

1 LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY

2 COUNCIL MEETING

3  
4 April 27, 2017

5 10:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

6 Barksdale Airforce Base, LA 71110

7 Eubank Center-Meeting

8  
9 MEETING AGENDA

- 10 1. Call to order
- 11 2. Pledge of allegiance
- 12 3. Approval of minutes
- 13 4. Chairman's remarks and introductions
- 14 5. Reports:
- 15 A) Secretary Strickland - Veterans Affairs
- 16 B) Barksdale Forward - Murray Viser
- 17 C) Fort Polk Progress - Michael Reese
- 18 D) SEMA - Gary Silbert, GNO, Inc
- 19 E) Calendar Commitment
- 20 F) Roosevelt Group - Chris Goode
- 21 6. New Business
- 22 A) Economic Impact Study
- 23 B) Jim Nunn presentation
- 24 7. Public Comments
- 25 8. Adjournment

1 MS. MCCONNELL: I would like to begin with a roll  
2 call.

3 Q Mr. Mathes?

4 A No response.

5 Q Mr. Nunn?

6 A Here.

7 Q Secretary Pierson?

8 A Present.

9 Q Mr. Pugh?

10 A. No response.

11 Q Ms. Randolph?

12 A Present.

13 Q Mr. Reese?

14 A Here.

15 Q General Richard?

16 A En route.

17 Q Mr. Russo?

18 A No response.

19 Q Mr. Smith?

20 A No response.

21 Q Secretary Strickland?

22 A Here.

23 Q Mr. Tate?

24 A No response.

25 Q Mr. Thompson?

1 A Here.

2 Q Mr. Vinci?

3 A Here.

4 MS MCCONNELL: Via phone.

5 Q Mr. Reiser?

6 A Here.

7 Q Mayor Walker?

8 A Here.

9 MR. ----:

10 Humphreys isn't here.

11 MS. MCCONNELL:

12 Thank you.

13 We have a quorum Mr. Chairman.

14 MR. MCCONNELL:

15 And Mr. Silbert, I believe, is on the  
16 line with us well.

17 Right? He's not on record though.

18 MR. SILBERT:

19 Here.

20 SECRETARY PIERSON:

21 Thank you for that, we do have a quorum and  
22 we'd like to start our meeting today with the  
23 Pledge of Allegiance. The flag's behind me, if  
24 you'll stand.

25 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

1                   SECRETARY PIERSON:

2                   Thank you for that and we have General Richard  
3                   joining us now, welcome. I believe the minutes  
4                   of our November meeting were emailed to you. I  
5                   hope you had a chance to review those. Were  
6                   there any comments or corrections that anyone  
7                   would like to add relative to the minutes  
8                   before we move for their adoption? Hearing  
9                   none, the chair will entertain a motion to  
10                  accept the minutes as provided.

11                  MR. HUMPHREYS:

12                         So moved.

13                  MR. JAKES:

14                         Second.

15                  All in favor please signify by saying, "I."

16                  ALL:

17                         "I."

18                  SECRETARY PIERSON:

19                  Thank you for that. Mayor Walker, we're  
20                  pleased to have you here. I don't know if you  
21                  would like to make a few remarks as our  
22                  community host, but thank you for your  
23                  assistance and Mr. Vizer was also of assistance  
24                  in helping us locate the meeting here today.

25                  MAYOR WALKER:

1                   Well, we're very pleased that you're  
2                   rotating this around. The only sad thing I  
3                   have to say and you and a few others will  
4                   know that this used to be at a bar. This  
5                   is a much better place to have it. Welcome  
6                   everybody.

7                   SECRETARY PIERSON:

8                   Thank you for that. I do want to make  
9                   sure that we've all had a chance to put  
10                  faces with names, so I will at this point  
11                  just ask the members to state their names.  
12                  And I also want to include our guests. We  
13                  have some distinguished visitors here with  
14                  us today. Mayor Beebe, would you please  
15                  start.

16                  MAYOR. BEEBE:

17                  Clarence Beebe. Mayor of Hornbeck.

18                  MR. RICHARD:

19                  Ron Richard. I'm with the Louisiana  
20                  Veterans Network Initiative.

21                  MR. JAKES:

22                  I'm Brian Jakes representing New  
23                  Orleans.

24                  MR. HUMPHREYS:

25                  Jack Humphreys. ESGR.

1 MR. BANKS:

2 I'm Willie Banks with the Military  
3 Officers Association.

4 MR. WALKER:

5 Lo Walker. I'm mayor of Bossier City.

6 MR. GATTI:

7 I'm Robbie Gatti. I'm a Major in the  
8 Louisiana National Guard and I'm a  
9 candidate for District 8 House seat.

10 MR. EPPERSON, SR:

11 Kenneth Epperson, Sr. Director of  
12 Northwest Louisiana Veterans Cemetery.  
13 Former Caddo Parish Commissioner for  
14 twenty-one years. Chair of the Caddo,  
15 Bossier, Shreveport, Bossier-City Veterans  
16 Parade and Honor Ceremony.

