• Salutation

• Thanks: Chairman Punaro / members of the Reserve Forces Policy Board for invitation to update; The Reserve Forces Policy Board as an important partner during the Commission’s fact-finding mission

• Special Thanks: Major General Singh - testified at our public hearing on Selective Service; Dr. Bensahel - met with our Commissioners, and the Board’s staff - provided important information to our team. This input has been very helpful to the Commission’s deliberations, and we are grateful for your time and insights.

• Background: FY17 NDAA to initially answer the question “women registration”
  
  o Late Sen. McCain & Sen. Jack Reed saw opportunity to do more
  
  o Charged with answering two important questions

  ▪ First, do we still need the Selective Service System and, if so, whether the current system requires modifications?

  ▪ Second, how can we, as a nation, create an ethos of service and increase participation in military, national, and public service?

  ▪ Commission Composition

  ▪ 3 year tenure; disestablish September 2020
Final report to Congress, President, American People March 2020

- First time in nation’s history, single entity, holistically and comprehensively reviewed the Selective Service System and all forms of service: military, national, and public service.

- In 2018, we:
  - Conducted extensive research;
  - Traveled to all 9 census districts, 15 states, 24 cities, and met with more than 300 organizations;
  - Met elected officials, government employees, military members, faith-based ministries; business and nonprofit leaders.

- The result of that research was our Interim Report, issued in January of this year that outlines what we learned in our first year of work and gives a glimpse of the policy options we are considering.
  - Give website

- 2019, continued robust research and public engagement agenda.
  - 14 public hearings, released 8 staff memos, and met with a wide range of stakeholders.
  - Hearings provided an opportunity to learn from policy experts on key topics within the Commission’s mandate.
  - In April, four hearings on the Selective Service System, mobilization needs, and whether registration should be expanded to include all individuals.
Today, primarily focus on the Selective Service System and Military Service

**Selective Service System**

- “Is the military draft still a necessary component of U.S. national security?”

- Since 1980, every presidential administration has made the conscious decision to maintain registration for the Selective Service System.

- This, in light of DoD admitting they have no plans to use a draft and extols the virtues of the AVF.

- Yet DoD supports, and some in this room have written about the need, to maintain SSS: (Gen. Barno and Dr. Bensahel, February 2016 “Why We Still Need the Draft” in War on the Rocks)
  
  o A low-cost insurance policy with only a $23 million budget and limited personnel
    - “The military selective service system guarantees the certain, timely, and equitable fulfillment of military manpower requirements in a national emergency.”
    - Current draft contingency requirements call for the first conscripts to be inducted into the military within 193 days of Congressional authorization of a draft, with the first 100,000 personnel reporting within 210 days of the same

- Heard from SSS that compliance with registration exceeds 92%
- Heard from detractors that in today’s mobile society, data is inaccurate soon after entry
- No significant exercise of system since re-instated in 1980
- Will it really be “timely”

- A source of recruitment leads
  - SSS provides the DoD Joint Advertising and Market Research Studies Office (JAMRS) the names, addresses, and dates of birth of all new registrants— more than 2.3 million in FY 2016 alone
  - Annually, the ‘joint lead’ generation card generates approximately 75,000-85,000 recruiting leads from men interested in the possibility of volunteering for service.”
  - USAREC – the largest user, cannot distinguish lead source
  - USMC – no statistical difference in conversions

- Reminds America’s youth of the importance of military service as inherent obligation of citizenship in a free society / important link btw military and society writ large - bridges civ-mil divide
  - Question validity since the vast majority register “passively” or as a secondary activity

- A symbol of national will and a deterrent to potential enemies of the United States
  - Unproveable

- “Is it needed and will it work?”

- To answer, we met with:
  - DoD
- SSS – visited data management center in IL
- Military Services
- Service members
- MEPS
- Conscientious Objectors / War Resisters
- Think Tanks
- General population across the age spectrum

• Highlights - What we learned

  - SSS & Draft are conflated
  - Misunderstanding of SSS requirements
  - Overwhelming majority of uniformed members prefer AVF
  - CO’s and WR’s – same goal for different reasons
  - Changing nature of warfare will require more than just riflemen
  - Questionable infrastructure capacity to meet demands / needs
    - MEPS
    - Recruit Training
    - High-skill MOS’s

• In response, Commission is exploring the policy and logistical implications of:

  - Discontinuing SSS as currently exists, either in toto or converting to “just in time”

  - Maintaining and modernizing
    - Expanding age range of draft cohort – older = greater skill set
    - Critical skills-specific (building on the Healthcare Personnel Delivery System)
    - Require females to register
- Require periodic updates

