HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
THE CURRENT READINESS OF U.S. FORCES

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

U.S. Senate
Subcommittee on Readiness and
Management Support
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:31 p.m.
in Room SR-232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. James
Inhofe, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.
Subcommittee Members Present: Senators Inhofe
[presiding], McCain, Rounds, Ernst, Perdue, Kaine, Shaheen,
and Hirono.
OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR
FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator Inhofe: I call the meeting to order.

Let me share a couple of thoughts with you. Twenty-two years ago I became the chairman of this committee, and I haven’t since that time because under the rules on the Republican side, if you chair and are a ranking member in another committee, you can’t chair a subcommittee. This is really the committee where really everything is happening. The problems that we’re facing today are the ones that we deal with, so Tim and I are going to do a good job with that, Joni and the rest of the committee.

The committee meets for the first time in the new session of Congress to receive testimony from you guys. I don’t think there’s a member of this committee that hasn’t read what happened yesterday. I know I have.

We’re joined by the same group. We have all the vices here, General Allyn, Admiral Moran, General Walters, and General Wilson. So I appreciate your sticking to this one more time here.

Last week General Mattis used the guidance on the Administration’s plan to rebuild and strengthen our Armed Forces. But, you know, I looked at some of the things that were said yesterday, some of the quotes, and I really do appreciate the fact that you folks came out and said things
that weren’t easy to say. We had General Allyn talking about the Army. Only three of 58 brigade combat teams are ready to fight. We had General Wilson talked about the hollow force, actually used the term “hollow force.” That’s what we’re faced with right now. A lot of the characteristics that we, who are old enough to remember it, remember from the Carter Administration, know what we had to do the following years. So that’s very similar to what we are going to have to do now. We had General Walters. You talked about the operational tempo is as high as it was during the peak of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. We know the problems that are out there.

While I didn’t always get along perfectly with Hagel when he was in the Senate, and I wasn’t one of his strongest supporters when he came into being the Secretary of Defense, when I read the statements that he has made from that position, it’s a wake-up call to the American people because otherwise they don’t know, they’re not exposed to this.

This is what he said, quote, “American dominance on the seas, in the skies, and in space can no longer be taken for granted.” So this is something we want to address, we want to accept as a reality. So we’re going to have to improve our readiness, achieve a balance in addressing shortfalls, and build a larger and more capable and more lethal joint force. Those are the statements that were made, the three
priorities that were given to this committee, the major committee, just a week or so ago.

So we have a lot of these problems that we’re going to be dealing with. During Secretary Mattis’ nomination hearing he stated that we are going to have to increase operation and maintenance funding while adapting to strengthening our military as the situation dictates. This means additional resources are needed, and what I’d like from our witnesses today is an outline of how you plan to restore the readiness to our Armed Forces and how we re-grow our force, how do we maintain the equipment that has been through two decades of war, and how do we train that force to meet the national security requirements.

So this is the committee where most of the action is going to be, and we’ve got a lot of work to do, and Tim and I have already talked about this. We’re going to see to it that we start getting a bigger attendance here and that we start addressing these problems that we should be addressing before they hit the major committee.

Senator Kaine?
STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You’ve done a better job arm twisting on your side of the table than I have.

Senator Inhofe: Yes, I guess so.

Senator Kaine: So I have to up my game here.

But welcome to the witnesses. This is an interesting hearing. The witnesses -- did you know this, Mr. Chair? Our four witnesses have a combined 142 years --

Senator Inhofe: No, I didn’t know that.

Senator Kaine: -- of combined military experience. So that means I know we’re only going to hear the most astute wisdom today.

There is a limit to what we can discuss in open session. So I’d just say at the start that all colleagues on the committee are encouraged to read the classified readiness reporting that is available to members of this subcommittee.

I am pleased to be the ranking. I work very, very well with the Chairman. We’ve got a good relationship, and I know this subcommittee will continue the bipartisan tradition that is its norm.

The military does suffer from an unacceptable level of readiness. I said to the Chair as we walked in that some of
what we’ll hear today we heard last year, and we heard two
years ago. Somebody said maybe if we listened, history
wouldn’t have to repeat itself.
The first step we ought to take to address this
vulnerability is to provide more predictable and stable
funding for men and women in uniform. The new
administration has made some comments about spending that I
agree with, a desire to boost military spending and repeal
sequestration for the DOD. But we haven’t heard the same
commitment with respect to repealing sequestration for the
whole government. The chairman of this committee, Chairman
McCain, put out a report suggesting that should be done, and
even if your focus is specifically on national security,
it’s still very important that sequestration, we look at it
not just on the DOD accounts but on the whole of government,
because whether we’re talking about Homeland Security,
State, the DEA, the nuclear reactor portion of what the
Department of Energy does, there are so many things in the
non-defense discretionary side that really are integral to
our security challenges.
We’ve got the responsibility to help DOD restore
readiness as soon as possible. We’ll be getting good
information that we can use as information to persuade our
colleagues of this.
I am concerned about one recent development, the hiring
freeze that was issued on January 23rd for Federal civilian employees. It was not a permanent hiring freeze. It was a temporary hiring freeze to analyze what should be done, and I hope it is, in fact, temporary because this does have a readiness impact on shipyards, depots, air logistics centers, but also on other Federal agencies because the Federal agency is certainly the employer of choice for veterans. So when you do a hiring freeze at the Federal level, it falls most disproportionately on the veterans that are hired so significantly into the Federal Government.

At a time when we’re losing shipyard depot workers and others to retirement and sequestration-related attrition, I’m afraid that a freeze like this, if it continues, could really hurt us both on the readiness side and be unfavorable to our veterans.

I am pleased in hearing from our witnesses today about plans to rebuild readiness and what exactly does a fully funded ready force look like. Each service branch has its own measures of readiness, and some of the most interesting discussions we’ve had in these hearings in the past is exactly what does a readiness measure mean. I used to say as governor I can measure everything, but the one thing that scared me was measures of emergency readiness. I can measure an unemployment rate, I can measure a graduation rate, but what was the measure for what we would do if there
was a hurricane tomorrow? Those measures are tough, and the
need for the committee to understand exactly how we measure
the readiness in the different branches is very important.

I understand the hearing today from the Air Force, they
would like to increase the number of fighter squadrons from
55 to 60. So what are the research requirements we have to
grapple with in the committee and those who are on budget
and appropriations to get to that? And what’s the
appropriate timeframe that we should be looking at to make
that kind of advance?

This committee also deals with MILCON and facility
sustainment, and these are important matters to readiness
too. When we talk about increasing military spending, I do
think that there is this area where we can do better, and
that’s increasing the O&M funding for facilities
sustainment, restoration, and modernization. We’ll be
going into some testimony that I’m really interested in on
the shipbuilding side. But as a general matter, if we’re
resource pressed and we end up having fewer facilities, then
it becomes even more important if we have fewer that we
maintain those we have to a higher level. That’s not
necessarily what we’re doing now in the MILCON area or in
purchasing platforms.

Our installations for a long time have had to defer
necessary maintenance, and if we don’t address backlogs
soon, it just leads to higher long-term costs and risks that
decrease the quality of life for our troops. So I hope we
can look at the FSRM accounts, increase as much as possible
in the Fiscal Year 2018 NDAA. I hope we can increase
military construction across the active and Reserve
components. If we can increase those two accounts in
particular, we not only improve the readiness in
installations in every state, it would also bolster the
resiliency of facilities, and we need to work together to
make this happen.

One area that’s important to me and I know important to
the Chairman, we have some slight differences on it, but
it’s the area of energy. DOD is the largest user of energy
in the Federal Government, and I support the military’s
effort to invest in technologies and alternative sources
that not only improve readiness but increase combat
capabilities by extending range, endurance, lethality, and
energy resilience for our installations, and especially in
some ways for forward operating bases.

Whether DOD is confronting cyber threats or
vulnerabilities in its energy supply or protecting against
severe weather events, from a readiness perspective we’ve
got to make sure that we make the investments in energy
resiliency, and we did those in Section 2805 in the 2017
NDAA, and I hope we will continue to do that.
So, Mr. Chairman, thanks again for today’s hearing, to start this discussion that will roll up into the NDAA work that we will do as a full committee. I’m excited to work with you as the ranking on this committee and very gratified that we have the witnesses here today.

Senator Inhofe: Well, thank you. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

It will be easy for you guys because you can use the same opening statements you used yesterday, if you want to. [Laughter.]

Senator Inhofe: But we want to hear it, and we want to get it on record. Some of the things were very bold statements that were made. It’s worth repeating because this is for our record over here. We’re going to be very aggressive trying to make the changes necessary to bring our defenses up, so feel free to do it.

We’ll start with you, General Allyn. Try to keep it down somewhere around 5 minutes, all right?
STATEMENT OF GENERAL DANIEL B. ALLYN, VICE CHIEF OF
STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

General Allyn: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking
Member Kaine, distinguished members of the subcommittee.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the readiness of
your United States Army. I appreciate your support and
demonstrated commitment to our soldiers, civilians,
families, and our veterans, and look forward to discussing
the strength of our Army with you today.