17 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

18 George Strickland. Secretary of  
19 Veterans Affairs.

20 SECRETARY PIERSON:

21 Don Pierson. Louisiana Economic  
22 Development.

23 MS. MCCONNELL:

24 Sherri McConnell. Louisiana Economic  
25 Development.

1 MR. VIZIER

2 Murray Vizier. President of Louisiana  
3 Forward.

4 MR. THOMPSON:

5 Andy Thompson. Retired Air Force.  
6 Currently with Northrop Grumman here in  
7 Bossier City and I'm your Defense Rep.

8 MR. NUNN:

9 Jim Nunn. Co-Chairman Veteran's  
10 Action Coalition Southwest Louisiana.

11 MR. GOOD:

12 Chris Good with the Roosevelt Group.  
13 We represent Barksdale Forward.

14 MR. REESE:

15 Michael Reese. Chairman of Fort Polk  
16 Progress.

17 MS. RANDOLPH:

18 Deborah Randolph of the Central  
19 Louisiana Regional Chamber of Commerce.

20 MR. LIESVELD:

21 Brian Liesveld. Cyber Innovation  
22 Center.

23 MR. SPOHN:

24 Craig Spohn. Cyber Innovation Center.

25 MR. ROCKENBAUGH:

1 Rocky Rockenbaugh. Voter United  
2 Development Foundation.

3 MS. Quinn:

4 Leslie Quinn. Congressman Mike  
5 Johnson's office.

6 MR. JAKES:

7 Brian Jakes, Jr. Supporting Brian  
8 Jakes, Sr.

9 SECRETARY PIERSON:

10 Thanks for coming out today Brian.

11 MR. Carter:

12 David Carter. Louisiana Economic  
13 Development.

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 Excellent. Great turn out. Thank you all for  
16 the travel that you may have made to join us  
17 here today. We have an important agenda and  
18 we'll move into the direction of that. I don't  
19 know with Ms. Leslie Quinn with Congressman  
20 Mike Johnson's office, would you like to make  
21 any remarks.

22 MS. QUINN:

23 Want to let you know that Congressman  
24 Johnson's a great supporter of veterans and  
25 veterans issues. And, he's looking forward



1 to working with all of you and to  
2 representing you in Washington D.C. as he's  
3 done in the past in the state legislature.  
4 Our office, I'm located here in the Bossier  
5 City District Office and so anytime that  
6 there's anything that the Congressman or  
7 our office can do to help in this effort,  
8 we certainly support all of these things  
9 we're going to be talking about and just  
10 want to make ourselves available anytime  
11 you need us.

12 SECRETARY PIERSON:

13 Thank you so much, Leslie. We look  
14 forward to working with Congressman Johnson  
15 and certainly Chris Good leading our  
16 delegation in Washington D.C. We will have  
17 the opportunity to spend some time with him  
18 as well. We offer those technical elements  
19 that we can possibly help support the  
20 Congressman so he can support us in any way  
21 that we can. So, thank you for your  
22 participation today and getting established  
23 in this network. Critically important. A  
24 lot of things that are around the federal  
25 policy issues today are moving. It's a new

1 administration and we've got some important  
2 elements to kind of shepherd up there. And  
3 you'll hear more about those things today.  
4 Through Sherri McConnell, who is acting as  
5 our Executive Director. If we can provide  
6 any materials or anything to anyone here,  
7 but in particular, to support the  
8 Congressmen's important work in this  
9 district. Then, please know that we are  
10 prepared to provide that for you. Alright,  
11 we'll move into our reports now. And I'll  
12 call on Secretary Strickland, Veterans  
13 Affairs.

14 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

15 I'm going to take the liberty of standing  
16 up. I just feel better when I breath  
17 standing up. I guess that's an old Army  
18 habit. But, anyway, it's good to see  
19 everybody here this morning. I know most  
20 of you and before I start my briefing, I  
21 want to acknowledge two people, General  
22 Richard who works very closely with me on  
23 veterans issues. My good friend Jim Nunn  
24 who are both members of the committee who  
25 worked with me in Lafayette on veterans

1 issues and I also, everybody knows Ken. We  
2 were looking for a cemetery director, Ken  
3 said that he was tired of Caddo politics  
4 and he wanted a steady job. So, we hired  
5 him to be our director and he's doing a  
6 great job over in Keithville running that  
7 beautiful cemetery. Which, by the way, was  
8 our first cemetery in the state of  
9 Louisiana and just absolutely beautiful if  
10 you've not been out there. It's my  
11 pleasure and my honor to lead the  
12 Department of Veterans Affairs under  
13 Governor John Bell Edwards. I'm no  
14 stranger to the department. I was the,  
15 back then they called them the director,  
16 for Mike Foster for eight years. And, then  
17 I ran it for Governor Blanco for about  
18 four. I even worked for Bobby Jindal for  
19 about a year before I went to Arizona to be  
20 the Secretary for Veterans Affairs out  
21 there. And came home to retire and John  
22 Bell had some other ideas and so here I am,  
23 back in the fight. But, I'm really proud  
24 of our department. We took over a  
25 department that had a lot of problems from

