

STATEMENT BY

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UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE

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Chairwoman Davis, Representative McHugh and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the Army's recruiting force. I also want to thank you for supporting our initiatives to improve incentives and bonus programs to attract the very best Soldiers. I take tremendous pride in saying that today's All-Volunteer Force is actually an "all-recruited" force and they are proudly representing our Nation throughout the Army.

In Fiscal Year 2005, the Army did not achieve its Regular Army recruiting mission in accessing 73,000 of its required 80,000 mission. Additionally, the Army only achieved 19,400 of the required 22,175 Reserve mission. The Army Recruiting Command was then reinforced with additional manpower, resources and incentives, and as a result, enlisted 13,000 more Soldiers for the Regular Army and Army Reserve in FY 06 than in FY 05 to achieve the Regular Army mission and 99% of the Army Reserve Mission. It was obvious we made the right adjustments at that time, and we knew what we needed to do. However, adequate resources are not always enough to ensure success. We must now overcome the increasingly unpredictable recruiting environment that resulted in a very difficult May and June FY07 for the Regular Army and continues to place our annual mission accomplishment at risk.

Risk to the FY07 Regular Army 80K Accession Mission

There is a historical seasonal pattern within Army recruiting where the mission is more challenging in the late winter and spring and somewhat easier in the summer and fall. Through late May, we projected to close out the FY at or above 80K based upon our forecast models. In early June, we realized that the normal summer surge was not materializing to the extent we anticipated and there was potential to miss the 80K mission.

We took the following actions:

- Increased incentives and heavily promoted the 2-year enlistment option.
- Established a “superleads program” to help us refine nearly one million leads to identify those with the highest potential to enlist, saving our recruiters valuable time and allowing them to focus on prospecting.
- Issued an Operational Mission to our recruiting force for each recruiter to write six contracts between the end of June and September, with four to access in this FY.
- Increased the Regular Army Quick Ship Bonus to \$20,000 for all Military Occupational Specialties that ship within 30 days during the remainder of FY07.
- Requested additional Soldiers graduating from Advanced Individual Training to serve as Hometown Recruiter Assistants and returning Combat Veterans to serve as Special Recruiter Assistants to tell their Army stories and influence prospects.
- Re-emphasized the \$2,000 Referral Bonus Program throughout the Army.
- Requested the temporary return of up to 1,000 former successful Recruiters to augment our recruiting force.
- Requested General Officer assistance to help the Recruiting effort in communities across America. These distinguished officers have volunteered to speak in their hometowns, schools, colleges and at events wherever influencers and prospects are in attendance.

We believe these new efforts and the commitment of our Recruiting force are the necessary tools to help us achieve our recruiting mission this year. We need your support to help the Army mobilize the Nation behind this effort.

Recruiting Environment

For the first time since the implementation of the All-Volunteer Force, we are recruiting during a period of protracted combat. Today's recruiting environment is incredibly challenging. Less than 3 out of 10 of our Nation's youth are fully qualified for service in the Army due to disqualifying medical conditions, criminal records, or low aptitude test scores. The Army competes head on with industry, a robust economy, and with higher education for the same high-quality youth. Today, parents and influencers are less likely to encourage their family members and other young adults to join the military. Propensity, the desire to enlist in the Armed Forces, is at its lowest point in two decades.

Despite the challenges in the current environment, I am proud to say nearly 70 thousand Americans have stepped forward to enlist in the Regular Army and Army Reserve this year. Our Soldiers are proudly serving with distinction as indicated in numerous emails, letters, and personal phone calls with commanders throughout the Army. They are also re-enlisting in record numbers, particularly those in combat. No amount of money would be enough to convince them to continue to serve, if they did not believe in what they were doing. We have the best trained, best equipped, and best led Army in the world. Our volunteer Soldiers are re-enlisting because they believe in their Nation, they believe in their flag, and they believe in each other. Each of these Soldiers became heroes for this Nation the day they decided to enlist in our Army.

Recent Congressional incentives for recruiting such as the \$2,000 referral bonus program and increased enlistment bonus caps have provided the Army the necessary tools to attract the men and women who want to serve our great Nation during these challenging times. There are many

good news stories that never make it to the evening news, so we rely heavily on important public influencers, such as the assembled committee membership, to help us tell the Army Story. I am confident that, with your continued support, we will meet the needs of our all-volunteer Army.

Funding

Through Congress and the Department of Defense, the Army and its senior leadership have provided Recruiting Command the support we have asked for to accomplish our mission. FY07 funding levels allow the Command to satisfy all recruiter support requirements. When additional resource requirements are identified and made known to the Senior Army leadership, they take immediate action to meet those requirements. The challenge is often one of timing. As the environment changes, we must be able to adapt quickly. Train-up of new recruiters and the development of new advertising, for example, require long lead times. We must continue to improve our market intelligence and assessment of the environment and the actions necessary to mitigate risks to the mission in a timely fashion.

Quality

All Soldiers serving in our Army are qualified to serve. We strive to achieve the goals of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army, which are 90 percent High School Diploma Graduates (HSDG), 60 percent test score category I-III A, and no more than 4 percent test score category IV. The Army does not accept applicants scoring in the lowest category on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, test score category V. In FY06, the Regular Army fell short in the area of HSDG, achieving 81 percent. Currently, we anticipate achieving approximately 80 percent HSDG, 60 percent test score category I-III A and

4 percent category IV this FY. The Army Reserve is currently meeting the quality goals.

