RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

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Introduction

Chairman Sullivan, Ranking Member Hirono, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the readiness of our Nation's Army. On behalf of the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Daniel Driscoll, and the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Randy George, we are grateful for your continued partnership.

Delivering Combat Ready Forces Today

We deliver readiness every day. We train, we deploy, we modernize, and we reform simultaneously. We meet operational demands today while building the force we will need tomorrow. More than 107,000 Soldiers are deployed or forward postured across 140 countries. They deter aggression in the Indo-Pacific, secure our interests in the Western Hemisphere, and preserve the ability to respond rapidly worldwide. We owe them a force that is trained, modernized, sustained, safely equipped, and properly resourced.

Western Hemisphere Command

Homeland defense is our top priority. In December 2025, we established U.S. Army Western Hemisphere Command (WHC). By consolidating Army North and Army South under a single Theater, Army aligned to the U.S. Northern and Southern Commands, eliminating seams and accelerating decision making.

At the same time, WHC retains globally available forces through the Immediate Response Force and XVIII Airborne Corps, defending the homeland without narrowing global response options. WHC is off to a great start, already executing combined operations and exercises across the region. PANAMAX planned for Summer 2026 is a 15-nation combined exercise aimed at building partner capacity to counter transnational criminal organizations.

Threats to the homeland are also evolving technologically with unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) representing a growing challenge. We are expanding our counter-UAS capabilities to installations across the force in the coming years, ensuring our Soldiers are protected from this growing threat. We increased 10 U.S.C. 130i approvals by more than 300% over the previous five years. Through Joint Interagency Task Force 401, aligned to the Joint Staff, we are tightening coordination across the Department and with interagency partners, so commanders have both the legal framework and the technical capability to defend forces at home and abroad safely and effectively.

Indo Pacific

The Indo-Pacific is our priority theater for deterrence and warfighting. To reinforce this commitment, we programmed $1.3 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative in FY26, modernizing forces with new long-range fires and air defense capabilities while strengthening allied readiness through joint exercises.

Through U.S. Army Pacific's Ready Forward initiative, we are pre-positioning equipment and munitions and training alongside allies, shortening response times, and leveraging the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center to regionally train and certify forces.

Operation PATHWAYS ties that effort together. Forty-one exercises across the theater build interoperability and strengthen deterrence. Flagship exercises such as TALISMAN SABRE demonstrate the Army's unwavering commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

On the Korean Peninsula, we build readiness through two major annual exercises. FREEDOM SHIELD strengthens Army-to-Army ground force cooperation with the Republic of Korea. ULCHI FREEDOM SHIELD is a joint bilateral exercise led by U.S. Forces Korea and Combined Forces Command, where 8th Army, 2nd Infantry Division, and other Army formations train together across all domains using live and constructive scenarios. These exercises reinforce our combined defense posture to counter weapons of mass destruction and prevent nuclear threats.

Uninterrupted access to training areas in Hawai'i is vital for national security. Pōhakuloa and Kahuku Training Areas offer unique environments for joint and multinational exercises that cannot be replicated elsewhere without degrading force readiness. We are balancing military readiness with Native Hawaiian cultural sensitivities and environmental preservation, in keeping with our commitment to responsible stewardship, while negotiating a public benefits package with Hawai'i.

Europe

In Europe, campaigning and readiness reinforce one another. DEFENDER EUROPE 25 deployed 25,000 U.S., allied, and partner forces from more than 20 nations across NATO's Eastern Flank, while exercises like FLYTRAP help units refine tactics against drone threats, demonstrating our ability to enable Allies to increasingly take the lead for their own conventional defense and combat operations.

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center, run by 7th Army Training Command, allows us to experiment with electronic warfare and counter-UAS capabilities alongside European partners. Units that rotate through Europe return home more proficient than when they arrived, having honed their skills through demanding and safely-executed training. Brigades rotating through Europe consistently return with enhanced proficiency, with thousands of Soldiers qualifying on core combat tasks, which significantly enhances NATO's collective defense.