1 the previous administration. I won't go  
2 into details, but there were a lot of areas  
3 that were dysfunctional. We had to put  
4 together a solid team, which we have. We  
5 have a good management team there now.  
6 There's two Vietnam veterans still working  
7 who are leading the department. Myself and  
8 Mr. Homer Rogers, the deputy. We have  
9 Desert Storm veterans that run major  
10 programs. We have Iraq-Afghan veterans  
11 that run major programs with a good mixture  
12 of civilian leadership. Our department is  
13 a sixty million dollar department with over  
14 nine hundred employees. We do a great job  
15 of serving Louisiana very well. The first  
16 thing I'd like to talk about is the parish  
17 service offices. We have trained  
18 counselors, now, in every parish providing  
19 benefits and helping our veterans with  
20 their disability and compensation claims.  
21 This past year, the department brought in  
22 over 1.2 billion, with a "b," dollars into  
23 the state of Louisiana. This is money that  
24 goes directly into the pockets of our  
25 veterans and their families. We're one of

1 the top states in the nation in bringing in  
2 federal dollars in compensation benefits.  
3 We're very, very honored to do that. The  
4 other big program that we run is our  
5 veterans homes. As you all know, we have  
6 one of the top notch veterans homes right  
7 here in Bossier City. Matter of fact, just  
8 out the gate, and I'm very honored to tell  
9 you, and Lo, I think you'll appreciate this  
10 because you were part of that, but last  
11 week the Bossier home underwent a very  
12 intense federal healthcare survey. These  
13 are like the three day IG inspections that  
14 we all remember and love and they look at  
15 everything. I'm happy to tell you that the  
16 Bossier home passed with zero deficiencies.  
17 That tells me that we have solid leadership  
18 at that home and we're providing quality  
19 top care for our veterans. There's a  
20 misconception that the homes are just for  
21 elderly veterans and spouses. That's not  
22 true. They're also for combat wounded  
23 veterans. Veterans that are paralyzed in  
24 accidents. And we have a number of those.  
25 We also were inspected three weeks ago at

1 the Jennings home and that home received  
2 zero deficiencies in there's. Now that's  
3 two down and three to go. We have a total  
4 of five homes. So, we'll see how the other  
5 three do. But, those homes are all  
6 federally funded and we don't rely on any  
7 state general funds. And that's the beauty  
8 of our program. There's about five money  
9 streams that come into those federal homes  
10 that support our veterans. I was able to  
11 use some of that reserve federal funding  
12 that we get through our homes to stabilize  
13 my parish service offices because they were  
14 one of the lowest group of paid employees  
15 in the state and we would train them and  
16 they would constantly jump ship and go over  
17 to the federal side. Well, using federal  
18 reserve dollars this year, I was able to  
19 give all of those great men and every one  
20 of them is a veteran, but, I was able to  
21 give them all a twenty-two percent pay  
22 adjustment. I haven't lost a one since  
23 then. And so, that solved that problem. I  
24 didn't use a penny in state general funds.  
25 I used all federal reserve dollars. I had

1 to be a little creative, but we got it  
2 done. And we needed to do that. So,  
3 things are going extremely well in our  
4 homes. We have major projects at each  
5 home. The newest home is over ten years  
6 old now. The oldest home is over thirty  
7 years. The home at Jackson. So, we have  
8 major projects going on at each home to  
9 make the quality of life a little bit  
10 better for our veterans. These veterans  
11 homes, in case you've never visited one,  
12 provide a quality of life that no civilian  
13 nursing home can ever match. They're not  
14 quite Club Med, but they're pretty darn  
15 close. And we're very, very proud of them.  
16 The other program that I want to discuss  
17 with you is our state veterans cemeteries.  
18 The state of Louisiana has authorized five  
19 state veteran cemeteries. We have four.  
20 Everyday, probably even as we speak, we  
21 bury veterans and their loved ones. And we  
22 do it just the way Arlington does it with  
23 honor and dignity. I'm very proud to have  
24 Ken here with us today to and hopefully  
25 maybe he can get a chance to talk a little

1 bit about what he does out there, because  
2 I'm proud of that. But, we need a fifth  
3 home. We own twenty-two acres in Jennings,  
4 fairly close to the big veterans home  
5 there. And, we've applied for an eight  
6 million dollar federal grant to build that  
7 cemetery. We've been told that we will be  
8 number two on the federal priority list to  
9 get that home. So, I fully expect that  
10 we'll start on the Jennings Veterans  
11 Cemetery for the Southwest. That will  
12 cover all veterans and their families from  
13 Breaux Bridge all the way to Lake Charles.  
14 That will allow them to be buried closer to  
15 home with their loved ones in the areas  
16 that they grew up in. We're honored to do  
17 that. We also have applied for a two  
18 million dollar grant to add more  
19 columbarium space to the Slidell Veterans  
20 Cemetery in Slidell. Because that  
21 particular cemetery, for some reason, has  
22 more what we call cremain burials. In  
23 other words, more cremated burials. And,  
24 so we're rapidly running out of wall nicks  
25 for those burials. And, so we're going to



