

**RECORD VERSION**

**STATEMENT BY**

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROBERT D. HARTER  
CHIEF OF ARMY RESERVE  
UNITED STATES ARMY**

**AND**

**COMMANDING GENERAL  
UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE COMMAND**

**BEFORE THE**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**SECOND SESSION, 119TH CONGRESS**

**ON THE POSTURE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE**

**21 APRIL 2026**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION  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

**Since the first shots were fired at Lexington Common**, the Army Reserve has served a single purpose – to deliver combat-ready soldiers and formations in support of the Army and the Nation. While our mission remains unchanged, the way the Army Reserve delivers its capabilities continues to evolve. No longer a "force in reserve," the Army Reserve of today is operational, integral to the Total Army, with capabilities required at the onset of conflict. This reality—that when the Army goes to war, we go to war—demands our Warrior Citizens be combat-ready at time of need.

### **Our Value to the Nation**

With a presence across communities and around the world, the Army Reserve provides an unmatched return on investment, offering critical capabilities and strategic depth to the Army and the Joint Force. With the strength of 172,000 soldiers and 10,000 civilians in over 2,000 units worldwide – including five territories, over 20 countries, and five key installations – we leverage talent from the civilian sector to provide decisive support.

At just under 20% of the Total Army's personnel, the Army Reserve provides half of the Army's maneuver support forces and a quarter of its force mobilization capacity — all for just 6% of the Total Army budget, with the lowest percentage of Full-Time Support (FTS). Many of the Army Reserve's Major Subordinate Commands (MSC) maintain crucial supporting relationships with active-duty Corps and Army Service Component Commands, providing vital capabilities to enhance mission readiness and operational depth.

Structured with dual-purpose capabilities, the Army Reserve is a Federal Response partner, maintaining a ready posture for Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations, including quartermaster (food, shelter, potable water, heated tents, etc.) and a significant portion of full-spectrum engineering capability.

Today's Army Reserve plays a vital role in National Defense, with the Total Army relying on its unique enabling capabilities to support the Joint Force. For example, the Army Reserve provides 10 of the Army's 15 deployable Medical Brigades, almost 70% of the Army's medical unit capability, and more than half of the Army's Forward Surgical Detachments and Field Hospitals. Additionally, with eight of the Army's 14 Expeditionary Sustainment Commands and 95% of the Total Army's bulk fuel line-haul capacity, the Army Reserve is essential to set the theater for the Joint Force, enabling combat formations to seize and maintain initiative and extend operational reach in Large-Scale Combat Operations (LSCO). These capabilities directly support Active Army and Army National Guard combat formations, providing food, fuel, ammunition, and repair parts. These are not ancillary functions; they are decisive.

### **Army Reserve Continuous Transformation**

For more than two decades, the Army Reserve successfully met the demands of continuous, predictable deployments. However, that focus – optimized for the Global

War on Terror – combined with a wide geographic dispersion, impeded transformation efforts vital to defend the U.S. Homeland and deter China in the Indo-Pacific.

We are at a critical inflection point. Adaptation is no longer a competitive edge—it's essential to survival. Preparing for the future threat environment requires an Army Reserve that is enhancing training and readiness, and transforming how it builds, equips, and organizes formations to dominate in the future fight.

We are not waiting. We are transforming now to ensure the Army Reserve remains a ready, relevant, and indispensable component of the Total Army and the Joint Force. To position our forces for long-term lethality and sustainability, we are leveraging our inherent adaptability and the Army's Continuous Transformation Initiative to fundamentally transform how we man, equip, train, and mobilize.

### **Decisive Operation: Geographic Mission Command**

In order to adapt to a complex global environment and prepare our formations, the Army Reserve is undergoing a comprehensive transformation of our command and control model. The current geographically-dispersed command structure, while effective for past conflicts, is no longer sustainable.

The Army Reserve's 300th Military Police Brigade represents a prime example of that outmoded formula – 3,200 soldiers across 37 states, participating in battle assemblies at 31 Reserve Centers in 11 states, with more than 70,000 pieces of equipment across 22 separate locations. That wide unit geographic dispersion presents multiple unnecessary dilemmas and hinders our ability to recruit and build cohesive, combat-ready formations.