Middle East

In U.S. Central Command, U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) enables joint operations, sets the theater, and maintains a high state of readiness. From Kuwait, ARCENT Forward and Task Force Spartan coordinate operations across a complex region, a key aspect of which is enabling and incentivizing partners to take the lead in deterring regional threats, such as Iran.

Aligning with the National Defense Strategy, we are focused on burden sharing and burden shifting. For example, we strengthened air defense partnerships across the region. We established combined command posts in Qatar and Bahrain and created Combined Air Defense Augmentation Teams to bring together multiple nations operating PATRIOT systems, improving our collective defense posture in the region and setting conditions for our partners to shoulder more of the burden for regional security.

In the months since the historic ceasefire in Gaza, we have made tremendous progress on implementing President Trump's 20-Point Peace Plan. The Department of War rapidly launched the Civil-Military Coordination Center to coordinate post-conflict activities, including monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement and facilitating humanitarian, logistical, and security force contributions from our partners in Gaza. At the inaugural Board of Peace meeting on February 19, President Trump announced the inaugural International Stabilization Force members and a $10 billion U.S. financial contribution to the Board of Peace.

We also bring Middle East partners to experience a rotation at our U.S. Combat Training Centers (CTCs), then help them build similar capability at home. Last year, United Arab Emirates finished its third Joint Readiness Training Center rotation, the largest partner rotation to date, while Jordan and Saudi Arabia finished their first. Israel, the UAE Presidential Guard, and Qatar are scheduled to participate in rotations during Spring 2026.

Transformation and Training Command (T2COM) and CTC Modernization

We established T2COM to unify force generation, development, and design under one headquarters. By aligning these structures we've shortened delays in feedback loops between operational units and designers and synchronized recruiting, education, and training with operational requirements.

At our CTCs, we are modernizing the Opposing Force (OPFOR) to replicate the composition and capabilities of our adversaries in a manner that prioritizes the most dangerous threats to American interests. Our OPFOR is continuously updated with the latest intelligence to ensure our Soldiers train against a realistic and challenging adversary, keeping them at the cutting edge of warfighting.

Next Generation Constructive (NGC)

We are digitizing and unifying parts of our training enterprise. NGC replaces legacy simulation systems with a cloud-based environment capable of modeling new systems accurately. It integrates with One World Terrain, Next Generation Command and Control, and Maven Smart Systems to create a unified training ecosystem. NGC will allow commanders to return thousands of Soldiers to the field during exercises, who would normally have been “pucking” the movements of formations online. By integrating constructive entities into live environments, NGC ensures that every moment spent in the field is more complex, realistic, and directly improves combat-effectiveness.

Increasing Magazine Depth

The Organic Industrial Base (OIB), Ammunition Production, and Advanced Manufacturing

Our Army's OIB stands as a congressionally protected national strategic asset, comprising 23 arsenals, depots, and ammunition plants with proven capacity, world-class facilities, and a highly skilled workforce ready to support Joint Force readiness, modernization, and future surge requirements.

The OIB faces critical challenges from aging infrastructure, fluctuating demand signals, and workforce gaps that threaten its ability to sustain military readiness. Addressing the safety of our workforce and the modernization of these facilities are inextricably linked. We have an urgent need to partner with industry and Congress to ensure our OIB is focused on projects that are needed to fight tomorrow’s wars.

Our vision is to build a more resilient, efficient, and technologically advanced Army. This requires a holistic approach to upgrading our infrastructure, technology, and business processes. We must operate with the speed, efficiency, and innovation of a modern global enterprise.

The Army is accelerating OIB optimization by leveraging the OIB Integration Cell to align requirements across the Defense Industrial Base, eliminate duplication, and implement focused solutions that enhance, rather than compete with private industry. To achieve our goals, we are looking to supplement traditional funding structures with strategic capital, thus allowing for creativity, innovation, and efficiency at scale. We are expanding advanced manufacturing capabilities in partnership with industry and academia, with a goal of shoring up critical supply chains, critical components and accelerating system production.