1 get on top of that real quick so that  
2 doesn't happen. We're very, very proud of  
3 our cemeteries, our leadership. We have  
4 top notch leadership, all veterans that run  
5 those cemeteries and they do an extremely  
6 good job. The other program that I want to  
7 mention to you very briefly is our  
8 legislative side of the department. In the  
9 past, we would put a bill through the  
10 legislature. And the bills, in my opinion,  
11 didn't really do much for veterans. I  
12 mean, yeah, they did, if you put a bill in  
13 for a tag to honor a group, like the  
14 American Legion or VFW, that's fine. I  
15 belong to those organizations and I don't  
16 have a problem with that, but I wanted  
17 solid bills to go through the legislature  
18 that helps veterans that do things. This  
19 past year, I got two bills that extended  
20 the Military Family Assistance Fund to all  
21 veterans that needed financial assistance.  
22 And just as the governor signed that bill,  
23 we got hit with the floods. We were able  
24 to help over a thousand veterans. We  
25 donated over five hundred thousand dollars

1 to get them back on their feet. That fund  
2 is also used to help guardsmen who are  
3 deploying into combat zones come back home  
4 one last time. One of the things that I'm  
5 doing, because I'm concerned that the state  
6 general fund doesn't feel that fund up fast  
7 enough is I'm working with the Office of  
8 Motor Vehicles and with General Curtis and  
9 we've got a bill going through the  
10 legislature to increase driver's license  
11 fees by one dollar. That fee will go to  
12 the Military Family Assistance Fund and  
13 that will give us a million dollars a year  
14 to work with and to take care of our  
15 veterans. It's a great fund. I just  
16 signed an authorization to award a veteran  
17 in Lafayette, yesterday almost three-  
18 thousand dollars cause he was in trouble  
19 financially. It was legitimate trouble.  
20 It wasn't BS. And so, it's a great bill.  
21 The other bill that we got through,  
22 Louisiana as we all know is a poor state.  
23 A lot of families can't afford to pay the  
24 burial plot fee to bury a spouse with his  
25 or her veteran. It's a seven hundred and

1            forty-nine dollar burial plot fee. Well, I  
2            got a bill through that allows me to either  
3            negotiate a lower payment or to waive that  
4            payment completely. And that's good.  
5            We've had a number of burials that we had  
6            to do. The other thing that I started to  
7            run into is there not really, there  
8            indigent, but their veterans who are  
9            estranged from their families for some  
10           reasons. Due to maybe combat, PTSD, or  
11           whatever reason they pass away and the  
12           families don't want to have anything to do  
13           with them. I had a case last week where  
14           there was one veteran that passed away, his  
15           brother was a judge and his brother  
16           wouldn't step up and help his brother. So,  
17           I can bury them in the cemeteries free of  
18           charge. There authorized to be buried  
19           there, but somebody has to pay for their  
20           funeral and these funeral homes don't  
21           always want to donate their services. So,  
22           what I did is I try to be as creative as I  
23           can. What I did was I got with Catholic  
24           Veterans in New Orleans and the leader  
25           there is a retired Coast Guard commanders

1 and we created an indigent fund to support  
2 those veterans that have no survivors or  
3 that survivors don't want anything to do  
4 with them so that we can pay for their  
5 funerals and get them buried with dignity  
6 and honor. We've got about three thousand,  
7 four thousand dollars in that fund now.  
8 So, across the board, the department is  
9 doing extremely well. We're taking care of  
10 our veterans. I've been the secretary now  
11 for about fourteen years here in Louisiana,  
12 so I know my department. I know the  
13 veterans service organizations extremely  
14 well. We have a good relationship with all  
15 of them. We do an extremely good job of  
16 taking care of veterans from say Vietnam  
17 era through Desert Storm. Veterans that  
18 are already established and work and so  
19 forth. Where we don't do a good job is  
20 taking care of younger veterans. The Iraq-  
21 Desert Storm veterans, because we don't  
22 always know where there at. So, I'm not  
23 going to steal the thunder from General  
24 Richard, he's going to talk about that, but  
25 we've got to come up with a way of reaching

1           that population, in terms of housing, jobs,  
2           and things like that. The general and I  
3           think that we have a way and we need the  
4           support of all of you push that program  
5           forward. You'll understand it and get a  
6           real picture after he briefs. The other  
7           thing that we work very hard on. It's the  
8           last thing I want to say. We work very  
9           hard advocating for our veterans to the VA  
10          medical centers. We do a good job and the  
11          VA Medical Center in New Orleans does a  
12          great job supporting and caring for our  
13          veterans. Everything from specialty care  
14          to you name it. Overton-Brook, here in  
15          Shreveport, I know that they've had some  
16          leadership problems, because I've been kept  
17          apprised of those leadership problems, but  
18          they've made the changes to the top  
19          leadership over there and I think things  
20          are going pretty smooth. But, they  
21          actually do a good job of taking care of  
22          our veterans in the greater Bossier-  
23          Shreveport area and in their cantonment  
24          area. We hardly ever get any complaints  
25          from our veterans on the quality of care at

1 Overton-Brooks. Where we do have a lot of  
2 problems is in Central Louisiana. Jim Nunn  
3 is going to talk about that. We have lots  
4 of problems with that medical center there.  
5 So, I'm honored to be able to appear before  
6 you. To represent our governor. To  
7 represent our veterans. I always kind of  
8 wrap my remarks up by saying I'm not a  
9 political person. I don't care if a  
10 veteran is an atheist or a Republican or  
11 whatever. If he's a veteran, I take care  
12 of him. So, thank you very much.