This is a challenging time for our nation, and
certainly for our Army. The unipolar moment is over, and
replacing it is a multi-polar world characterized by
competition and uncertainty. Today, the Army is globally
engaged with more than 182,000 soldiers supporting combatant
commanders in over 140 worldwide locations.

My recent travel -- I have visited our soldiers in 15
countries since Veterans Day -- reinforces that the Army is
not about programs; it is about people, our people executing
security missions all around the globe. The strength of the
all-volunteer force truly remains our soldiers. These young
men and women are trained, ready, and inspired. We must be
similarly inspired to provide for them commensurate with
their extraordinary service and sacrifice.

To meet the demands of today’s unstable global
environment and maintain the trust placed in us by the
American people, our Army requires sustained, long-term, and predictable funding. Absent additional legislation, the caps set by the Budget Control Act of 2011 will return in Fiscal Year 2018 -- that would be October of this year -- forcing the Army to once again draw down end strength, reduce funding for readiness, and increase the risk of sending under-trained and poorly equipped soldiers into harm’s way, a preventable risk our nation can and must prevent.

We thank all of you for recognizing that plans to reduce the Army to 980,000 soldiers would threaten our national security, and we appreciate all your work to stem the drawdown. Nevertheless, the most important actions you can take, steps that will have both positive and lasting impact, will be to immediately repeal the 2011 Budget Control Act and ensure sufficient funding to train, man, and equip the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA authorized force.

Unless this is done, additional topline and OCO funding, though nice in the short term, will prove unsustainable, rendering all your hard work for naught. In this uncertain environment, readiness remains our number-one priority. Sufficient and consistent funding is essential to build and sustain current readiness, progress towards a more modern, capable force, sized to reduce risk for contingencies, and to recruit and retain the best talent
within our ranks.

Readiness remains paramount because the Army does not have the luxury of taking a day off. We must stand ready at a moment’s notice to defend the United States and its interests. With your assistance, the Army will continue to resource the best trained, best equipped, and best led fighting force in the world.

We thank you for your steadfast support of our outstanding men and women. Please accept my written testimony for the record, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Allyn follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Thank you.
All statements will be made a part of the record.
Good statement.
Admiral Moran?
STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. MORAN, VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES NAVY

Admiral Moran: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon to you and the members of the subcommittee. It’s a real privilege to be here with my fellow vice chiefs to talk about the readiness of our military.

The crux of my testimony is that your Navy is less ready because she is simply too small. It’s a simple matter of supply can’t meet demand. The smallest Navy we’ve had in 99 years can only answer 40 percent of combatant commander requirements today.

On 9/11, we had 316 ships and over 400,000 sailors. Today we have 275 ships and nearly 90,000 fewer sailors, and yet the world has become a lot busier place today. A smaller fleet operating at the same pace is wearing out faster, work is increased, and we’re asking an awful lot of our sailors and Navy civilians.

That said, we are where we are, which makes it urgent to pass an amended budget and remove sequestration so that we can adequately fund, fix, and maintain the fleet that we do have.

It seems that every year, to Senator Kaine’s point, we come before you and talk about making tough choices, and more often than not, we rightly choose to support those forward at the expense of those at home. This year is more
of the same as our long-term readiness continues its insidious decline. So while we’re still able to put our first team on the field, our bench is largely depleted.

With your help, we have the opportunity to change all this. It starts by strengthening the foundation of the Navy by ensuring that the ships, aircraft, and submarines that we do have are maintained and modernized so they provide the full measure of their combat power. Then let’s fill the holes by eliminating the inventory shortfalls of ships, submarines, and aircraft in the fleet. Together, by taking these two steps, we can achieve the ultimate goal of sizing the Navy to meet the strategic demands of this dynamic and changing world.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Moran follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Admiral. Excellent statement.

General Walters?
STATEMENT OF GENERAL GLENN M. WALTERS, ASSISTANT
COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

General Walters: Good afternoon, sir. Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Kaine, and distinguished members of the Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, thank you for the opportunity to appear today and report on the readiness of your Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps remains dedicated to our central role as our nation’s naval expeditionary force. During 15 years of conflict, we’ve focused investment on ensuring our Marines were prepared for the fight, and they were. Today our operational tempo remains as high as it was during the peak of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our continued focus on deployed unit readiness, combined with fiscal uncertainty and funding reductions, leave your Marine Corps facing substantial readiness challenges. Your Marine Corps is insufficiently manned, trained, and equipped across the depth of the force to operate in an evolving operational environment. Due to years of fiscal constraints, the Marine Corps is fundamentally optimized for the past and has sacrificed modernization and infrastructure to sustain our current readiness.

In addition to the increased resources for operations and maintenance needed to improve current readiness across
the entirety of your Marine Corps, we require your support in three key areas to regain the readiness levels our nation requires of us. Over the past 18 months we have identified various end strengths and associated capabilities and modernization required to operate in the threat environment characterized by complex terrain, information warfare, electromagnetic signatures, and a contested maritime environment.

We need to increase our active component end strength. We are confident that an increase of 3,000 Marines per year maintains a rate of growth consistent with effective recruiting while maintaining our high standards. Our bases, stations, and installations are the platforms where we train and generate our readiness. The continued under-funding of our facilities sustainment, restoration, modernization, and military construction continues to cause progressive degradation of our infrastructure and creates increased long-term costs. We have a backlog of $9 billion in deferred infrastructure sustainment requirements. We require up-to-date training systems, ranges, and facilities to support the fielding of our new equipment, and simulation systems that facilitate improved training standards and readiness.

Supporting the joint force requirements over the past 15 years consumed much of the life of our legacy systems,
while fiscal uncertainty reduced defense spending for significant delays in our modernization efforts. There are significant costs associated with maintaining and sustaining any legacy system without a proportional capability increase associated with that investment. As we continue to spend limited fiscal resources to sustain legacy systems developed for threats 20 years ago, we risk steadily losing our competitive advantage against potential adversaries. We need to modernize our ground tactical vehicle and aircraft fleets soonest. Accelerated investments in amphibious ships is necessary to reach our wartime requirement.

If forced to continue to pursue the path of investing in legacy systems in lieu of modernizing our force, we will find our Marine Corps optimized for the past and increasingly at risk to deter and defeat our potential adversaries.

On behalf of all of our Marines, sailors, and their families, and the civilians who support their service, we thank the Congress and this subcommittee for the opportunity to discuss the key challenges our Marine Corps faces. I thank you for your support as articulated in the recent 2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

While much work needs to be done, the authorizations within, coupled with sufficient funding and the repeal of the Budget Control Act, will begin to put us on a path to
rebuild and sustain our Marine Corps for the 21st century.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Walters follows:]
Senator Inhofe: Thank you, General.

General Wilson?
STATEMENT OF GENERAL STEPHEN W. WILSON, VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

General Wilson: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished members of the subcommittee. On behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force, it’s a pleasure to be here with you today, and with my fellow vice chiefs. I request the written statement be submitted for the record.

American airmen are professional, innovative, dedicated and, frankly, the envy of the world. They are proud to be part of the most powerful joint fighting team in our history. We provide our leaders with a broad range of options, from protecting our country and its interests both at home and abroad. For the past 70 years responsive, flexible, and agile American air power has been our nation’s first and often most sustainable solution in conflict and in crisis, underwriting every other instrument of power.

We provide the nation with unrelenting global vigilance, global reach, and global power. In short, your Air Force is always in demand and always there. Look no further than two weeks ago when your Air Force executed a precision strike in Sirte, Libya, killing over 100 violent extremists. This was a textbook trans-regional, multi-domain, and multi-function mission. Air Force space, cyber, and ISR warriors provided precision navigation and timing...
while monitoring enemy communication and movement.

Simultaneously, two B2 bombers took off from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri, flew a 34-hour non-stop mission, refueled with 18 tankers from U.S., European, and Middle East bases, and teamed with two MQ9s to employ 108 precision munitions, meeting their time on target within 10 seconds.

Meanwhile, every day your American airmen operate 60 remotely-piloted aircraft patrols 24/7/365, as an unblinking eye for combatant commanders. They remotely fly these missions from the continental United States. They team with nearly 20,000 forward deployed airmen to support the missions, like the recent Raqqa and Mosul offensives, where our fighter bomber and RP airmen also conduct 92 percent of U.S. strikes against ISIS.

We do all of this while fulfilling two of our nation’s most critical missions at home. We insert two-thirds of the nuclear triad and 75 percent of the nuclear command control communications remain to ensure robust, reliable, flexible and survivable options for the nation, while our fighters and tankers remain on alert, as they have for the past 15-plus years, ready to launch to defend the homeland.

The capabilities our airmen provide to our nation and our allies have never been more vital, and our global demand for American air power will only grow in the future.

However, this steadfast watch comes at a price, and the
demand for our mission and our people exceeds the supply.
We are out of balance.

Twenty-six years of continuous combat has limited our
ability to prepare for future advanced threat scenarios,
scenarios with the lowest margin of error and the highest
risk to national security. Non-stop combat, paired with
budget instability and lower-than-planned toplines, have
made the United States Air Force one of the smallest,
oldest-equipped, and least ready in our history. We have
attempted to balance the risk across our force to maintain
readiness but have been forced to make unacceptable
tradeoffs between readiness, force structure, and
modernization. Today’s global challenges require an Air
Force not only ready to defeat today’s violent extremism but
prepared and modernized for any threat the nation may face.