The end state is an OIB that is technologically advanced (integrated with AI, robotics, and digital engineering), operationally efficient, strategically aligned with national priorities, and fully integrated with the national industrial ecosystem.

Acquisition Reform and Innovation

We reorganized our acquisition structure to move faster and align more closely with operational needs. We consolidated 13 Program Executive Offices into six Portfolio Acquisition Executives aligned to aligned to Fires; Command and Control/Counter Command and Control; Maneuver; Maneuver Air; Agile Sustainment & Ammunition; and Layered Protection and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear.

We paired operational leaders with acquisition professionals and empowered portfolio executives to manage trade-offs across cost, schedule, and performance. This structure allows procurement decisions to reflect operational reality rather than bureaucratic boundaries.

Through the Pathway for Innovation and Technology (PIT), we connected science and technology programs under a unified framework. This approach targets high-priority investment areas and accelerates transition from concept to production. To place innovation closer to operational formations, PIT embeds acquisition professionals at Corps and Army Service Component Commands through the Global-Tactical Edge Acquisition Directorate in Wiesbaden, Germany, and the Joint Innovation Outpost at Fort Bragg. Another component of PIT is the Army's FUZE effort, which unites several innovation programs into a coordinated pathway. Ultimately, these initiatives help reduce barriers to entry and accelerate technology transition by connecting operational needs with cutting-edge solution(s) from government, industry, academia, and capital.

Rapidly Delivering Capabilities to Soldiers

Through Continuous Transformation, we are accelerating the delivery of next-generation capabilities, ensuring our Soldiers maintain overwhelming battlefield advantages through seamless integration and smart prioritization. We are advancing Next Generation Command and Control (NGC2), fielding the MV-75 Future Long Range Assault Aircraft (FLRAA), delivering the XM30 and M1E3 Abrams, expanding UAS capacity, producing the Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle, and advancing the Mobile Tactical Cannon. Together, these efforts extend our operational reach, enhance lethality and protection across our formations, and lay the foundation for an Army fully prepared to defeat any peer adversary.

Next Generation Command and Control (NGC2)

Our top modernization priority is NGC2. NGC2 delivers command and control at operational speed by removing seams between echelons, units, systems, and domains. It converges sustainment, fires, intelligence, protection, air defense, and maneuver on a shared data foundation. This eliminates the need for separate stacks, system-specific formats, and the latency caused by translation between data systems.

We have two industry teams under contract for prototyping. Team Anduril supports 4th Infantry Division. Team Lockheed Martin supports 25th Infantry Division. We are partnering with industry leaders to prototype NGC2 with Soldiers in operational units. These experiments are providing invaluable feedback to ensure the system meets the needs of our warfighters. Both teams integrate multiple technology vendors, and we continue to competitively onboard best-of-breed solutions.

Soldier Lethality and Ground Maneuver

Building on modernization priorities, we are converting 21 Brigade Combat Teams to Mobile Brigade Combat Teams (MBCTs) *(14 Regular Army and seven Army National Guard)* by the end of FY26. MBCTs are leaner and more mobile thanks to the Infantry Squad Vehicle's capacity and technical capabilities. These formations excel at seizing and controlling complex terrain, and the Army is applying this proven methodology to transform Armored and Stryker Brigades.

Complementing this transformation, the M1E3 Abrams acceleration strategy delivers a better-protected, more lethal, lighter, and rapidly deployable tank. With the prototype unveiled in January 2026 *(five years ahead of schedule)* the first platoon set of four early prototype tech demonstrators will be fielded in December 2026. This accelerated approach restores hundreds of millions in development costs by iterating faster with industry, prioritizing commercial solutions, and retaining intellectual property. The result is a platform that is 25% lighter, 50% more fuel efficient (reducing logistics and enabling silent watch), features exceptional counter-drone capability, and includes an unmanned, AI-empowered turret for rapid targeting. Compared to legacy variants of the Abrams, with maintenance costs having doubled from FY15 to FY23, this modernization investment boosts readiness and lethality while accelerating divestiture of aging equipment.