Field commanders are very pleased with the men and women now serving in their formations, some of whom are not high school diploma graduates or may have received a waiver to serve in our Army. While the Department of Defense goal for High School Diploma Graduates is 90 percent, the national average for high school graduation is approximately 70 percent. In some urban areas, the graduation rate is less than 50 percent. The Secretary of Education has called the declining graduation rates in this country a "Silent Epidemic." The high school graduation rates are of significant concern to the Army. Additionally, millions of those who graduate from high school cannot score well enough to serve in our Army, despite their strong desire to do so. The Army has established education programs such as March2Success and our GED Education Plus Program in order to provide an academic second chance for the youth of America and to give them an opportunity to serve in our Army.

Regardless of their education credential or test scores, every applicant we enlist is qualified to serve. I have witnessed their outstanding performance first-hand during my own deployment to Iraq, and commanders in the field are extremely proud of their Soldiers.

Waivers

We have a very solid process for reviewing and approving all waivers. Of the Army's Fiscal Year 2006 accessions in the Regular Army and Army Reserve, 85 percent entered the Army without a waiver. The number of waivers this year has increased. So far this year approximately 9 percent of all applicants needed a medical waiver, 12 percent a moral waiver, and

less than 2 percent needed a waiver for a positive drug and alcohol screening test.

We believe this increase is partly a result of changes in society, changes in policy and our improved processing procedures. In the past few years, we streamlined the waiver process from weeks to days, providing recruiters with less reason to turn away applicants who need waivers and resulting in more applicants staying with the Army enlistment process.

Relative to societal changes, according to FBI Uniform Crime Reports, since 2000 there has been a 14 percent increase in crime, which affects our market. The top four crimes as reported by the FBI are Drugs (Narcotics), Burglary, DUI, and Stolen Property. These four offenses coincide with the top four felony offenses waived by USAREC and result in an impact to our target market.

In FY06, 86 percent of our moral character waivers (RA/AR) were for misdemeanors (7,202 of 8,330). In certain circumstances, we have granted waivers for serious criminal misconduct to include certain felony offenses. These waivers undergo intense scrutiny and require General Officer review and approval. Some examples are:

- Terrorist Threats – an 18 year-old who made a false bomb threat to get out of class, who is now 20 years old with an expunged record
- Throwing Missiles onto Highway (felony) – a 12 year-old threw rocks at passing cars, received community service as punishment and is now 22 years old

We conduct a very thorough examination of the facts, circumstances and the legal disposition of the charges prior to allowing individuals to enlist in

our Army with a moral waiver. These men and women enter our Army, grow and mature as a result of Army training, teamwork, exposure to Army Values and to the Warrior Ethos. I am confident that our process is sound and in the best interest of the applicant, the Army and our Nation.

Recruiter Misconduct and Impropriety

Recruiters are the Army's ambassadors across the Nation and hold a position of trust with the young people and influencers in our communities. There is a small percentage of the force that violates that trust. In FY06, 16 percent of our approximately 8,000 recruiters were investigated for recruiting impropriety allegations, and approximately 200 recruiters (less than three percent) had substantiated allegations. We investigate every allegation of recruiting misconduct and impropriety and take appropriate action.

We have a multi-pronged approach for preventing recruiter misconduct: starting with the recruiter selection process, a prescriptive training program, routine standard inspections and enforcement down to recruiter level, and reinforcement of discipline through command information and command presence on a weekly basis. We have instituted a "buddy system," where a recruiter must be accompanied by another recruiter when in the company of an applicant of the opposite gender. In some locations where there have been allegations of recruiters misleading applicants, as a test, we have installed cameras in selected recruiting stations to record all conversations. Our leadership is required to conduct proactive and regular discussions of Army Values and what they mean in a recruiting environment. We also schedule an annual Army Values/Safety Stand-down Day with all command personnel, which is reinforcement of what it means to be an American Soldier.

Each year, our recruiters have millions of contacts with the American public. Our ability to recruit successfully depends upon the public's belief in our commitment to recruiting with integrity.

Recruiter Access to Schools

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) provided Armed Forces recruiters access to student recruiting information and the same access to students enjoyed by colleges and prospective employers. However, the current legislation contains limitations that prevent military recruiting services from receiving student information in the following ways:

- The military can be singled out when students or parents "Opt-Out" from having their contact information released to the military. In the same schools, there is no opt-out option against postsecondary schools or prospective employers receiving contact information.
- There is no timeframe for a school to provide the student information upon request by the military recruiting services. We have instances where schools have promised repeatedly to provide the list, but ultimately give it to our recruiters too late in the year to be of much use.

There is a growing effort to oppose the No Child Left Behind legislative provisions that provide access and release of student information to the military, to include pressure to change the law from "Opt Out" to "Opt In." We desire the opportunity to tell the Army story to young adults and let them decide for themselves whether or not service in our Army is the right choice to help them reach their full potential. Access to our Nation's schools and student information is critical to this effort.

We need your help to ensure all our Nation's youth have the opportunity to hear what the Army has to offer.

Conclusion

Recruiting during a time of protracted war is challenging, and this has been a difficult year. The challenging environment, with a strong economy, low unemployment rate, low propensity to enlist and influencer resistance to the young people in their lives joining an Army at war make FY07 one of the most challenging times in the history of the All-Volunteer Force. However, in spite of the challenges, more than 70,000 Americans have made the commitment to join our Army and Army Reserve.

I am confident that our recruiters will maximize the resources you have given them in order to achieve our mission. While public support for our Soldiers remains Strong, we need more Americans to step forward and serve our Nation, a nation at War. I thank you for your commitment to assist Army recruiting, and ask for your continued support to encourage Americans to answer our Nation's call to duty.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to answering your questions.