

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

Hearing to Review the FY2020 Budget Request for the National Guard and Reserve

April 10, 2019

(As prepared for delivery)

Good morning, the Subcommittee will come to order.

I am pleased to welcome our distinguished panel to consider the President's budget requests for the National Guard and Reserve Components in fiscal year 2020.

Today the committee will hear from General Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Charles Luckey, Chief of the Army Reserve; Lieutenant General Richard Scobee, Chief of the Air Force Reserve; Vice Admiral Luke McCollum, Chief of the Navy Reserve; and Major General Bradley James, Commander of Marine Corps Forces Reserve.

Thank you for appearing today, and thank you for your service.

It is imperative that our nation's guard and reserve components be sufficiently manned, trained and equipped to continue to maintain and defend our national security interests.

Our Nation's guard and reserve components are a vital part of our nation's total military force. They provide support during homeland emergencies, participate in important joint training exercises, execute missions with our partners, and are currently deployed around the globe in support of combat operations.

The men and women that make up our reserve components also serve our nation by remaining ready to put their lives on hold. Whether they are called to mobilize, voluntarily deploy, or transition to full time support – they represent the very best of us.

As we wrestle with responses to recent natural disasters and deployments to our southwest border, it is also important to highlight the unique flexibility offered by the National Guard. Their ability to operate through Dual Status Commanders provides an invaluable link between State and Federal authorities.

As we evaluate the request for resources for fiscal year 2020, we look forward to updates on disaster response and border efforts. But we would also like to focus on how this budget reflects the new national defense strategy, and in particular, how it proposes to modernize our forces to compete and win against peer competitors.

We look forward to your testimony and discussion.

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

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