Beyond the Abrams, the XM30 Infantry Fighting Vehicle replaces the aging M2 Bradley. The XM30 leverages an open systems architecture to allow best-of-breed technologies to be rapidly integrated and updated throughout the vehicle's lifecycle. XM30 Prototypes will be delivered to III Corps in FY27 for Soldier feedback and testing. Simultaneously, the Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle Family of Vehicles is in full production, replacing the Vietnam-era M113 Family of Vehicles.

At the individual level we are fielding the M7 Rifle, and soon the M8 Carbine to replace the M4A1 Carbine, along with the M250 Automatic Rifle to replace the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. These systems fire a common family of 6.8mm ammunition that materially expands what our infantry squad can do on the battlefield.

The 6.8mm round delivers significantly greater energy on impact and maintains velocity and accuracy at distances where legacy 5.56mm systems begin to lose effectiveness. It penetrates advanced body armor at extended ranges and performs consistently across varied terrain and environmental conditions. On a modern battlefield where adversaries are protected, dispersed, and operating at longer ranges, that advantage is significant. The rifle squad regains reach, penetration, and stopping power.

Aviation Transformation

We are rebalancing aviation structure through FY28.

The Army is committed to MV-75 and to our aviation industrial partners. FLRAA delivers lethality to combatant commands and is designed to integrate state-of-the-art technologies through its open system plug-and-play architecture.

Flight School Next (FSN) is a critical component in aviation transformation because it will deliver 60% more flying hours for students and produce more proficient aviators with stronger warfighting foundations. FSN reduces per-hour costs by over 60% and saves up to $9.1 billion over the lifetime of the contract.

After a difficult FY24, Class A mishap rates returned near historic lows in FY25, reflecting focused leadership and disciplined standards, and a renewed emphasis on risk management.

Integrated Fires

The Army is modernizing its fires capabilities with a layered architecture of cannon, rocket, and missile systems designed to deliver greater range, precision, and lethality on the modern battlefield. Key systems include the Mobile Tactical Cannon, Extended Range Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (ER-GMLRS), Precision Strike Missile (PrSM), and HIMARS, enabling formations to achieve fires superiority across multiple domains and support maneuver forces during large-scale combat operations.

PrSM is an improvement over the legacy Army Tactical Missile System and represents a significant leap in capability. To accelerate modernization, the Army increased PrSM Increment 1 production capacity.

Further extending our strike capabilities, the Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW) provides speed, maneuverability, and altitude, enabling rapid defeat of time-critical, heavily defended, high-value targets. Following a successful end-to-end flight test in December 2024, Battery 1 finished fielding in early 2026 with munitions to Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The second battery is planned for late 2026.

Rapidly Integrating Drone Technology

Our UAS strategy focuses on proliferating drones, empowering commanders, and scaling the domestic industrial base. We've empowered units to procure, test, and train National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) compliant UASs through a "UAS Marketplace". This provides an Amazon-like storefront where Soldiers select mission-tailored capabilities, provide real-time feedback, and drive continuous innovation. The marketplace approach encourages competition, accelerates innovation, and expands access to emerging capabilities while simultaneously building industrial base resilience.

Integrated Air and Missile Defense

We are expanding air and missile defense capacity through FY32 by adding counter small UAS (C-sUAS) batteries, three PATRIOT battalions, and nine Indirect Fire Protection Capability battalions (IFPC). These IFPC battalions deliver comprehensive layered defense, seamlessly bridging tactical and operational areas while eliminating dependence on PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 for cruise missile defense.