Geographic Mission Command—supported by smart stationing and an integrated staff—gets leaders closer to the problem set. Reorienting the Army Reserve footprint puts units where people are, and with continued support from U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC), the Army Reserve of the future will be different—stationed nearer to population centers, integrated across components, and focused on our role as the Army's Federal Reserve Force. This evolution is driven by Army leadership's recognition that the force must change to remain lethal, relevant, and an indispensable component of the Joint Force.

We have already begun – streamlining United States Army Reserve Command's (USARC) direct-reporting commands from 29 to 15 – empowering commanders at the regional level to "own" the total readiness of units within their footprint. This initiative includes regional alignment of units and consolidation of resources to optimize manpower and enhance operational efficiency. It allows Readiness Division (RD) commanders to drive readiness and combat lethality through meaningful partnerships across components, with government officials and through community engagement.

As part of this effort, the Army Reserve is also optimizing its headquarters staff structure to build readiness, unity of command, and effective Title 10 oversight. This initiative maximizes full time support to subordinate commands and aims to ensure a seamless transition from policy to execution – synchronizing strategic and operational planning to support global contingencies.

### **You Go – We Go: Building and Deploying Combat Ready Formations**

More than 200 units and approximately 9,000 soldiers are currently supporting global operations. Army Reserve personnel provide support to Army and Joint Force requirements at home and overseas. This includes the preponderance of sustainment capability to U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) with more than 4,000 soldiers providing sustainment command and control across the entire U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility.

### **Manning the Force**

While manning remains our top readiness challenge, we are making significant gains. A renewed emphasis from U.S. Army Recruiting Command has yielded a 20% increase in recruiting contracts in just two quarters. To build on this momentum, we are taking decisive action. By implementing Geographic Mission Command and strategically aligning our reserve centers with population hubs, we ensure commanders and units are in close proximity to the communities they recruit from. This approach effectively bridges the gap to our next generation of soldiers.

### **AC2RC**

Our transformation to Geographic Mission Command also plays a role in retaining the force and supporting continuum of service. As primary stakeholders, RD commanders are engaging with AC installations within their geographic footprint, maximizing our ability to retain valuable talent through Active Component to Reserve Component (AC2RC) accessions, and better supporting soldiers and families as they transition across components. Additionally, through our Reserve Component Career Counselors, we continue to engage with Active Duty servicemembers to build awareness of opportunities within the Army Reserve.

### **Train as We Fight**

Integrated, multi-component exercises are honing our lethality. Operation Sentinel Justice (OSJ) is a large-scale, realistic training exercise for 11,000 Army Reserve and National Guard troops, designed to sharpen interoperability and readiness for deployment within a cohesive Total Force. This exercise simulates LSCO against a near-peer threat in a multi-domain environment, linking Gulfport and Camp Shelby, Mississippi with the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana. Building on lessons learned from Fiscal Year 2025's Operation Mojave Falcon, OSJ will integrate the Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) and Global Medic, stressing expeditionary

command and control, digital integration, and realistic sustainment networks. A multitude of new technological advancements will be tested for combat viability throughout the exercise – including an automated, robotic crossing of a contested river, a counter-UAS range for detecting and defeating drones, and an escort fleet of attack and counter-attack drones scenario.

In addition to these efforts, the Army Reserve is placing significant emphasis on the Western Hemisphere, with approximately 2,000 Warrior Citizens scheduled to participate in 11 upcoming exercises. This initiative underscores the Army Reserve's sustained dedication to reinforcing regional security and building vital partnerships at home and around the world

In addition to our priorities in the Western Hemisphere, the Army Reserve is providing the mission-critical forces and capabilities needed to win on the battlefield. This commitment is demonstrated through extensive participation in the Joint Exercise Program, where more than 3,000 Army Reserve soldiers are currently engaged in over 80 exercises. This high operational tempo is set to increase, with plans to support U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and U.S. Army Europe-Africa (USAREUR-AF) with an additional 5,000 soldiers in across 140 exercises in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. European Command.

