

STATEMENT BY

GENERAL RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

FIRST SESSION, 112TH CONGRESS

ON

THE CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AS A STATUTORY MEMBER
OF THE
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

November 10, 2011

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and members of the committee.

I have seen first-hand the power and capabilities of the Total Army. The performance, selfless service, and dedication of both the Army National Guard and the Army Reserves have contributed directly to our successes.

The Reserve Component connects the Army to the American people. The Guard and Reserve Soldiers that live and work in over 3,000 communities have shared the burdens of war, with over 900 killed in action and more than 7,500 wounded. They are a critical component of our Joint Force and connect us to “Main Street America.”

We have built a strong relationship between all of our Army components; probably the strongest we have ever had. It is our goal to sustain and increase this momentum as we move forward.

With all due respect to the Chief of National Guard Bureau – with whom I have worked closely on a variety of critical issues – I am bound to communicate my explicit opposition to this post as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for several reasons.

First, representing only two of the seven Reserve Components – the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard – at the Joint Chiefs of Staff level, will create confusion, imbalance, and challenge interoperability. It would run counter to intra-service and inter-service integration and negatively impact the progress we’ve made toward jointness.

Second, the proposed legislation will complicate the central principle of civilian control of our Nation’s military. This proposal risks creating a bifurcated force – one focused internally and another focused abroad. It is important that we have clear authorities and responsibilities to ensure effective employment of the Total Force.

Third, this could lead to divided or redundant force management, funding, modernization, training, and doctrine creating a high level of complication and friction.

The Reserve Component forces will continue to play a critical role in our National Security Strategy and the advice of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau will always be – as it has been – extremely valuable and essential within the context of our Total Army in a balanced Joint Portfolio.

The integration of the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserves has proven – over the last decade – to be unbeatable on the battlefield and irreplaceable at home and abroad. Now, more than ever, we are truly one Army.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to appear before you and for your support. I look forward to your questions.