The Integrated Battle Command System anchors this expansion. IBCS integrates current and future sensors and weapons into a unified fire control network. It has demonstrated the ability to fuse sensor data for offensive and defensive fires in joint exercises and now serves as the backbone of the Guam Defense System architecture. The IBCS is a revolutionary command and control system that is being deployed to enhance the defense of critical assets in the Indo-Pacific. The Lower Tier Air and Missile Defense Sensor finishes this modernization by replacing the aging PATRIOT Q-65 radar with a next-generation, 360-degree sensor delivering initial operational capability in FY27.

Intelligence

Timely, accurate, multisource intelligence underpins the Army's readiness to fight in any theater. We continue to invest in the Army Intelligence Data Platform to arm analysts with machine learning and artificial intelligence tools to enhance their work and are actively working to integrate intel data into NGC2.

We are continuing to experiment and refine the Tactical Intelligence Targeting Access Node to integrate sensor data critical to our long-range precision fires. We are also keenly aware of the persistent, aggressive espionage from adversaries targeting our national security, the readiness of our warfighters, and our defense industrial base. In response, we are empowering our Army counterintelligence force, strengthening oversight, and integrating our efforts with other intelligence agencies to deny foreign intelligence entities access to our sensitive technology and operations.

Sustainment

We are transforming sustainment around predictive logistics, decentralized distribution, and operational reach. AI-enabled maintenance sensors monitor platform health and stock usage, reducing downtime and improving availability.

We are also implementing right-to-repair provisions in new and existing contracts. Our forces require access to technical data, tools, the right protective equipment, and parts so Soldiers can maintain equipment independently. We will not allow million-dollar systems to sit idle for years waiting on parts that could be produced through additive manufacturing at minimal cost.

In large-scale combat operations, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, distance alone makes contractor-dependent maintenance impractical. Soldiers must repair forward. Organic

access to technical data and additive manufacturing capability keeps equipment operational in contested environments. Bipartisan legislation such as the Warrior Right to Repair Act would extend these protections across the services and standardize fair access to repair materials.

While we're enabling Soldiers to repair equipment forward, we're also revolutionizing how we get supplies to them. The Joint Tactical Autonomous Aerial Resupply System delivers autonomous, on-demand resupply in contested environments. We have begun operational testing of our new autonomous aerial resupply system with a maneuver unit, and we plan to field this capability widely across the force.

Autonomous aerial resupply solves part of the equation, but the Indo-Pacific demands a maritime solution. We are activating two Composite Watercraft Companies and forward-stationing vessels to strengthen joint posture. With Maneuver Support Vessel (Light) fielding beginning in FY26, forward stationing and autonomy development will eliminate lift gaps and strengthen Indo-Pacific Command readiness.

Recruiting and Retention

Recruiting is strong, with more than 70% of our FY26 goal already achieved ahead of last year's pace. This success enables targeted recruitment for 21 critical military specialties, including infantry, artillery, and air defense, as well as specialized skills like drone operators and cyber/electronic warfare specialists.

Likewise, we are applying more precise talent management tools based on Soldier skill markers to retain those whose experience and performance strengthen formations the most. With continued congressional support, we are prepared to sustain our momentum.

Improving Soldier Quality of Life

Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F)

Holistic Health and Fitness is the Army's primary investment in Soldier performance optimization, building durable combat power at the individual level. By strengthening physical performance, sharpening cognitive capacity, and reducing injuries that prevent Soldiers from deploying, H2F ensures our formations remain ready. The program is embedded in brigades and organized around dedicated facilities, modern equipment, and full-time Human Performance Teams (HPTs) comprised of athletic trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, physical and occupational therapists, registered dietitians, and cognitive performance specialists.

The results are measurable. For every $1 invested in HPTs, the Army avoids $4.69 in costs and gains $3.46 in readiness improvements. Units with H2F demonstrate higher deployable rates and a 6.8% reduction in musculoskeletal injuries, which remain one of the leading causes of lost readiness. Reduced injury translates directly into fewer medical profiles, more available Soldiers, and lower long-term medical costs.