13 SECRETARY PIERSON:

14 Secretary Strickland, thank you for your  
15 leadership and that excellent report. We  
16 will call on Commissioner Epperson a little  
17 later on in the meeting. Now going to  
18 Barksdale Forward, Murry Viser.

19 MR. VISER:

20 Lights, please sir. First and foremost I  
21 want to thank Secretary Strickland,  
22 Secretary Pierson, and members of the  
23 committee for your presence here at  
24 Barksdale. Going around to the different  
25 military bases in the state is, in my mind,

1 critical for us to understand the strengths  
2 and weaknesses of everyone. So, thank  
3 y'all for being here. We're here,  
4 Barksdale Forward to support you guys and  
5 do whatever we can. I hope you come away  
6 with a better understanding, a better  
7 appreciation of what it's like to go to  
8 work each day in a B-52 or go to work each  
9 day on a B-52. We've got some young airmen  
10 that are going to talk to you guys later on  
11 today and I think you're going to come away  
12 very impressed with the caliber of the  
13 young people that are our United States Air  
14 Force. Thank y'all again for being here.  
15 We're real excited to share some of the  
16 things that are going on at Barksdale. We  
17 keep quite busy as you might imagine. I'm  
18 going to give you a bit of an update on  
19 what's happened since we talked in  
20 November. We continue to change. "We"  
21 being Barksdale Air Force Base. Change for  
22 the better. Having a major command here at  
23 Barksdale particularly with its current  
24 leader, General Robin Rand is a wonderful  
25 opportunity. I like to say, Colonel Ty

1           Newmann, the Wing Commander is blessed to  
2           have a numbered Air Force with a two-star  
3           commander and a major command with a four-  
4           star commander. I also like to say that  
5           Colonel Newmann is cursed with a numbered  
6           Air Force with a two-star commander and a  
7           numbered Air Force with a four-star  
8           commander all living on his base. Because  
9           they're not shy about helping him  
10          understand where he might be able to  
11          improve. The Flight Commander is  
12          responsible for two of the three legs of  
13          the nuclear triad. The three ICBM bases,  
14          B-52 which is nuclear capable air craft, B-  
15          2 which is a nuclear capable air craft, and  
16          a B-1 is a conventional only air craft, and  
17          ultimately the B-21 Radar. The Global  
18          Strike Commander is responsible for the  
19          care and feeding and maintaining what's  
20          necessary for the B-21 Radar made by, I'll  
21          give you my colleague here Retired Colonel  
22          Andy Thompson a little plug, Northrop  
23          Grumman is Andy's company and they are the  
24          prime contractor for the B-21 Radar. That  
25          should come online probably, I think we're



1 still looking at 2025 time frame. That's  
2 good, we're hoping to maintain that program  
3 and keep it where it needs to go. Our  
4 missions here at Barksdale are growing.  
5 It's a very good thing for Barksdale. It's  
6 a very good thing for the country. Nuclear  
7 Command Control and Communications Center,  
8 better known as NC3 was stood up here  
9 probably about a month or so ago, six  
10 weeks, something like that. Very important  
11 function of Air Force Global Strike  
12 Command. It provides the ability for the  
13 Commander in Chief on our nation's worse  
14 day to maintain command and control of the  
15 nuclear weapons at Global Strike Command is  
16 empowered with. It is a great thing. It's  
17 going to grow. It's going to provide a  
18 capability that we haven't had in the Air  
19 Force since Strategic Air Command went  
20 away. Two hundred new positions  
21 immediately here. Hopefully we will see  
22 that grow. It's a very good thing. Global  
23 Strike Command is also responsible for the  
24 nuclear recapitalization efforts. As I'm  
25 sure you've seen in the news, it's about

1           reinvigorating, refurbishing, and not so  
2           much development of new nuclear weapons,  
3           but making sure that if we ever need them,  
4           that they are capable of doing what they  
5           have to do. Now, I'll kind of pile on that  
6           and say it's not just about things that go  
7           boom, but it's also about deterrence.  
8           Strategic deterrence and escalation in  
9           bulk. The nuclear weapons we have deployed  
10          today, a lot of times you see in the media  
11          that they don't do anything. Well, I'm  
12          here to tell you, they do something  
13          everyday. That's to keep people over in  
14          Korea, North Korea paying attention to  
15          consequences for actions. But, also people  
16          in other countries that may or may not be  
17          our friends. Helping them understand that  
18          there are consequences for their actions.  
19          Going to have the Global Strike Command,  
20          Global Power Symposium in August. The last  
21          week of August. That goes back to the  
22          former Strategic Air Command Bombing and  
23          Navigation Competition. There are  
24          competitions among the Global Strike  
25          Command Wings and Bases for various job

