

**Chairman Richard Shelby Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense**

Hearing to Review the FY2020 Budget Request for the U.S. Army

March 27, 2019

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the Subcommittee will come to order.

I am pleased to welcome Secretary Esper and General Milley to the Committee for an update on Army operations and a review of the fiscal year 2020 budget request.

The Army is seeking \$182.3 billion in its current request, which is an increase of about \$2.4 billion over amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2019. While we are here to focus on this budget request, we are also interested in hearing how the Army is executing 2019 funds.

Readiness remains the cornerstone of the Army's resourcing decisions. Although building and maintaining readiness is the number one priority, it must be balanced against the need to meet manning goals and to modernize and enhance our competitive advantage.

The fiscal year 2020 request slows down the pace of the Army's plan to get to 500,000 active duty soldiers. The new plan is to add 2,000 troops in fiscal year 2020 and subsequent years, with proportionate growth in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

This Committee understands that the budget request before us is informed by the 2018 National Defense Strategy, and that the recent creation of the Army Futures Command has further changed many planning assumptions.

Moreover, the American people expect that their military will be adequately resourced and that the funding that they provide for that purpose will be diligently examined to ensure that it is well spent.

To that end, as this committee considers the President's fiscal year 2020 budget request, we will be looking closely at both the reductions and eliminations that the Army recently undertook and the tradeoffs that were made since the Army defended its previous budget before congress.

Gentlemen, we appreciate your service and look forward to working with you during the appropriations process to meet the needs of the Army in today's complex strategic environment.

Now I turn to the Vice Chairman, Senator Durbin, for his opening remarks. Thank you.

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