Mr. Chairman, I’ll close by quoting General Douglas
MacArthur. He sent a cable as he escaped the Philippines in
1942. He said, “The history of failure in war can be summed
up in two words: Too late. Too late to comprehend the
deadly purpose of the potential enemy, too late in realizing
the moral danger, too late in preparedness.”

Distinguished members of the subcommittee, preparedness
or readiness cannot be overlooked. Your Air Force needs
congressional support for Fiscal Year 2017 to pass an
appropriation, and support for a budget amendment that
accelerates readiness recovery. In Fiscal Year 2018 we must
repeal the Budget Control Act and provide predictable
funding for the future. These are critical to rebuilding
full-spectrum military readiness, which is the number-one
priority of the Secretary of Defense. We need to act now,
before it’s too late.

On behalf of the Secretary and the Chief of Staff and
the 660,000 airmen, active Guard, Reserve, and civilians who
serve our nation, thank you for your tireless support. I
look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Wilson follows:]
Senator Inhofe: I thank all of you for your opening statements.

I see this as I did 22 years ago in this committee, not just to get our state of readiness where it should be, but also to tell the truth about how unready we are. I think you did a good job of that, General Wilson.

Admiral Moran, the thing that probably came out that shocked most people from yesterday was your statement about more than half the F18s are not running. I mean, people need to hear that, and they need to hear it from you guys who are at the top and who are in a position to say it with more credibility certainly than I can say it.

So anyway, we know where we are right now. We know there are problems we have. Senator Kaine and I are in very much agreement. In fact, we have a mutual friend who put us together several years ago, and we have a friendship. There’s a little bit of difference in how we see what has happened during the last administration, the idea of finding ourselves where we have to do something about sequestration, we have to do something about the deterioration in the funding and the capabilities of our military.

But as we do that, we don’t want to be in a position that for every dollar we do that, we have to do it for the non-defense. I mean, that philosophy tells me that the priority is not what I interpret the Constitution, and I
told you all of this when you were in my offices. So I think it’s important that we recognize that we’re going to have to do a lot of rebuilding here, and we have to tell the truth. When you talk about we’re pretty good forward but we have nearly an empty bench behind, that’s a serious thing. So you’ve heard a lot of the talks recently. You’ve heard the figures, as some of you have referred to, the Army going to 540,000 ships, 355 Marines to 36 battalions, and 1,200 fighter aircraft there for General Wilson. These are figures that it’s going to be hard to actually come out for exact figures. We talked to Mattis about these same figures, and they recognize they do represent an enhancement that has to be there.

So I want to start off by asking each one of you how realistic you think these figures are, not as if they’re going to be exact but are they in the ball park of the threat that’s facing us now.

We’ll start with you, General.

General Allyn: Thank you, Chairman Inhofe. I’ll start by --

Senator Inhofe: I neglected to say if there’s no objection, we’ll use 7-minute rounds because we’re going to have to do this in one round.

Go ahead.

General Allyn: I’ll ignore this 4-minute ticker on my
Senator Inhofe: Just ignore that.

General Allyn: But, yes, Chairman Inhofe, the Secretary of Defense has directed a strategic review that we expect to result in an adjusted force sizing construct. But as Chief of Staff of the Army has highlighted in prior testimony, the estimate that 540,000 in the active force reflects is a subset of what would it take to get the military risk level to respond to the contingencies that we face and the operational plans of our combatant commands down to a moderate level.

Senator Inhofe: So you’re talking about moderate risk.

General Allyn: A moderate risk level. That would require a 1.2 million total force. Now, if we get adjusted guidance, obviously we will do our internal due diligence to determine exactly what the right number is. But you asked is it in the ballpark; it’s in the ballpark.

Senator Inhofe: All right, and I appreciate that. You know, when you talk about risk, I would hope you would always make sure people understand. You talk about risk, which talks about readiness, which talks about lives. We’re talking about lives now, that’s how serious that is.

Admiral Moran?

Admiral Moran: Yes, sir, Chairman. The number you quoted was based on our force structure assessment, which
was done over the past year. I would tell you that that’s a
good target to start ramping towards. But as you know, in
shipbuilding, it takes years just to get to one ship. So
we’re going to have many years to assess where new
technology takes us, new war-fighting constructs.

But as I said in my opening, we know we’re too small
for what we’re being asked to do today, so we have to get on
a ramp to not only arrest the decline, which I think we’re
on in PB-17, unsequestered, and with an appropriations bill.
So it’s a target that’s worth shooting for, at least in the
beginning ramp of the next four or five years.

Senator Inhofe: Okay, that’s understandable. Would
you repeat your characterization of our capability of our
F18s?

Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. The facts are that for our
entire Hornet fleet, it’s the Hornets and Super Hornet
fleet, we have 62 percent on a given day. Yesterday was 62
percent. I doubt it’s changed much since yesterday. But
we’re in about 62 percent that are not flyable.

Senator Inhofe: More than half.

Admiral Moran: More than half. On a typical day it’s
about 30 percent if everything’s going well, about 30
percent that’s either in depot or on a flight line that’s
not flyable. So we’re double where we should be in non-
flyable aircraft.
Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

General Walters?

General Walters: Yes, sir. The figure of 36 battalions for us, that’s a reasonable target to shoot at if it’s a total force number. But more importantly I think is if we grow end strength. I mentioned that we have done 18 months’ worth of analysis on what capabilities we need. They’re everywhere from ISR, IO, counter-UAS, which is nascent but required and I think a need right now, long-range fires.

So before we build another capacity, we need to fix the holes that are in our current organizations. That’s a smaller number, 194,000 is about that, before you start buying any additional capability. That’s a strategic choice that needs to be made, and a strategic review will look at that.

But I think the 36 battalions comes from a two-thing strategy, doing two things simultaneously. I can tell you today we cannot do two things simultaneously, and one of the stressing ones for us is Korea. We couldn’t do that at all if we still had commitments elsewhere in the world -- Europe, Africa, or the Middle East.

Senator Inhofe: You know, they don’t use that anymore like they used to, two worldwide conflicts almost simultaneously.
General Walters: Yes, sir, and I think our enemies know that.

Senator Inhofe: Because it’s a recognition we’re not there.

General Walters: Yes, sir, and I think our enemies know that, too.

Senator Inhofe: Yes, I think they do too.

General Wilson?

General Wilson: Chairman, I told you yesterday that we’re at about 50 percent readiness today across the Air Force. We’re at the smallest Air Force ever in 2016, when we bottomed out at 310,000. Just last year we finished the year at 317,000. We want to grow our force to 321,000 this next year. But we think the target we’re shooting for is 350,000 airmen in the United States Air Force. That number fills 100 percent of our current manning documents. So that’s a current mission. That’s no new mission. As mentioned by General Allyn, it’s a strategic defense review that looks at where we need to be. That number can be adjusted even up. But we think 350,000 is the number for our airmen.

We think we need 60 fighter squadrons, in addition to modernizing our nuclear force and our space forces.

Senator Inhofe: I want to get to one other area before we go around, and that is when you’re going through a
starvation period, you have two problems. One is it’s at
the expense of modernization and maintenance. First of all,
do you agree with that?

What I’d like to have is just for each one of you the
area of modernization that needs to be enhanced now because
you’ve had to let that go, starting with you, General Allyn.

General Allyn: As we testified last year, Chairman
Inhofe, we’ve had most of our modernization programs on life
support for the last several years. We are currently -- our
modernization program is 50 percent of what it was in 2009.
In 2009, it was $48.5 billion. It’s $24.8 billion this
year, and it’s inadequate to modernize for the near term,
let alone the long-range future force that we know we’re
going to require on a multi-domain battlefield.

So we would prioritize against our near-peer
competitors to ensure our current platforms are the best
that we can possibly field, and then begin to work on the
new equipment that we would need.

The good news about modernizing current equipment is
it’s shovel-ready today if the resources are provided.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

Admiral?

Admiral Moran: Senator, as you know, modernization for
us also comes in the form of maintenance. We modernize our
ships while they’re in maintenance, just upgrading radars,
weapon systems, those sorts of things. But in terms of platform modernization, our top priority is the Columbia class to replace the Ohio class of submarines. We’re at the end of service life in Ohio if we don’t start this year. So we appreciate the anomaly in the current CR environment for Columbia.

Second would be a close call between building to the 12th nuclear aircraft carrier Ford class to get us to a total of 12. And then DDGs and SSNs, probably SSNs over DDGs if we had to prioritize them, simply because we’re already very low on our SSN numbers, and are going lower over time. That’s a key capability for us.

Senator Inhofe: Okay. Generals Wilson and Walters, you answer for the record since we’re out of time here. But keep one thing in mind, and that is when you’re looking at the future, you don’t know really what you have to -- I always remember the last year I was on the House Armed Services Committee, we had a witness. This was in 1994. They said that in 10 more years we will no longer need ground troops. So, you don’t know. You’re predicting in the future; it’s very difficult to do.

