop
4 over Norway, I think just in February or March, that was
5 very successful.

6 Senator Sullivan: And there were some very serious
7 cold weather training. It was done all winter.

8 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. In February. Exactly.

9 Senator Sullivan: Yes, 40 below. I mean, people were
10 getting on. It is not easy to operate in 40 below zero.

11 Secretary Wormuth: Yes. I can only imagine,
12 literally as someone who grew up in Texas. But we are
13 doing two war games this year, specifically to help us
14 better understand kind of what are the needs of the
15 soldiers in terms of their cold weather gear, cold weather
16 equipment. So that is one initiative we have underway to
17 help us look at the MTOE but let me let the chief build on
18 that.

19 General George: So having been up in Alaska in
20 February, March, I mean, surviving is tough. And so, we
21 are really proud of the 11th Airborne. The big exercise
22 that the Secretary was talking about, I mean, not only
23 surviving but thriving.

24 And so, they are -- we have increased their training.
25 You know, we had the joint multi-purpose training up there.

1 You can do almost anything in Alaska, and that is a real
2 advantage to us. And so, India, for example, was also out
3 as our partners and trained up in Alaska. We are doing an
4 MTOE review right now.

5 As you know, Senator, what works in Texas for systems
6 doesn't necessarily work or won't work when it is 40 or 50
7 below up in Alaska. So, and the Vice is kind of under and
8 I think you have met with him recently.

9 Senator Sullivan: Yes.

10 General George: It is going to go through exactly.
11 What we want to do is make sure that they have the right
12 equipment for operating in the Arctic. And then how do we
13 kind of put -- set some aside, because the other great
14 thing about that unit, they are very physically hard. They
15 can operate anywhere in the world. And we have that
16 capability to do that.

17 Senator Sullivan: Well, General, I appreciate you
18 directly addressing this because as you know, when you are
19 looking at the difference in operational capability, no
20 matter what it is, it is harder and more expensive to
21 operate in that kind of environment.

22 And sometimes in the past, I was worried that that
23 just got fairy dust, and oh, well, you are going to get the
24 same amount of money as the units down in the lower 48.
25 Don't worry about it, being tough in the Arctic. But it is

1 tougher.

2 You guys are seeing it. So, I think they need to be
3 resourced in that way that addresses that. Would you
4 agree?

5 General George: I would agree. And what we are
6 trying to do as well, like for resourcing, and make sure
7 that they are also not taking care of equipment that isn't
8 going to work. So, we are going to pull some of that out.

9 So, I think it is a combination of things to make sure
10 we have given them the cold weather equipment. I think
11 what we are trying -- what we got to do now is make sure we
12 have -- it is sustainable, that we can give it to them. We
13 are buying additional CATVs. As you know, that is what you
14 need to be operational, that is up there. We are reviewing
15 all of that, Senator.

16 Senator Sullivan: Let me turn to the topic the three
17 of us discussed in my office a couple months ago on the
18 Army force structure changes. Some big articles in Alaska.
19 Some people actually had some concerns about kind of the
20 overall kind of top line numbers.

21 You know, we went through that whole 425 issue where
22 the Obama Administration was going to get rid of the 425,
23 and that was actually us here in the Congress who stopped
24 that. But in our meeting, you two both mentioned to me
25 that the force structure changes that the Army's doing

1 overall are going to mean an increase of 1,469 more
2 soldiers in Alaska by 2030.

3 Can I just, in this committee, kind of in the hearing
4 room, can I just get your recommitment to that number?

5 Secretary Wormuth: Senator, I will say, I don't have
6 the number off the top of my head, but we do have those
7 numbers, and I am certainly willing to -- you know, I am
8 confident that what we explained to you before was
9 accurate. So, we commit to that.

10 Senator Sullivan: Okay.

11 General George: And I just was going to add, Senator,
12 I think part of it was too -- was that we have the force
13 structure up in Alaska. We need to recruit now which we
14 are in, and we are doing better, to fill out those
15 formations, which is what we really are trying to get after
16 immediately.

17 Senator Sullivan: Great. I had several more
18 questions, but being true to my word to the chairman, I am
19 going to yield my time.

20 Chairman Reed: Senator, we welcome you to join us in
21 a closed session.

22 Senator Sullivan: Oh, good. Okay.

23 Chairman Reed: And you may ask those question there.

24 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

25 Chairman Reed: Thank you, Senator Sullivan. And

1 thank you, Madam Secretary and General George. We will
2 close the open session and reconvene in SVC-217 at
3 approximately 11:30 a.m.. Thank you very much. With that,
4 I will deem the open session closed.

5 [Whereupon, at 11:13 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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