1 skills, if you will. We have the score  
2 posted here every other year. That will  
3 take place in August and will be at the  
4 Shreveport Convention Center. Also at that  
5 symposium we'll see the awarding of the  
6 Barksdale trophy. This is the inaugural  
7 awarding of this particular trophy, but it  
8 goes back to a trophy that we awarded back  
9 in the early '90s and its for the best  
10 community support for military bases  
11 stationed Air Force Global Strike Community  
12 Support. You may think to yourself, oh  
13 gosh that's really great to see Northwest  
14 Louisiana doing that and that's going to  
15 make people really happy, but we have  
16 somewhat of a nefarious idea behind this as  
17 well. We want to steal all the good ideas  
18 we can and incorporate them here at  
19 Barksdale so that we can take of the men  
20 and women that are stationed here. That  
21 put their lives on the line and their  
22 families. We're working on an energy  
23 resiliency plan for Barksdale. It's a  
24 pilot plan. It'll be the first one if we  
25 can make it happen that's ever been done on

1 an Air Force Base. It's a long term  
2 project. It's going to take some time to  
3 make it happen. But, it's a great  
4 opportunity to provide energy resiliency  
5 for Barksdale Air Force Base and the  
6 critical missions that are out here such as  
7 Air Force Global Strike Command. One other  
8 thing that's not on the slide, Barksdale B-  
9 52s are deployed, a portion of them about  
10 seven-eight months ago went over to the  
11 area of responsibility in Afghanistan and  
12 Syria stationed at a base close by. It's  
13 the first deployment of B-52s in fifteen  
14 years. About a thousand people went over  
15 there, there back home now. Now, the  
16 squadron from Minot, the B-52 base has been  
17 deployed over in that area of  
18 responsibility. The B-1s have been doing  
19 the job carrying the water for the last  
20 fifteen or so years. It gives them a much  
21 needed rest to be able to come home and get  
22 upgrades and maintenance necessary for  
23 those air crafts. Barksdale is excited to  
24 have the opportunity to go out and be apart  
25 of that and they did a great job and

1           everybody came home. So, that's good news.  
2           Our outreach and advocacy, this is similar  
3           to what you saw last November, we don't  
4           really change what we do that often. We  
5           just change what it looks like. Regular  
6           Capitol Hill visits and visits to the  
7           Pentagon. Members of the Air Force Civic  
8           Leader Group which is a group of about  
9           sixty to seventy people that has regular  
10          meetings with the Chief of Staff of the Air  
11          Force and the Secretary of the Air Force.  
12          We participate in the Association of  
13          Defense Communities and if you're from a  
14          military base and you don't participate  
15          with the Association of Defense  
16          Communities, I highly recommend it. I get  
17          nothing for that, except they do a good  
18          job. Congressional advocacy. We go see  
19          Congress a couple of times a year, at  
20          least. Typically it's more than that. B-  
21          52 upgrades, very important. The last B-52  
22          sitting out there on the ramp, the pilot  
23          came off the Boeing assembly line in 1961  
24          and was taken into the Air Force in 1962.  
25          That's not a 1962 Chevy Impala, ok. It's

1 critical that they have upgrades. They  
2 have seen plenty of upgrades over the year.  
3 What we're working on right now is a  
4 replacement for the Strategic Radar. It's  
5 a 1980s vintage radar. It's critical to  
6 the B-52s, particularly their nuclear  
7 missions with targeting and being able to  
8 put weapons where they need to be put.  
9 Currently, that system has an average time  
10 of failure at about eighteen hours. We're  
11 looking at a twenty-two, twenty-three hour  
12 mission, that's not a good thing. You  
13 don't want to take off and get half-way  
14 where your going and realize that your  
15 radar is not working. The answer right now  
16 is we don't turn the radar on until their  
17 close. Not a good option. Critical to  
18 have that piece of equipment. New radar  
19 installed in the B-52s. Re-engining of the  
20 B-52s is also a critical requirement. This  
21 is the third or fourth time they've worked  
22 on re-engining the air craft. I think this  
23 one has a better than actual opportunity of  
24 coming to fruition. The cost to rebuild  
25 the B-52 engine and there are eight of them

1 on the air craft is increased dramatically.  
2 It costs about two million dollars or so  
3 and rising to rebuild one of the TF-33  
4 engines that are on those air planes right  
5 now, today. Putting a new regional jet  
6 engine on the air craft, which is what  
7 flies in the airplanes we all see, they  
8 will never have to be taken out based on  
9 the number of hours B-52s fly every year.  
10 It makes sense. It's just a matter of how  
11 to get the financing to do that, because it  
12 is a big, big number with seventy-six B-  
13 52s. Multiply that times eight and that's  
14 how many engines there going to have to  
15 come up with. Weapon storage  
16 recapitalization, that's a huge part of  
17 what we need here at Barksdale Air Force  
18 Base. Our nuclear weapon storage area was  
19 re-certified about ten years ago. Now, the  
20 nuclear weapons for the B-52s are stored  
21 off-site. So, at the time of need, our B-  
22 52s would have to fly to that base to be  
23 loaded up to go do the President's  
24 directive. Support for Air Force Global  
25 Strike Command is a four-star position