So if you want to meet the expectations of the American people, you have to be superior in all areas, which we’re not.

Senator Kaine?
Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to the witnesses.

First a general question for all four of you based on your verbal testimony. Would you agree that a comprehensive national security strategy would require a repeal of sequestration not only for defense but also for the non-defense accounts that directly bear upon national security?

General Allyn: Senator Kaine, absolutely. We require a new national security strategy to guide both the military capability that’s required and the other elements of national power that would be integrated to whatever solution we would need to deliver around the world.

Admiral Moran: I would agree with General Allyn, sir.

General Walters: I agree, sir. The entire nation’s power needs to be brought to bear.

General Wilson: I agree.

Senator Kaine: Thanks, General Wilson.

General Allyn, in your verbal testimony, in talking about readiness, you talked about the link between readiness and our ability to recruit and retain our best talent, and I’d like you to elaborate on that a little bit. What’s the connection between these readiness discussions we’re having and the ability to recruit and retain?

General Allyn: Thank you, Senator Kaine. As I talked in the intro of the conversation, the Army is people. At
its core, our primary weapon system is our soldier. So unless we can continue to assess the great champions that continue to join the United States Army every day and retain the best, we cannot sustain the tempo that we are executing each and every day around the globe.

We have really endured the last several years of the drawdown on the backs of our soldiers who have been willing to extend the time deployed, reduce the time at home, and carry that load. We cannot continue to bear that burden into the future without severe readiness impacts. If we don’t have soldiers manning our forces and carrying our weapons, we don’t have anything. So that is job 1 for us.

Now, the good news is we are successfully recruiting the force that we need, and we are seeing very positive signs in retention. In response to the NDAA 2017 authorization, our first step was to try to retain more of the current force, and within the first 30 days of this effort 2,500 have said I want to extend on this great team. So we are encouraged by that, but we know that this is a long-term effort, and we have to stay after it.

Senator Kaine: Thank you.

Admiral Moran, you and I talked in my office about the maintenance of ships, and as you point out, maintenance is modernization for a lot of what you do. If we’re down from the 300 and teens down to 275, doesn’t that make the
maintenance of the remaining 275 even more important?

Admiral Moran: Yes, sir, it absolutely does.

Senator Kaine: Talk to me a little bit about the shipyards, and I’ll stay with Admiral Moran because there was an implementation guideline on the civilian workforce hiring freeze that was last week issued by the deputy secretary of defense, Secretary Work, and he authorized certain exemptions for positions in shipyards and depots that perform direct management of inventory and direct maintenance of equipment. But nevertheless, that hiring freeze still is affecting your shipyard and depot workers, and many of them are nearing retirement. If this hiring freeze were to continue without adjustment, talk a little bit about the effect that that would have on shipyards in particular.

Admiral Moran: Yes, Senator. I’m mindful of the fact that we’ve got several members here that have shipyards that are very concerned.

Senator Kaine: Yes, I’m trying to beat the question — [Laughter.]

Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. So we have some pretty good assurances that the hiring freeze, the temporary hiring freeze that’s been put into place, that we will be able to get exemptions for our depots and our yards. We are still working through the mechanics of that, though. The
Secretary of the Navy, who has been delegated authority to allow for these exemptions, has to sign each person’s exemption, or can we do these in groups based on the lower echelon input? So we’re working through those details, but I think you’ll be pleased to know that we’re going to get through this in the very near term.

But to your point, if it were to endure, we’re back to sequestration, furlough levels of ’13, that was devastating to our force, and we don’t want to go there.

Senator Kaine: And could I have the other members of the panel talk a little bit about what the hiring freeze would mean if it continued?

General Walters: Sir, I’ll just give you a short example. We’re doing a lot of planning to increase readiness and grow the force and do these things. I’m short contracting officers 50 percent. If I can’t hire contracting officers, we can put any plan we want in place, we can put the money in place, but I can’t execute it, it’s not going to come to fruition. So that’s one of our challenges.

Senator Kaine: General Wilson?

General Wilson: You mentioned shipyards; depots are the same way. So we need to be able to -- today, 96 percent of our civilian workforce works outside of Washington, D.C. They work in places like our depots or on our flight lines.
And if we can’t hire, that has a direct impact to readiness. We’re confident that we can get the procedures in place to move through this, but we can’t have it slow down the hiring.

General Allyn: And for the Army, we’ve begun to triage our depots based on those temp and term hires that were about to expire. We’ve worked through February. We’re just about through March, and we find that the waiver is meeting the need that we have for our commanders, and we have a direct link between our commanders and the Secretary to ensure that bureaucracy does not get in the way of taking care of our people.

Senator Kaine: I’m going to use the remainder to allow General Walters and General Wilson to answer the question that Senator Inhofe asked, because I was really interested in the prioritization, if there were restoration of funds, what are some of the highest priority items that you’ve not been able to do that you would want to do, and I think this is really important testimony to get on the record today.

General Walters: Yes, sir. So we are like all the other services that have taken hits in modernization. We’re at about 50 percent of where we were even five years ago. It caused us to make decisions. Our ground combat vehicle program, our 40-year-old amphibious vehicles, our Humvees need to be replaced, and we have programs for that but
they’re a very, very minimal amount, minimum sustaining rate, and it caused us to do things like an obsolescence program on our light armored vehicles instead of buying new ones. So we’re putting -- I don’t like the term “band-aid,” but we’re putting that program on a light armored vehicle when we really should be buying a new one.

Senator Kaine: General Wilson?

General Wilson: Senator Kaine, just like Admiral Moran talked about, our first priority would be nuclear modernization. We delayed investment in that for far too long. Today we have 75 less F-35s than we had planned on in 2012. So the F-35 program is a significant modernization program going forward.

Additionally, the KC-46 and the B-21 are significant programs going forward. Today’s modernization is tomorrow’s readiness, and right now our average fleet is over 27 years old. We’ve got 21 of 39 fleets of our aircraft that exceed the 27-year average. So building this new capability will help the modernization going forward.

Admiral Moran: Senator, if I could add, if you don’t mind, General Wilson reminded me that for Navy I was focused on the shipbuilding part, but aviation is clearly a priority, either in the near term buying Super Hornets to replace the Hornet fleet, the legacy Hornet fleet, but also we’re in the same position. We are well behind where we
wanted to be when it comes to the F-35. So those are two very important modernization --

Senator Inhofe: I know that’s true, along with the pilot problem, which I’m hoping members will get into.

Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Lieutenant Colonel Ernst?

Senator Ernst: Thank you, sir. I appreciate that.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for being here today. I told a friend earlier today that I think what I’m going to hear from you gentlemen today is very similar to what we heard from last year, and that’s extremely disappointing I think for all of us. So thank you for working under such tight constraints.

General Wilson, I’ll start with you. The Iowa Army Ammunition Plant produces components for some of America’s most advanced ammunition. Since 1941 it has played a role in ensuring America’s forces are ready, and I noted in your written statement that you say we must have sufficient munitions to counter threats. So you’re stating in your opinion that your munition supply is low; is that correct?

General Wilson: Yes, Senator. Today we’re expending about -- well, in the ISIS fight we expended 43,000 munitions. We’re spending about 1,500 a month. So replenishing that stock we think will take about a billion dollars a year of added investments over a significant
period of time, just to replenish those stocks. But our preferred munitions to meet all the combatant commanders needs, we have a deficit across all of them that we need to dig our way out of.

Senator Ernst: So as far as Congress is concerned, simply by providing the dollars necessary, you would be able to secure those munitions?

General Wilson: Yes, ma’am. We’ve put investments not only into the munitions but into what you described, the infrastructure that makes those munitions. So all the plants that produce the fill for the munitions are part of the investment going forward. It’s a significant investment we believe of about a billion dollars a year for about a decade, just on munitions.

Senator Ernst: Very good. I appreciate that. Thank you very much, General.

General Allyn, thank you. I appreciate you leading the way in everything that you do in your travels around the globe to visit our soldiers. That has been very important, and it has been noted in many conversations that I’ve had. So, thank you so much.

You stated that our greatest asset is our soldiers, and I firmly believe that. I believe that we have some of the finest young men and women out there. As you know, I’ve been a long-time proponent of upgrading small arms
capabilities within the Army, and I know, I know that readiness begins with the individual soldier. If they are not ready, none of our higher echelons can be ready.

I do commend the Army’s recent action on upgrading its handgun. I did receive a call from the chief, and I was glad to hear about that. The fact remains that it took far too long for that to happen, but we are on our way.

Russia continues to upgrade its rifles, and this really needs to be a priority as well for the Army.

So again to you, besides more money, what can we do to upgrade other small arms, and how can we do it faster?

General Allyn: I know that you’re aware we have a soldier enhancement program that is part of our program executive officer soldier, and we are focused on a number of initiatives to ensure that our soldiers have the best possible equipment as they go into combat in the future, as we have been able to do in the past.

We have many of those programs, just like every other modernization program that we have. For instance, our multi-year programs for our aviation fleet are all on the floor, right? They’re absolutely at the minimum level to keep those contracts alive. We cannot operate that way. The unit cost for every aircraft is increased each time we do that, and yet year over year we’re put into this dilemma.