Given this strong return, we are accelerating expansion. In FY26, we will field 20 additional H2F Performance Teams and 10 Area Support Teams, bringing the totals to 111 Performance Teams and 11 Area Support Teams by the end of the fiscal year. By FY29, H2F Performance Teams will be present in 129 active-duty brigades, with four Guard and two Reserve pilot programs, all supported by 59 Area Support Teams. As Soldiers become stronger, more resilient, and less prone to injury, the entire formation achieves a higher level of operational readiness.

Exceptional Family Member Program

The Exceptional Family Member Program supports approximately 47,000 active-duty Soldiers and 59,000 Family members with special needs. Enterprise-EFMP 2.0, launched in November 2025, streamlined enrollment, improved assignment coordination, and strengthened data accuracy and command visibility.

Spouse Employment

Spouse employment affects retention and overall family stability. Frequent permanent change of station moves and professional licensing barriers disrupt career continuity. In FY25, Employment Readiness Programs assisted 6,925 spouses and family members, and the Civilian Employment Assignment Tool has processed 752 military spouse transfers since inception. As of December 2025, the Army has 20 military spouses approved for Domestic Employees Teleworking Overseas arrangements and 692 military spouses with Return to In-Person Work policy exemptions. Supporting spouse employment strengthens families, and strong families sustain readiness.

Campus-Style Dining

The Army is committed to modernizing our food program and meeting Soldiers where they are, providing food options that are convenient, healthy, accessible, and affordable. Campus-Style Dining options include kiosks, food trucks, and meal prep programs. The Army awarded a concession contract in August 2025 for Campus-Style Dining Venues at five installations, with the first opening at Fort Hood in February 2026. The Secretary of Education's determination to limit the Randolph-Sheppard Act priority at Army dining facilities enables the Army to establish fair and open competition for its food service contracts.

Military Construction (MILCON) Reform and Installation Investment

With 33% of priority facilities in poor condition and a $152 billion repair backlog, the conditions of our installations directly affect readiness. In response, the Army is reforming MILCON procedures to accelerate construction delivery and prioritizing housing and barracks to sustain a high quality of life for our Soldiers.

We maintain 6,741 government-owned unaccompanied housing buildings providing 471,616 bed spaces, with 25% of the inventory showing significant deterioration requiring major restoration.

Accelerating this effort, the Department of War Barracks Task Force allocated $520 million to the Army through the One Big Beautiful Bill for immediate and long-term improvements. This investment directly counteracts the historical underinvestment in unaccompanied housing that eroded recruitment and operational readiness, a consequence of misunderstanding how critical building conditions and natural spaces affect morale, readiness, health, and overall readiness.

Beyond direct appropriations, the Army is strategically leveraging Enhanced Use Leasing to generate revenue from underutilized property, with active solicitations for manufacturing, data centers, and mineral processing. This revenue reinvests directly into critical infrastructure supporting Soldier and Family quality of life, creating a sustainable funding model for continued improvements.

Project Janus: Installation and Operational Nuclear Energy

The Army's Janus Program, capturing lessons learned from the Department of War's investments in Project Pele, in partnership with the Defense Innovation Unit, aims to prototype micro-nuclear reactors on at least three U.S. installations by 2030, providing resilient power for critical national security facilities for up to 30 years. This will be done under the most stringent safety and environmental standards to protect our personnel and neighboring communities. Nine Army installations are identified as potential sites. Under Executive Order 14299, the Secretary of War will designate the Army as the Executive Agent for installation and operational nuclear energy.

Closing

Above all, we require budget certainty. Continuing Resolutions delay modernization, disrupt training schedules, increase program costs, and force inefficient short-term decisions that compound risk over time.

The Nation entrusts us with its sons and daughters and expects them to prevail. That expectation requires disciplined stewardship of resources, candid assessment of risk, and sustained commitment over time. With continued support, our Army will remain ready to fight tonight, lead the future of land warfare, and honor the trust placed in us by the American people.