I recently observed the tangible impact of realistic training scenarios on the Korean peninsula during exercise FREEDOM SHIELD, where more than 500 Army Reserve soldiers trained alongside U.S. and Korean forces, bridging rivers under combat conditions, conducting psychological operations, and executing a U.S. civilian evacuation. This type of demanding, large-scale simulation is crucial for enhancing the readiness of Army Reserve forces to deploy and fight effectively when called upon.

The Army Reserve is also building essential military readiness through the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program, delivering critical support to American communities while simultaneously providing servicemembers with opportunities to refine essential skillsets. In a series of recent medical missions, our soldiers provided care in over 1,500 patient encounters, serving underserved populations from the Choctaw Reservation in Alabama to the Nimiipuu Wellness event in Idaho.

Upcoming missions include Tropic Care on Hawaii's Big Island and "Wellness across the Marianas," a joint exercise to provide medical services in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. This latter mission not only delivers vital community support but also provides critical readiness training for 145 soldiers from the 9th Mission Support Command, underscoring our commitment to increasing engagement throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

## **Equipment and Modernization (NGREA)**

On average, the Army Reserve receives less than 1% of the Total Army Equipping Budget, leaving many units with critical equipment shortfalls and legacy platforms that limit realistic training and integration with active formations. To remedy this, we are working with the Army's modernization enterprise to accelerate the divestment of outdated equipment and prioritize the fielding of modern, interoperable, and protective systems.

In today's fiscal environment, the Army will not modernize all formations at the same rate. A top priority, underscored by the deadly drone attacks in Jordan and Kuwait, is modernizing our Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and fielding Counter-UAS (C-UAS) capabilities across all our formations to outpace our enemies. We are taking concrete steps to mitigate risk. Through National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) appropriations, we are procuring essential C-UAS equipment for FY26 collective training during OSJ. This modernization will leverage the unique technical skills and civilian-acquired expertise within the Army Reserve, enhancing readiness and integration into the Joint Force. Failure to modernize creates critical operational gaps, increases our vulnerability, and underutilizes the Army Reserve's strategic value.

The Army Reserve maximizes every dollar to modernize its force. With a \$115M share of the \$800M Department of War NGREA fiscal year 2026 enacted, we are upgrading critical battlefield support systems, including Load Handling System Compatible Water Tank Racks (HIPPOs), Tactical Water Purification Systems, Bulk Fuel Delivery Systems and Medium Tactical Wheeled Vehicles. Critically, we are leveraging innovation by exploring autonomous systems, modernizing our UAS capability across all Army Reserve formations to ensure our Warrior Citizens can deliver vital supplies like fuel and water to the Joint Force while defending against emerging threats like hostile drone swarms.

### **Innovating for the Future**

We are transforming our force structure to match the pace of modern warfare. This includes merging the 108th and 80th Training Commands to create a single point of excellence for training, and spearheading tactical advances, with the 75th Innovation Command aggressively pursuing a comprehensive UAS strategy and integrating kinetic drone capabilities and forensic analysis teams into our exercises. The 75th is also developing a replacement for the "Big Beagle" talent-tracking database, rolling out a new Soldier Innovation Platform to integrate field-sourced military technology at the institutional level, and testing over 20 cutting-edge technologies at exercises such as Northern Strike and Sentinel Justice. These future possibilities ensure the Army Reserve remains a "value-added" partner in Multi-Domain Operations.

The Army Reserve is focused on equipment that deploys on a Contingency Response Force/GFMAP rotation or is going to a major training exercise. We anticipate Army

Reserve capabilities will continue to be needed early and often, particularly in defending the Homeland by taking a more powerful, leading role in the Western Hemisphere and in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command as the priority theaters. To further enhance our responsiveness, we are exploring opportunities to forward-position additional equipment in these key regions.

The Forward-Positioning of Equipment (FPE) initiative strategically places high-demand equipment sets – enhancing combat readiness by staging equipment where it's needed, reducing reliance on strategic sealift in a contested environment, increasing training readiness through participation in joint exercises. This program provides a triple benefit of facilitating better, more realistic training for soldiers who work and train with allies overseas, enabling equipment to be better maintained and ready for immediate use, and making our Army a more reliable allied partner by demonstrating a tangible commitment to regional security.