So in our soldier portfolio I can provide for the
record specifics, but having reviewed that in detail and visited PEO soldier at Ft. Belvoir, we have a number of lighter, better human dynamic and next-generation FLIR capability that we need to get to the force. But we’ve got to have money to enable that to happen, so I appreciate your continued support as we move forward.

Senator Ernst: Outstanding. Thank you, General.

Admiral Moran, thank you. I enjoyed our conversation the other day. We agreed that readiness is really a mutual obligation, something that we have to commit to in the Congress. You committed to continue to look for ways to make major acquisitions like the Ford class carrier and the F-35C more efficient. That’s imperative. I recognize Congress’ responsibility to provide better budget planning and execution.

Can you commit to me here again that you’re going to hold programs like the Ford class carrier accountable?

Admiral Moran: Yes, ma’am, absolutely.

Senator Ernst: Thank you. And in our meeting you painted a very grim picture of our Navy’s current state of readiness, and I think ensuring that we are being fiscally conservative with major programs like that is key to establishing that readiness.

A question for you and something that we just briefly touched on. If our Navy had to answer to two or more of the
so-called four-plus-one threats today, could we do that?
Admiral Moran: I hate to use the lawyer answer here
and say it depends, because it does depend on which two of
the four we’re talking about. To answer it more
specifically than that, I think we probably need to go into
a closed hearing to really fully flesh that out for you.
But we are at a point right now, as I said in my opening and
in my written statement, that our ability to surge beyond
our current force that’s forward is very limited, which
should give you a pretty good indication that it would be
challenging to meet the current guidance to defeat and deny
in two conflicts.
Senator Ernst: Absolutely. Thank you very much,
Admiral.
And finally, just very briefly, General Walters, you
listed the growing concern for the end strength as one of
your top priorities. Right now it looks like you’re going
to have to pull in 3,000 Marines a year to meet those
recruiting goals. Is that accurate?
General Walters: To be quite accurate, Senator, we
think we should not grow any faster to ensure our standards
are met.
Senator Ernst: Very good. And given that --
General Walters: And we’ll buy their --
Senator Ernst: Very good. The legal answer.
Laughter."

Senator Ernst: Given that women make up about 50 percent of our population, actually a little bit more, that’s a good place to start. Do you have a plan for utilizing women? And what role will they play as you try and increase your readiness and reach your desired end strength?

General Walters: As you well know, the policy now is that all MOS’s are open to women in the Marine Corps. We have a battalion that’s starting a great woman right now. I can’t report to you on any results of that. We have three female infantry down there and three in the staff, and that was out of 380 that were trained and three volunteered. We’ve turned the recruiters to start recruiting for that MOS, and we have 13 in the pipeline right now. So it’s going to be the law of small numbers for a while, I believe.

Senator Ernst: Great. Well, I appreciate it very much, General. And P.S., the Marines need more amphibs.

So, thank you. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for being here today and for your service to the country.

I just want to pick up on Senator Ernst’s comments
about handguns for the Army and point out that I was very pleased to see that get done and very proud to report that those handguns are going to be made in New Hampshire by Sig Sauer, which is an excellent company. So you’re going to get the best.

Admiral Moran, as we discussed when we met, one of the things that I found very concerning was when the first meeting of the Navy caucus met last fall, that Admiral Richardson said to us that the Navy no longer plans any spending in the first quarter of the new fiscal year because of the ongoing continuous resolutions that you all have had to deal with and the uncertainty that that means.

So I think we are probably looking at another CR for the remainder of this year, and I wonder if each of you could identify what you think will be the most challenging impact of that CR as you look at what you’re facing in this current budget situation.

General Allyn: Thank you, Senator Shaheen. I’ll start, and I know they’ll be ready to pile on here.

Our Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA authorized an increase in our operations maintenance account of over $4 billion. None of that will be executable under a continuing resolution. That will have severe implications to not only planned operations here in the homeland but OCO missions as well, contingency operations overseas. So that will be a significant problem.
We also have 50 new starts that are part of our president’s budget for 2017. None of those will get started.

And to the point that Senator Ernst made about ammunition, we also have a severe backlog in our war reserves which we were trying to get after by increasing production at our plants and facilitating those plants. None of that will be possible under a year-long continuing resolution.

That’s just the top couple for the United States Army.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

Admiral Moran: Senator, thanks for the question. The top for us would be deferral of 14 ship avail demands, to include one submarine that would add to the current bow wave for backlog that we have, which is rather enormous. We would probably -- we will begin to shut down two air wings completely. That means no flying for two air wings, and we’d go to what we refer to as tactical hard deck for two additional air wings, which is 11 hours a month per pilot, just to keep them safe. And then we would -- well, it would definitely impact the other flight hour accounts which do pilot production, so where we train pilots to become pilots. I’m about to go over to the Naval Academy tonight to welcome the newest selectees for naval aviation. I’d hate to tell them that they’re not going to be able to train to be pilots
for a while. But that’s what we’re being faced with if we
go to a year-long CR without trading, moving accounts around
where something else has to give.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

General Walters?

General Walters: Yes, Senator, I’m with the Navy on
this one. The definition of a CR is spending at 16 levels.
Our flying hour accounts are nowhere near. I think I
testified yesterday that if we don’t get a supplemental,
we’ll probably stop flying in July. It could be more. We
could burn through our 16 levels because we have more RBA
aircraft in 2017 than we had in 2016, and that’s how it
works. That would be the effect on us.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

General Wilson: Senator, we would have a $1.5 billion
math problem to make up. It would impact 60 new starts. To
meet that math problem, we’d have to directly -- the only
place we can go for money is our readiness accounts. So it
would be flying hours, WSS, or facilities, FSRM accounts.
So much like the rest of the service, we’d stop flying in
the summer, we’d backlog the depots, we’d have to delay,
further delay any modernization of our infrastructure on our
bases. So the thing we’re trying to stop or dig our way out
of, readiness, would impact the most.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you all.
General Allyn: If I could, Senator --

Senator Shaheen: Please.

General Allyn: -- just to add for all of us, you authorized an end strength increase. That would not be funded. So we would be starting that hollow force revisit. At least when I joined the United States Army, we were coming out of that, and we would be starting back down that precipice.

Senator Shaheen: Well, I think I’ve heard everyone on this subcommittee and everyone on the Armed Services Committee say that we can’t let that happen. So shame on us if we don’t take action to address it.

General Wilson, I was distressed to read in your testimony that pilot retention has declined for five straight years. To what do you attribute that? Is it the uncertainty that people are facing, the lack of readiness to be able to train? Or is there something else going on?

General Wilson: Senator, there are a lot of factors at play here, but let me try to give you a snapshot of a couple of them.

It is lack of flying, because pilots join the Air Force to fly. There are different categories, but today’s fighter pilots are flying about 75 to 80 sorties a year, and they’re flying about 140 to 150 hours a year, total. That’s significantly down from before. So they come into the Air
Force to fly.

We’ve got lots of efforts underway to improve the culture of the squadron, to see what a 21st century squadron looks like, and how do we remove the impediments that keep pilots from doing what they want to do. So whether it be reducing additional duties or their ancillary training, improving their quality of life, we’re working on those efforts.

But the other part of it is there’s an ops tempo that goes on. Again, if I take a fighter squadron, for example, the Shaw fighter squadron that flies F16s, when they’re in the bucket to deploy, that year they average 260 days a year gone from their families. On the year that they’re back home, not deployed, they’re averaging 110 days TDY to do other things, red flags, other exercises, so they’re gone a lot.

So at about that 11-year point, the family makes a decision do we continue doing this, and the airlines are hiring and they’re paying a lot of money, and is this a better stability for us. So we’re trying to get after this problem, and I can talk more on the pilots because I don’t think it’s an Air Force problem or a Navy problem or a Marine problem; it’s a national problem that we’re going to have to get our arms around to get after.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.
One of the issues that we’ve been following very closely in New Hampshire is what’s happening with the KC-46 new air refueling tankers. I just learned that the delivery, that first delivery of aircraft has slid by about six months. Will that have an impact on our readiness? How will that affect what’s happening?

General Wilson: Senator, we all think it won’t impact readiness per say because we’re going to keep the number of KC-135s and KC-10s, and as we bring on the KC-46, once we get to the 479 tankers, then we’ll start one-for-one replacing KC-10s and taking them out of the fleet. It’s not ideal, we wanted to be on time, but we slid a little bit. After the initial batch of three per month, then we’re going to go to 1.5, 1.25. But that slide in adjustment has made about a six-month delay.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator.

Chairman McCain?

Senator McCain: I thank the witnesses, and I only wish that all members of Congress could hear the testimony today as we again fight the battle of sequestration.

I only have one question, and I don’t want to take the time of my colleagues. But in late 1970s, some of you may recall or know that the chief of staff of the United States
Army came before Congress and said that we had a hollow Army, and that caused significant repercussions throughout the Congress and the nation.

I’ll begin with you, General Allyn. Do we face the prospect of a hollow Army?

General Allyn: Thank you, Chairman McCain. My belief is if we continue with a continuing resolution, and if we do not eliminate sequestration this year, then we will be faced with the likelihood of beginning that dive toward a hollow force.