1           there. Under the National Defense  
2           Authorization Act of 2017, the Air Force is  
3           going to lose about five four-star  
4           positions. We want to make sure that one  
5           of those does not come out of Barksdale.  
6           Military support projects currently ongoing  
7           2017. A new second communications squadron  
8           building complex is going to be built.  
9           We'll start work on that here soon, we  
10          trust. There are also, there's also a  
11          building with a 307 baubling that is under  
12          construction right now. So, those two  
13          projects are necessary to make sure that we  
14          have what we need as far as the storage  
15          area goes, the process is begun. It's  
16          scheduled right now for 2019 and it's a big  
17          number. It's a four hundred and plus  
18          million dollar contract for that facility.  
19          But they started the environmental impact  
20          statement information gathering on that, so  
21          it's moving forward. It's a great thing.  
22          Nuclear posture review is about to start  
23          up. Most president's have had one of these  
24          for the last twenty years. Going back  
25          longer than that. Going back to



1           Eisenhower. It's an inventory of our  
2           nuclear weapons and what they're used for  
3           and what states they're in. We should have  
4           a report by the year end. This time  
5           they're also going to look at space and  
6           size components as well. We're working on  
7           making sure that the correct information is  
8           out there because just like in a base  
9           closure around sometimes, there's bad  
10          information that makes it's way into the  
11          report. So, we want to make sure that's  
12          taken care of. Again, with the storage  
13          area, we're following that very closely to  
14          make sure that it stays on track. Future  
15          for structure increases, the Air Force  
16          would like to see the for structure grow  
17          over the next seven years from 321,000  
18          troops up to 350,000 troops. Which is  
19          good. They concur the current  
20          administration is supportive of that.  
21          That's going to be a good thing for the Air  
22          Force. It's going to be a good thing for  
23          the country. We're going to do our best to  
24          be sure that it's a good thing for  
25          Barksdale Air Force Base. Finally, we

1           discussed last time the extension of  
2           Interstate 220 into Barksdale for the DOJ.  
3           That is going to be critical infrastructure  
4           for the growth of Barksdale. We're  
5           following that very closely and again, it's  
6           been a long term project and finally think  
7           we've got light at the end of the tunnel  
8           and it's not a train coming at us with  
9           Governor Edwards support. That's my  
10          report, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you  
11          for your attention.

12          SECRETARY PIERSON:

13                 Thank you Murry. Certainly the growth  
14                 here at Barksdale. Two hundred new  
15                 positions is music to our ears. The  
16                 important work of the refurbishment of the  
17                 nuclear weapon storage facility and that  
18                 four hundred million dollar project.

19          MR. VISER:

20                 About four hundred and fifty, right  
21                 now. Yes.

22          SECRETARY PIERSON:

23                 Obviously something that we want to  
24                 continue to closely monitor. Pleased that  
25                 the charter school on the base is moving

1 forward. Also acknowledging an important  
2 installation award that Barksdale received  
3 as the best in the --

4 MR. VISER:

5 Installation of Excellence, yes sir.  
6 The Commander in Chief's Installation of  
7 Excellence Award.

8 SECRETARY PIERSON:

9 Congrats on that and all the good work  
10 going on here at Barksdale Air Force Base.  
11 Thank you for keeping us informed. Mr.  
12 Mike Reese, Fort Polk progress report,  
13 please.

14 MR. REESE:

15 I appreciate the opportunity to  
16 provide a very quick update, overview of  
17 what's going on at Fort Polk and what we're  
18 tracking presently. I'll cover a few  
19 recent updates there. Our new mission that  
20 we've been pursuing that the Army Chief of  
21 Staff announced recently is that they'll  
22 stand up between six and eight Army bias  
23 assist missions, work we've done with the  
24 National Guard in securing new cyber-  
25 battalion that the National Guard is in the

1 running for. Ending deployment of the  
2 third brigade tenth mountain shared  
3 services opportunities in future highway  
4 infrastructure projects that are so far out  
5 in the future that it's not in competition  
6 with your I-20 extender, I can promise.  
7 What we've suffered at Fort Polk in the  
8 last five or six years, we've been  
9 constantly on defense. As the Army has  
10 drawn down in size, we've had to fight  
11 tooth and nail to prevent major reductions  
12 of Fort Polk. Thanks to a lot of work from  
13 many of the people in this room and around  
14 the state of Louisiana, we successfully  
15 managed not to lose more than about 2700  
16 soldiers. Now, our total base population  
17 is somewhere around 8300 permanently  
18 stationed soldiers there. The unfortunate  
19 side to that, though, is that once you drop  
20 down below about 10,000 soldiers, we start  
21 reaching some of those tipping points that  
22 so negatively impact our regions ability to  
23 support the installation. Things such as  
24 schools. We've lost about thirty-two  
25 million dollars in school funding in the

1           Vernon Parish School District due to the  
2           drop in soldier population there. At the  
3           same time, Army demands that we produce  
4           very high quality results in those school  
5           systems. It's damaged our ability to  
6           attract the kind of entertainment and  
7           restaurants that the Army says they want  
8           there in order to make it a good station of  
9           choice for soldiers. But, if you don't  
10          have that core population there to support  
11          it, very difficult to manage. Now, as we  
12          pivot to a new administration that says  
13          we're going to grow the Army and they've  
14          identified some missions that they will  
15          target to grow, we're happy to pivot to  
16          offense now. We think we have a great  
17          product to sell, if you would, with Fort  
18          Polk. Our training abilities are nearly  
19          unmatched within the Army. Certainly our  
20          training ranges and a lot of our on base  
21          facilities and a lot of what we're doing  
22          right in the community. We're primed.  
23          We're ready to go. This Army assist is the  
24          first opportunity to really go after a  
25          mission. We recognize that Fort Polk's

