

Testimony of

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Commission on the National Guard and Reserves

December 14, 2006

Chairman Punaro, members of the Commission, Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves.

I bring a somewhat unique view to this having served as an Adjutant General three times, the Director of the Army National Guard, the Vice Chief, NGB, and the Chief of Staff, NORAD/NORTHCOM.

My essential message to you is this: The people of America deserve the highest level of security which our government is able to deliver. In order to insure that our integrated State and Federal, civilian and military capabilities can deliver that security, reform of the National Guard is absolutely essential. That reform – regardless of exactly how it happens – must address two critical elements: Relationships and Resourcing.

I offer to you two analogies -- two new perspectives on the way to view the role of the National Guard, the National Guard Bureau, and the relations considered by The National Defense Enhancement and National Guard Empowerment Act of 2007 – also known as HR 5200. One model for reform is the Coast Guard. The other is the Special Operations Command.

As you know the role, of the National Guard as a reserve of the Army and Air Force, the total force, is well established, mature and evolving to

meet war fighting needs. However, in the domestic arena, the National Guard has a role established by the constitution, statute, and custom that makes it first and foremost an armed force for response by Governors to domestic emergencies.

For decades, the readiness of National Guard units to perform that domestic role has been a by-product – a second order effect – of resources invested in its role as a reserve force. The post 9-11 world, however, has added a new level of expectations for its operational use here in the homeland.

My analogy then is to recommend to you that as you examine HR 5200 you compare your expectations of the National Guard to the Coast Guard. From the DoD perspective the USCG is a reserve of the Navy but it is given treatment as a separate service. From the DHS perspective it is treated as an operational entity and resourced for domestic roles of great impact. The Navy and the USCG have a very good relationship as two services. The Coast Guard is officially part of the Department of Homeland Security, yet to perform its dual role, also has relationships and resourcing through DoD.

The National Guard from the DoD's perspective is a reserve of the Army and Air Force. It is acknowledged as a state service but dealt with

only as a reserve in planning and operations. Its formal, official relationships and resourcing limited strictly to this role.

DHS through many of its elements deals with the National Guard as separate operational entities as it does with many state agencies, individually and episodically.

I believe that HR 5200 establishes tools to align DoD policy with the reality of the constitution, statutes and custom. From the state perspective the National Guard is clearly a separate service (and a joint one) for operational use in domestic emergencies, much as the USCG operates in the domestic arena.

In addition to the Coast Guard, another reasonable model for National Guard reform can be found in the Special Operations Command. SOCOM has unique requirements – needs for training and equipment not normally found in the Services. To resource those unique needs, SOCOM gets separate funding and authority through Major Force Program 11 through which it can procure items peculiar to special operations. HR.5200 includes a similar mechanism for those unique needs of the National Guard in providing military assistance to civil authorities. These unique domestic requirements are a relatively small aspect of the overall National Guard mission, but they are of increasing importance in the post-9/11 world.

Unfortunately, however, they are ignored in the current resourcing and relationships of the National Guard which are still of Cold War vintage.

Each of the reforms in HR 5200 address weaknesses in the domestic use of the National Guard that would be strengthened or eliminated. It would move the National Guard towards a domestic standard that could be dealt with programmatically and not dependent on wealth or revenues of an individual state and/or the grantsmanship of state agencies.

I was the Vice Chief of NGB during the airport security mission directed by the President immediately after 9/11. I saw the shortcomings and limitations of the current Cold War Era relationships and resourcing of the Guard. I also saw the effectiveness of establishing standards and training, a pay system, and a means of interagency coordination through NGB and headquarters in the states and territories.

Could we do it again without these reforms? Yes. But haven't we learned from 9-11 that prevention, planning, preparedness require us to be proactive and not reactive?

My observation of the effective relationship at NORAD where the commander is US and the deputy is Canadian leads me to support the requirement to make the deputy commander at USNORTHCOM a National Guard officer. As long as USNORTHCOM has a significant component of

its mission to support state authorities in domestic emergencies and to provide homeland defense, I believe an officer who has intimate knowledge and experience with the 450,000 members of the National Guard and their state commanders-in-chief would be an invaluable assistant to the Commander, USNORTHCOM.

This Commission is now faced with the requirement to make an assessment of H.R. 5200. In my view, that piece of legislation is what is needed to reform National Guard relationships and resourcing so that it can fully provide the American with the quality of security they deserve here in the homeland. I urge the Commission to endorse the proposals of H.R. 5200 or, as an alternative, to put forward other viable reforms which will effectively address the relationship and resourcing needs of the National Guard as it exists in the real world of today.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.