Admiral Moran: Senator, I believe that the sign of a hollow force is when no one wants to stay in the force, and I think the longer we go, to General Allyn’s point, with reduced funding and an inability to allow our young men and women to do what they joined to do, to serve their country, they’ll walk, and that will lead to a hollow force. So we’re under threat here in the next few years if we don’t get our fiscal house in order.

General Walters: Chairman, same for us. If we don’t give them the new equipment, they won’t stay around; and that, by definition, at least in my mind, is a hollow force.

General Wilson: Chairman, I would agree with everything that’s been said. As we look at the time period you talked about, the late ‘70s, at the depth of the hollow force, we’re flying less sorties and less hours today than
The good news is we saw how we got there and we saw how we get out of that, so we know what’s required to do that. We know that it takes, first of all, manpower. Once we fix the manpower, then we get the right training. With the right training, we get the weapon systems support, we get the flying hours that we need, we fix the infrastructure, and we can dig out of this, but we have to start now.

Senator McCain: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Rounds?

Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for your service to our country.

Sometimes we don’t say that enough. We appreciate what you do.

I want to just work through some anecdotes that we’ve learned about, and I’d like your thoughts on them, and perhaps this brings some focus to the day-to-day operations and some of the challenges that you have and your team has. If you don’t feel comfortable discussing it in this category, please let me know.

Admiral Moran, I’d like to start with you. Can you talk about the submarines that you’ve got right now, their
capabilities right now and whether or not, specifically with
the USS Boise, what the challenges are and the current
position?

Admiral Moran: Senator, thanks for the question.
First of all, our submarine force is the finest in the
world, unquestioned. But we are lacking capacity in the
long haul. So if we don’t turn around our procurement of
Virginia class submarines, we’re going to be down in the low
40s by the middle of next decade. That’s the lowest point I
can recall. And we ask an awful lot of that force.

To give you an indication of where we are with this
smaller Navy running harder than it has in a very long time,
we are out in our public yards, the priority to fix ships in
our public yards are our nukes, starting with our boomers
because of the national strategic deterrence, followed by
our aircraft carriers, and then we get down to the SSN
world. Because of the capacity limitations and the
workforce limitations that we’ve had, and our inability to
get some of our submarines or some of our work assigned to
the private yards, we’ve had to delay submarines like Boise
for an extended period of time.

So Boise was scheduled for a 24-month availability.
They are now on 47 month. In that time, the CO has come --

Senator Rounds: May I just make this point?

Admiral Moran: Yes, go ahead.
Senator Rounds: What you’re telling me is that you’ve got a nuclear submarine that, because it doesn’t meet readiness standards, you can’t take it out and utilize it today.

Admiral Moran: Even while it’s waiting for maintenance, it is not certified to dive because of the length of time it’s been parked. Yes, sir, that’s true.

The last piece of that that’s important is that, much like Albany, another SSN, which also was extended for 48 months, that CO started the avail and finished the avail having never left the yard to operate that submarine. The XO and the chief engineer, I believe, neither one of them promoted, and the entire crew never deployed. We’re on path to do that with Boise if we don’t get her going. So we’re looking hard at the private yards to fix that problem.

We have four additional, upwards of five additional submarines this year who are going to have to go for an extension to their dive certification. They’re in a similar situation. We think we get most of those extensions by NR, but if they don’t, then we have a similar problem with some of them as we have with Boise today.

Senator Rounds: It’s one thing to build to buy new. It’s another thing to take care of the stuff you’ve got, which is suggesting that while we’re talking about buying new, we’re not giving the resources to even take care of the
equipment that we’ve got today necessary for your
operations.

Admiral Moran: We often trade readiness dollars to pay
for current operations and making sure our kids who are
overseas on deployment have everything they need.

Senator Rounds: I understand right now it’s not just
the ships themselves, it’s not just the boats themselves.
When you talk about manning them and equipping them, is it
ture that right now there have been cases in which you’ve
had carriers moving back out of the areas of forward
operations into the back areas and trading them off and
literally having to stop midway and trading munitions from
one ship to another because you don’t have the resources
right now to maintain two?

Admiral Moran: All of the services are struggling with
munitions stocks, and we’re no different. So when our
carriers swap places, one coming home and one going on
deployment, they often have to offload some of their
munitions to fill the stocks of the one that’s going on
deployment. That is true.

Senator Rounds: Not necessarily the best way to run an
operation.

Admiral Moran: Not if you’re going to turn that
carrier back around if something happens in the world like
has happened in the last five years, that’s true. Yes, sir.
Senator Rounds: Thank you. Let me just ask with regards to the tankers right now that we’ve got, I don’t think we can go anyplace in the world right now without having any one of our aircraft having the availability of a tanker. What’s your current status on tankers, and what are their capabilities today, and what would you expect them to be in order to meet the ongoing needs of the Air Force?

General Wilson: Senator, we certainly are flying KC-135s today. We’re bringing on the KC-46, which is brand new. We’ll start delivery this year. We’re flying KC-10s to keep 479 booms in the air. And you’re absolutely correct, we’ve become a global Air Force because of our tanker force that can move us around the world. As I highlighted in my opening testimony, the strike in Libya would have never happened without 18 different tankers taking off from bases in the U.S., Europe and the Middle East to make that mission happen.

Our tankers are getting old. That’s why the KC-46 is so important going forward and why it improves everything. It improves MC rates to have more of them to fly, aircraft availability. It improves capacity. The KC-46 modernization program is the first step to modernize the tanker force. Largely it was built in the ’50s, modernized along the way. But we find tankers, KC-135s, with tail numbers of 56, older than I am, and I’m an old guy, out
there on the ramp. As we’ve talked about, the maintainers who maintain those do Herculean efforts to keep all those airplanes ready.

Senator Rounds: Let me ask you about your pilots right now. How long does it take you right now to train a pilot, and how long under optimum conditions should it take you based upon the availability of aircraft that are air worthy today?

General Wilson: Senator, today, to produce a basic pilot takes a little over a year. From that time, then they’ll go on to their training school. Depending on what they’re doing, it takes anywhere from four to eight months to a year to get what we call mission ready. Then after that they’ll go off to their units.

Our training path is pretty much at capacity. So we’re producing about 1,200 pilots a year. We think we can grow that to about 1,400, and then we’ll max out the current capacity to produce pilots. Our problem isn’t getting pilots on the front end. It’s basically retaining them on the back end, and then in the middle of that being able to absorb them, getting them all the flight time and training that they need. The hours of sorties have been coming down across the force in the last decade.

Senator Rounds: I had a chance to visit the F-35 base, the training base in South Carolina yesterday. I noted that
you’ve got up-to-date models that are flying right now. They’ve got good operational capabilities, Admiral, and that basically that B model right now is operational and ready to go. The one thing that I discovered is that you guys could use more of those in an expedited manner to make up the difference. That aircraft where for a while there were program problems, right now you’re using some updated software in it, and they’re flying, and they’ve got a good operational capability.

The aircraft in its current condition, we can use those in combat today, can’t we?

General Walters: Yes, sir, we can. The software upgrades need to continue to give us full capability. It needs to deliver on time.

Senator Rounds: I was very impressed with what you’re doing down there, and I appreciate it, and thanks for the opportunity.

General Walters: Thanks for visiting the Marines down there, sir.

Senator Rounds: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

Senator Hirono?

Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for your service and leadership.
Admiral Moran, thank you very much for your commitment to making sure that we move ahead with a waiver of the hiring freeze at our shipyards. Pearl Harbor Navy Shipyard is very important to our national security, as well as to Hawaii.

General Wilson, in your prepared testimony you state that today’s Air Force is at risk of becoming a second-best hand, with readiness hovering near 50 percent. Can you explain for the American public what this means in terms of what the Air Force can and can’t accomplish in terms of its mission? And in your opinion, how much additional budget relative to recent budgets would the Air Force need, and how much time would it take to get readiness levels to much more acceptable levels?

General Wilson: Let me start with -- I used an example, Senator, of how long does it take to grow an eight-year tech sergeant. It takes eight years, and that’s the type of experience we need and I think it’s going to take to get to the readiness levels that we need. It’s not going to happen in one year or two years. We’re looking at six to eight years to bring the readiness level back up to 80 percent.

When I talk about the United States Air Force being 50 percent ready, there are pockets of the Air Force that are significantly below that. Let me give you a snapshot again.
To go back to the Desert Storm timeframe, in 1991, our Air Force stood at about 500,000 active airmen, 134 fighter squadrons. Today we have 55 fighter squadrons, and that’s active Guard and Reserve. Of that, 71 percent are deployed today or are doing co-com-assigned missions, homeland defense of the nation or doing theater support in both Europe and the Pacific. Said another way, there’s 29 percent left in the United States not fully engaged today.

In those different units, in a case against violent extremists, I’ve got very ready crews. They’re going to win in the Middle East. But against a high-end adversary, they’re not training the way they should. They’re not doing all the muscle movement, all the skills that they need to practice on a routine basis to be ready against any adversary anywhere.

Senator Hirono: When you talk about a high-end adversary, you’re talking about Russia or China?

General Wilson: Russia or China, for example.