  - Exploring proposals that could serve as a continuum between the AVF and a draft
    - Presidential call to encourage Americans to voluntarily join the military before resorting to a draft.
    - Additional mechanisms that could be used to encourage volunteers during a national security emergency
      - Voluntary mechanisms to identify personnel before the onset of a crisis, with a focus on individuals with critical skills.
      - These mechanisms could include:
        - A registry of individuals who, in return for incentives, indicate their willingness to serve in national security emergencies and provide information that establishes special skills and eligibility.
        - A voluntary roster, which through a registration system, would annually prompt individuals to indicate if they want to remain “on-call” or opt-out, to update their skills if changed, if they would like to speak to a recruiter, and if they would like to visit a military unit that aligns with their skills/interest areas.
        - A non-prior service, skilled, strategic reserve administered either by the SSS or the DoD, with training, incentives, and an accession policy for inclusion in the reserve. This reserve, offering robust incentives, might include a requirement to transition to active duty status, similar to U.S. military reserve components in the event of a national security emergency.
Creating a civilian corps of former federal cybersecurity employees to retain a reserve of critical technical talent in case of emergency. This would allow agencies to offer compensation and maintain security clearances for corps members, provide regular training, establish systems and policies to recall corps members to full-time service, and protect re-employment rights with private-sector employers.

The 800 Pound Gorilla - Expanding SSS registration to all individuals

- While the Commission is interested in exploring how we can increase the type of talent used in the case of a national emergency, that raises the question of whether half of the population – women - should be included in the registration process.

- This Commission was created amid the debate of whether registration for the Selective Service System should be expanded to include women since combat restrictions for women were lifted in 2015.

- This debate is not new. And this question of registering women has been raised throughout history as a result of anticipated military needs, legal concerns, capabilities of women in the military, and changing attitudes over women’s role in society.

- In the case Rostker v. Goldberg, the Court held that men and women were not similarly situated for purposes of draft registration because of then-existing restrictions on women in combat.

- However, in February, a federal district court judge in Texas issued a declaratory judgment finding that all-male registration violates the equal protection principles of the Constitution and can no longer be
justified.

- The district court concluded that, men and women are now similarly situated for purposes of a draft or registration for a draft.

- The federal district court in New Jersey is also considering this question but has not yet entered judgment.

• The Commission recognizes that Americans hold varied and deeply held convictions regarding extending registration to all individuals.

• Meta-analysis of studies: slight overall majority favor; women as a group slightly oppose.

• We do not take this task lightly

**Encouraging Military Service**

• We have all heard the numbers: ¾ of today’s youth ineligible to serve

• Societal issues beyond the scope

  - ~32m 18-24 y/o
  - ~9m eligible (medical [obesity, mental health], legal, drug use)
  - ~4.5m eligible and high academic quality
  - ~450k eligible, high academic quality, and propensed

• ASVAB CEP
  - <5% of high school students

• JROTC and other cadet programs

• Better use of advertising dollars
• Create limited tuition grants for pre-service professional civilian certifications in exchange for an enlisted service commitment.

**National and Public:**

• I have focused my update today on Selective Service System and military service, but the Commission has also taken a very deep dive into a wide range of topics related to increasing participation in all forms of service to include national service and in public service.

• Three overarching and interconnected conditions that underlie an individual’s participation in service:
  o Awareness, referring to their understanding and knowledge of service opportunities;
  o Aspiration, or their motivation or ambition or entering service; and
  o Access, their ability to act on and realize their aspiration by entering service

• We believe there are many ways to serve your country – whether shoulder a rifle, tutoring a child, or protecting our public lands. Our report will have some exciting and innovative ideas that – if enacted-will help make service a common expectation and experience.

• If you have any questions about what this looks like, please feel free to ask during this question and answer period.

**Closing**

• I know some of you are on the edges of your seats wondering what the Commission will recommend about the Selective Service System and
other parts of our mandate.

- You don’t have too much longer to wait. Our final recommendations will come out soon – the six-month countdown begins to March 2020!

- One thing I can tell you is that the Commission is looking at ways to help smooth out that transition to help more people move from one service world to another. We will address awareness, aspiration, and access.

- Americans deserve a clear and supported path to service and we are making sure of that.

- If you haven’t yet, I encourage you to read our Interim Report and our staff memos on our website to see where we are and where we are headed in 2019. The Commission appreciates input and ideas from the public, and is taking public comment until December 31, 2019. Please visit www.inspire2serve.gov to submit a comment.

- Please join us in making our vision a reality: every American, inspired and eager to serve.

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