Initiatives such as Operation Keystone are changing our approach to equipment readiness by aligning support maintenance companies with under-resourced equipment maintenance sites. In coordination with Theater Sustainment Commands, Army Reserve Readiness Divisions (RD) are improving their approach to equipment readiness by aligning selected support maintenance companies with under-resourced Equipment Maintenance Sites across MSC footprints. This strategy ensures equipment is mission-capable while simultaneously developing the technical proficiency of soldiers.

The Army Reserve is leveraging its existing manpower and capabilities through the Multi-Component Sustainment Brigade (MCSB) pilot, a partnership initiative with our Active and National Guard counterparts that strengthens Total Army lethality on essential combat and combat support equipment. This pilot assigns the Army Reserve's 300th Sustainment Brigade in Grand Prairie, Texas to the Active Component's 13th Armored Corps Sustainment Command in Fort Hood, Texas. This "train as you fight" initiative enhances readiness by integrating staffs, giving Army Reserve units access to more training, and ensuring commanders are invested in the readiness of their aligned reserve formations.

### **Adapting Our Footprint**

The Army Reserve is divesting unneeded facilities in areas that cannot be manned, shifting from "a reserve center in every community," and investing in regional readiness-producing training hubs, ensuring the Army Reserve of the future is positioned to train and recruit. The current stationing model is unaffordable and unsustainable: a \$10.7 billion backlog in military construction and deferred maintenance across facilities with an average age of 45 years. It cannot take over five years to divest a single facility we can no longer man or maintain.

The new Army Reserve Center at Camp Williams, Utah, is a prime example of our innovative and fiscally responsible approach to military construction. Through a strategic partnership with the State of Utah, we delivered a new \$127M Army Reserve Center while saving over \$100M in Military Construction funds. This project provides modern facilities for 1,800 soldiers, optimizes the use of nearby National Guard ranges and barracks, and enabled the divestiture of 50 acres of historic property.

### **Investing in Our Strength: Soldiers and Families**

Our readiness depends on the families and employers who support our soldiers and enable them to serve the Army and the Nation. We continue to invest in programs that enhance readiness by supporting our soldiers, civilians, and families across a geographically-dispersed footprint – including the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, the Army Reserve’s Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) initiative, and the Army Reserve Private Public Partnership (P3) program.

The Army Reserve Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) initiative aims to improve soldier readiness and wellness by addressing physical, mental, and behavioral health across all five H2F domains. Embedded H2F Performance Teams at RDs will provide expert training and support to subordinate units, leveraging both Active-Duty Operational Support personnel and strength and conditioning coaches. The initiative maximizes cost savings by aligning Troop Program Unit soldiers with H2F-relevant Military Occupational Specialties and focuses on educating leaders to build a sustainable, command-wide system. Key metrics include injury prevention, deployability, and quality of life improvements, with the goal of strengthening soldier readiness and holistic wellness.

The Army Reserve’s Private Public Partnership (P3) program strengthens readiness by serving soldiers and families as career advisors, connecting them to civilian employment through national industry, nonprofit, and public-sector partners. During 2025, P3 supported more than 3,000 participants while facilitating over 900 successful hirings. Dependents, and Veterans, delivered 1,200 résumé and interview coaching sessions, and enabled 400 professional certifications and credentialing pathways. These services reduce

### **Conclusion: Ready for Tomorrow's Fight**

The Army Reserve acknowledges the risk associated with our current posture in a contested LSCO environment. That is why we are not waiting; we are acting with urgency. Through Continuous Transformation, we are building a more responsive and combat-ready force for the 21st century. The goal of this transformation is to posture the Army Reserve in the right communities to recruit and train, with a streamlined chain of command, closely integrated with our Active and Guard teammates.

We deeply appreciate Congressional support, especially through NGREA, which provides a critical resource for accelerating modernization and addressing near term equipping gaps. Our top priority is ensuring the Army Reserve is resourced to provide combat ready soldiers and formations in support of the Army and the Joint Force. Current operations highlight the vital role of the Army Reserve, and the importance of our formations of trained and specialized Warrior Citizens being combat ready – manned, trained, and equipped to meet the demands of LSCO.

**Twice the Citizen, Combat-Ready – This We'll Defend**

###