Senator Hirono: Again, General Wilson, the Air Force COS has stated that 50,000 airmen have left the Air Force while missions have grown, so there’s a math problem, and that the Air Force is too big for the resources available but far too small for what the nation demands of it.

Can you explain the implications of reduced readiness and the impacts on morale and retention? I think one of you
said it’s getting them on the front end that’s okay, but keeping them is a major problem.

Can you talk about the Air Force’s plan to increase readiness in future years? And also, what steps are being taken by the Air Force to meet the requirements for more technically capable recruits for areas like space, cyber, ISR, and nuclear?

General Wilson: Senator, those are all fantastic questions. I’ll maybe start with the last one.

We are in competition. We want the best talent that America has to offer, and the good news is we’re getting great talent. It’s going to continue to be a challenge as we go forward, as we grow our force, because we’ve got to be able to attract America’s best and brightest. They’ve got to see what we do is different, and I think we can connect to the American public about the value of our mission. When they see what we’re doing, they want to serve, they want to join our team.

But to be part of that, to be part of a world-class team, we need to get them the right education, training, and equipment, and then make sure they’re both personally and professionally fulfilled. That’s what keeps them in the service. So across those areas we’ve got lots of work to do to make sure that they’re not coming into the Air Force and working on old, outdated equipment, that they’re working on
state-of-the-art equipment. The training and education they
get is world class. So they remain committed, passionate,
and proud about serving our nation and are personally and
professionally fulfilled.

Senator Hirono: So for our other services, are you
basically having retention problems also, and what are you
doing to make sure that the troops stay in?

General Walters: Retention should never be taken for
granted, Senator. It’s something we look at every day.
When it comes to pilots, I think probably the Air Force is
the bellwether for that, and we’re watching very closely
what they’re doing, and we’re looking for the partnerships
to try to keep more pilots in place.

The biggest thing we can do to retain service men and
women is to give them the equipment they need and the
training they need and the quality of service. The quality
of life will come. But give them the things they need to do
the job they came in for. If they sign up, let’s get them
the stuff they need.

Admiral Moran: Senator, I agree with everything that’s
been said. I would just add that retention problems are
always looking in the rearview mirror. It’s very difficult
to project when it’s going to come without some of the
canaries in the coal mine.

On the pilot side, we certainly look to the Air Force
to be the leading indicator of that. So we’re concerned, deeply concerned that they’re having issues.

When it comes to recruiting, I often look to the Army because they recruit more young men and women into the Army than any of us do. So if they’re having troubles, then we should be looking next.

So those are the bellwethers and the canaries in the coal mine for us.

We currently are doing fine when it comes to recruiting. A lot of young men and women want to come join the service to their country. It’s keeping them for the long haul, especially those we have invested a lot of money in for their technical training that we really have to pay attention to.

General Wilson: Senator, can I pile on just for a second, just to give you another example? If each of us were to lose -- again, I’ll use fighter pilots just for an example. If I say I’ve lost 10 fighter pilots, what I really said, what I should be saying, that’s a $100 million capital investment, because they’re about $10 million each to train, and it takes 11 years. So when they get out at the 11-year point, that’s the loss. I’ve got to make up that capital investment, plus time, and that experience. So we’re focused hard on how to retain quality pilots in the Air Force, and what they’ve all said, let them do their job
with the right equipment.

Senator Hirono: Did you want to add something, General?

General Allyn: Thank you, Senator Hirono. I would echo the comments that have been made. I will tell you that we are assessing the finest talent that we have seen in our history. So we’re getting high-quality soldiers that are joining. We are watching very carefully our mid-grade non-commissioned officers and mid-grade captains and majors who have been on this relentless tempo. The reason why the end strength increase is so important is that a smaller force cannot continue to carry the same load without a retention impact. So we need to grow the force. We need to sustain the quality that we have, and we will not have a retention problem as we move forward if we do that.

Senator Hirono: And it’s pretty hard to enable our people to do the jobs that they signed up for if we continue to rely on short-term CRs and we do not get rid of sequester, because those all impact readiness and modernization, all of those connected areas.

So, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Hirono.

Senator Perdue?

Senator Perdue: Mr. Chairman, thank you for having this hearing. I just want to say for the record, I’m
shocked. When I read the testimony -- and I want to thank you guys and your teams for everything you’re doing, but I want to comment on where we are. I mean, this is shocking to me, that the Federal Government has only a few things it’s supposed to do. One of six reasons 13 colonies got together to start with was to defend and provide for the national defense. No leader would ever let that responsibility dwindle to this sort of capability. It’s not the fault of these guys. God bless them. I think they’re getting as much out of what we’ve given them over the last 25 years than anybody in the world, but here’s where we are. This is not the first time we’ve been there. General Wilson, you mentioned the late ’70s. I mean, in the ’70s, post-Vietnam, we defunded the military. We recapped it in the ’80s. We defunded it again in the ’90s. And we sort of recapped it in the 2000s. But behind 15 years at war, we burned it up, and a lot of that money went to operations, not equipment.

So we hear across all these services, we’ve got 20 years of catch-up here, and I don’t know how you do that. General Mattis two weeks ago actually said that the greatest threat to national security is our own Federal debt, and here’s why. I mean, we can’t fund what these guys need, and what we need for them to have. There’s a moment in history here today -- I just want to say it, though -- that I heard
both sides today say that we have something in agreement, and I want to document that today in the United States Senate. We both know that sequestration, CRs, and the BC caps are just devastating to what we’re trying to do here, but it’s much bigger than that, Mr. Chairman and leaders.

I just want to tell you how much I appreciate your brave face today, but I’m very concerned that in the last eight years, and in the next 10 years based on the baseline budget today, the Federal Government is borrowing over 35 percent of what it spends as the Federal Government. That means that we’re borrowing the other 35 percent, the 35 percent. The problem with that is that our discretionary spending is about 30 percent of our total spend. That means all of the tax money we get in pays for our mandatory. That means that every dollar we spend on your services, on the defense of the country, every dollar we spend on our veterans and our VA, every dollar we spend on the domestic programs which have been holding our military spending hostage, is borrowed. We have to go to China to help fund what you’re talking about doing today.

Mr. Chairman, I don’t know how to say this any clearer. We are in the throws, I think, of the worst military crisis we’ve had in our history, short only of the 1800s when we had to fund our first five frigates and we didn’t have any income to do it. I don’t care how we do this, but we’ve got
to get serious as a Congress and as an administration to
figure out how to do this.

I just have a couple of questions. I read your
testimony. It speaks for itself. But, General Allyn, I’d
like for you to emphasize for the record some really telling
-- we had a question on the hollow force. I’d like to
quantify that a little bit. You mention in here that your
forces, you have about 31 BCTs. Is that right?

General Allyn: In the active force, 58 in the total
force.

Senator Perdue: Yes, sir. So of that 58, or of the
31, you have about 3 that could go to war tonight, that
could fight tonight. Is that what you said?

General Allyn: That’s correct. They’re fully manned,
fully equipped, and trained for immediate deployment.

Senator Perdue: And that 3 compares to the 58. Is
that correct?

General Allyn: That’s across the 58. They happen to
be from the active force.

Senator Perdue: Agreed.

General Allyn: But however you do the math, it’s not
good enough.

Senator Perdue: I’m trying to find out how severe this
really is relative to putting it in perspective. It’s
amazing to me how Congress and past administrations have
allowed this to happen.

Talk about consuming readiness. As we sort of build that back, there’s a danger, and I’ve heard this before, and I’ve seen it in business. You can consume what you’re adding back. So by the time you get to the end of that adding back, you really haven’t added much. I know you each have that going. Could you explain that to us more?

General Allyn: Well, I think to my distinguished colleague from the Navy, he used the term “supply and demand.” It’s really a very simple math problem. If your commitments remain steady or increase, as the United States Army’s have during this drawdown, and your force is smaller, you are doing as much or more with less. And as a result, something gives. For us, we would never send a soldier or a force to do a mission that wasn’t trained and ready and fully equipped with the best that we can provide.

What that means is the force that’s back here is less ready than it needs to be, less well equipped, and for the United States Army we’ve had to implement many restrictions so that the forces going forward are fully manned.

Senator Perdue: And we see that. I’ve been on Foreign Relations now for just two years, but traveling around, meeting with your troops around the world -- and by the way, the best American, and I mean the very best, is in uniform. It makes me proud to be sitting here, and we want to fight
to help do what you’re trying to do. They’re getting what they need at the tip of the spear. It’s everything, the mojo back here, is what you’re saying is our problem.

But, General Walters, just to be specific about one example of what General Allyn is talking about, in Moron, Spain, you’ve got a great contingent of Marines over there. Their mission, as I understand it, is to protect, on a front-line basis, the embassies in Africa. That’s one of their missions, their primary mission.

General Walters: Yes, sir.

Senator Perdue: And we just had to bring half of our B-22 squadron back. Could you explain to us why we brought that back and --

General Walters: Because we couldn’t sustain it, sir. We had to reduce the commitment to Moron and --

Senator Perdue: And what does that do to your mission capability?

General Walters: Well, it puts them in a little bit riskier position if they -- we had 12 over there because we had to send four to South Sudan, a no-fail mission. Four had to take off. Doing that with six aircraft, four out of six on a 24/7 basis, is a little bit more risky.

Senator Perdue: Yes, sir.

General Walters: Now, if we had the squadron, if we had the airplanes, if we had the readiness, then we would
keep 12 over there. It’s the same with our -- we didn’t
only reduce that one. Our CENTCOM commitment in Al Jaber
grew from 12 to 6 aircraft.

Senator Perdue: So basically cut that --

General Walters: We cut those commitments. The
requirement was still there. We just couldn’t sustain it,
so we had to reduce the commitment to a sustainable level,
and that happened to be six.

Senator Perdue: General Wilson, you mentioned that
your average pilot today, active duty, averages about 150
hours a year. Is that correct?

General Wilson: Yes, Senator, across the fighter
fleet.

Senator Perdue: Yes, sir. It would shock you, I know,
but it certainly shocks me to realize, Mr. Chairman, that
I’m flying four times -- a sitting United States Senator, I
put four times the number of airplane hours as our average
Air Force pilot. That’s shocking to me, and it’s not your
fault, but I recognize how severe that puts us.

If we’re looking at your priorities -- there’s no way
we can fund all this in the very short term -- can you
prioritize between your list of the B-21, KC-46, F-35? Talk
about that just a little bit. And the nuclear capability.

You said nuclear was priority 1, right?

General Wilson: We have to modernize our nuclear
force. When you look at the nuclear force today, our Minuteman IIIs were built in the '60s, Minuteman I in the '60s, modernized to Minuteman IIIs in the early '70s. We still have components on the Minuteman III from the Minuteman I. So we have to modernize those.

Our Cruise missiles were designed in the '70s, built in the '80s, to last 10 years. They’re on their fifth service life extension for those missiles. So they have to be modernized. We have to have missiles that can get to the target and do what’s asked of it, and we have a plan to do that with what’s called the LRSO.

The B-21 bomber. Again, we’re flying all of our bombers. Our newest bomber is 25 years old, the B-2. That’s the newest bomber. So all of our bombers are old. The B-21 will be a huge improvement to our combat capability.

So nuclear first, KC-46 to follow -- or, excuse me, F-35, KC-46, and then the B-21. Those are the programs going forward, the modernization programs.

Senator Perdue: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Perdue.

I think we also need to recognize -- and this will surprise a lot of people. I want to distribute these out. This shows what has happened to our military in terms of priorities. In 1964, 52 percent of all revenues that came
into the United States went into defending America. That figure is now 15 percent. And it’s a much more volatile world out there.

The only place we’re going to come up with the resources is going to be to re-prioritize where our military is. I was a little bit critical of President Obama’s position, that he didn’t want to do anything with the military unless you do an equal amount. That’s not what the Constitution tells us we’re supposed to be doing.

I have three things to put in, without objection, into the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[SUBCOMMITTEE INSERT]
Senator Inhofe: Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Mr. Chairman, I could make just a response to your comment about the doing it equally for defense and non-defense, because I think, just to explain how we look at it from our side of the aisle --

Senator Inhofe: Sure.

Senator Kaine: -- because maybe this will help us figure a way forward.

There was no necessary linkage between spending on defense and non-defense prior to the sequestration and the budget caps. You’d make your argument for non-defense; you’d make your argument for defense. You’d hopefully convince your colleagues.

When the caps were voted in place, the sequester in August of 2011, it was let’s try to find a good budget deal, but if we don’t, we will impose budget caps equally on defense and non-defense. So the equality was as a result of the budget caps going into place in the sequester, and so we have always insisted on our side of the aisle that as long as the caps are in place, there should be equal relief.

If sequester was repealed like that, we would be back in the previous state where there wouldn’t be a 50-50 argument. Each side would make its case on the priorities that it wanted and may or may not succeed, but we insist on the 50-50, and another president did as well, because we are
in a BCA cap environment, and as long as the sequester is the law and we’re not repealing the whole thing, we insist on 50-50.

Now that the GOP controls both houses, it would seem like a good time to go ahead and get rid of the caps, and then we’ll just go back to making our case about the priorities. But living under the caps under this scenario, I think we all agree it really doesn’t make any sense, and there’s no 50-50 argument once the sequester goes away.

Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Yes, Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: I know that we have a time deadline, but I just thought it might be remiss of us to close this hearing without asking our panel to testify on the comments yesterday before the House panel on the BRAC process and whether they support that, because there was testimony yesterday that some of you would like to see another round of base closing, and I just wanted to see if we could get insight into that.

Senator Inhofe: Let’s do this, and I would afford the same opportunity for the other senators here. Quite frankly, I didn’t bring that up, and I didn’t bring that up because I disagree with these guys.

[Laughter.]

Senator Inhofe: Here’s the problem, and tell me if you
disagree with this. I’ve been through every BRAC round, five of them now. Without exception, every BRAC round for the first three years costs money. If there’s ever a time in the history of our military that we can’t afford to dilute those dollars that we need to try to resolve the problems that have been talked about today, it’s now.

The second reason is this. We’ve allowed in this starvation period our function to go down. I’ve always been hesitant, and I felt the same way back in the ‘90s after we said the Cold War is over and we no longer need this site, we lived through that. But the problem with that is, if you allow the mission, the infrastructure to go down and the resources to go down to match what is already artificially low, then once you rebuild you don’t know for sure what you’re going to need.

Now, you didn’t ask me; you asked them. So if you would like to make any comments about your position on a very significant issue, it would be BRAC.

General Allyn: I’ll step into the breach first, Chairman, recognizing that I’m going to say something that you disagree with, but I respect your opinion. I also recognize that I’ve been up here now for the third year pleading for additional funding, pleading for the elimination of sequestration, and pleading for the stoppage of continuing resolutions.
Given that those have not gone away, we are forced to look internally on where else can we save, and a BRAC is an area we know we can save. And, yes, we do have to put money up front, but right now we are saving $1 billion per year from the 2005 BRAC, and $2 billion per year from all the BRACs in prior years. That’s real money that we need if we don’t get rid of sequestration and we don’t get rid of continuing resolutions.

So that’s the environment that we’re operating in, and to us a billion dollars would make a huge difference. It costs us $30 million to run an installation, whether there’s a soldier on it or not. So this is real money when you have 154 installations to run around the world.

Senator Inhofe: And I would say if we can afford to reach the point where that yield is achieved and realized, I would agree with you.

Any other comments on the BRAC?

Admiral Moran: Senator, I would just tell you I learned a long time ago that waterfront property is something you should never give away.

[Laughter.]

General Allyn: The Army doesn’t have much of that.

Admiral Moran: I know, and that’s why I respectfully disagree with you.

[Laughter.]
Admiral Moran: So we feel we’re in pretty good shape in the Navy. The 6 percent or so of overhead that we’re carrying really is internal to the bases. If we could do a micro-BRAC inside our own bases just to demolish buildings we’d like to demolish and not have to go through the bureaucracy of that, that would be far more helpful than going through another round of BRAC to the Navy.

Senator Inhofe: Appreciate it.

Any other comments?

General Walters: Sir, we’re small either coast. We’re fine right where we are.

Senator Inhofe: You’re still using retreads, too.

[Laughter.]

Senator Inhofe: Senator Perdue?

Senator Perdue: I apologize, but I cannot resist this moment. I came into the Senate as a debt hawk and also a defense hawk. We’ve lost the luxury of choosing sides on this. We have to be both. I’m very concerned that in the last 42 years, since the ’74 Budget Act, we talk about CRs and we talk about sequestration and all this, but we’ve used 175 CRs since 1974. That’s not going to stop.

The budget process is broken. It’s one of the problems that --

Senator Inhofe: Yes, it is.

Senator Perdue: It’s not a partisan comment. It’s one
of the few things Senator Kaine and I -- we agree that this is something, if we could get to a politically neutral platform, you could eliminate CRs, you could eliminate debt ceiling conversations. This is something that we can do. But I think we have to use the military as the platform and the reason why it is absolutely necessary we do it right now.

So I would implore this subcommittee to start looking at that as a way to put pressure back on the people who do have an opportunity to change that process. One-hundred-seventy-five continuing resolutions under all kinds of presidents over the last 42 years. This has nothing to do with partisan politics. It’s something that we’ve got to fix. We will never solve this problem until we solve that problem.

Senator Inhofe: And we might start by passing appropriations bills.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, I just want to be clear for the record that I agree with your position, not with General Allyn’s, much as I understand it.

Senator Inhofe: Oh. Thank you.

General Allyn: I wasn’t coming after Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, ma’am. My stepfather worked there for 30 years, okay? I got to go to school because of it.

Senator Perdue: And in 42 years, we’ve averaged two-
and-a-half appropriations bills passed per year. That’s the problem.

Senator Inhofe: Yes. It’s disgraceful.

General Wilson, last shot.

General Wilson: Senator, I think we carry about 25 percent extra capacity on our bases. I think there’s an opportunity to do some smart investment going forward. But right now, we’re carrying a backlog of stuff that we have to pay for in this budget environment. I think we need to look at opportunities to save.

Senator Inhofe: Okay, appreciate very much the excellent testimony and the attendance. Thank you so much for being here.

We’re adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:08 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]