1 ability to attract a three, four, five  
2 thousand person mission, while feasible and  
3 while we can do it. Those are going to be  
4 far and few between. Because, we think as  
5 the Army starts to grow, they're going to  
6 start growing by these units of four and  
7 five hundred or so that are plugging gaps  
8 that they've currently identified. Whether  
9 that's engineers. Whether that's  
10 transportation companies, or whether that's  
11 things like an Army sis brigade which would  
12 be the nucleus to the nuke brigade if the  
13 Army had to grow it. Fort Polk is  
14 certainly perfectly positioned for that.  
15 First, we went to Fort Benning in Georgia  
16 who had lost a brigade during Army  
17 downsizing and had plenty of resources and  
18 assets for that. There were some politics  
19 involved in that as well, as you would  
20 expect. We expect a decision pretty soon  
21 on the number two and three locations. The  
22 work of Chris Goode, our entire  
23 Congressional delegation, a lot of folks  
24 from Central Louisiana, we've worked  
25 diligently with the military to outline all

1 the advantages of Fort Polk. Fort Polk had  
2 the 162nd mission which was the Army Advise  
3 and Assist. They dated back to Vietnam and  
4 work they did there. We know we have the  
5 facilities. We have the trainers that are  
6 skilled in that area. We think that Fort  
7 Polk is perfectly suited for that. We're  
8 going to continue to pursue that. As we  
9 talk about the Army growing. To date,  
10 there has not been an additional dollar  
11 actually dedicated for that purpose.  
12 That's one of the things that the Army is  
13 fighting now. They have these missions and  
14 what they need to do, they don't have the  
15 funding to support it. In the meantime,  
16 we've also worked with the Army National  
17 Guard and Curtis and his staff to support  
18 their pursuit of a cyber-battalion that the  
19 National Guard is growing. We think that  
20 Fort Polk offers an awesome opportunity for  
21 them to participate in offensive cyber  
22 strategies. The Army Chief of Staff and  
23 others including Joe Anderson recently  
24 testified about the Army's lack of ability  
25 in it's national training centers to really

1 exercise offensive cyber-warfare. We think  
2 this is an awesome opportunity for the  
3 National Guard to gain a mission and at the  
4 same time, FPM will exercise that mission  
5 and enhance the opportunity of JRTC. We're  
6 going to continue to work with them. We  
7 think that announcement will come very soon  
8 as well. Our deployment, Colonel Brian  
9 Sullivan will be taking his great American  
10 heroes and warriors of the 310 Brigade into  
11 Northern Iraq, a very dangerous part of the  
12 country right now to back up the Iraqi  
13 army. Right now, they are planning on  
14 taking all 4300 of their soldiers. Very  
15 significant, because at one point, that  
16 would have accounted for about a third of  
17 our troop population. Today, that will  
18 account for about fifty-five to sixty  
19 percent of our troop population to Fort  
20 Polk. Colonel Sullivan currently tasked  
21 nearly three hundred soldiers of his  
22 brigade every day to do garrison level  
23 services on the installation. That's  
24 everything from cutting grass to manning  
25 the gates to keeping the gyms open. We are



1 going to have some very significant  
2 challenges at Fort Polk in the near future.  
3 That's not to take away from the very  
4 significant sacrifice that these soldiers  
5 and their families make when deployment  
6 occurs. We certainly recognize that. We  
7 have some significant cuts that will come  
8 to our school system as a result of that.  
9 That we're battling. These are younger  
10 soldiers, primarily, in these infantry  
11 brigades. They're going to deploy in  
12 August, before the school year starts. As  
13 you would expect, many of the young  
14 families may go home to where their support  
15 system is. We lose that head count for  
16 both state MFP funding as well as Federal  
17 Impact Aid dollars. Then, it's only for  
18 nine months. The school system has to  
19 absorb huge economic cuts and lay off large  
20 numbers of staff only to have to reverse  
21 that nine months later when those soldiers  
22 are home. The families are back and the  
23 school population grows again. We're going  
24 to work through that. We've got a great  
25 team. We're all working in cooperation

1 with one another. Brigade is working to  
2 help identify what those losses may be. Of  
3 course, all of our different community  
4 partners, chambers everybody else are  
5 heavily engaged in what they can do to  
6 support these soldiers and their families  
7 during a deployment of that nature. We're  
8 working with the state right now. There's  
9 a pending bill that basically is in  
10 conjunction with the flood bill. That  
11 basically says some of the school's  
12 affected by the flooding in Baton Rouge,  
13 there's a bill that says, you know you  
14 disrupted those school systems, a lot of  
15 these students might not have been there  
16 for the headcounts, let's blend or average  
17 their funding over a multi-year period so  
18 that they don't see these big dips in  
19 funding. There's an effort in this  
20 legislative session to maybe look at the  
21 Vernon Parish School District in the same  
22 light with a deployment like this that can  
23 cause a major dip only to come back up.  
24 Could they look at an average over several  
25 years. That's kind of where I'm going at

1 the state level. At the federal level,  
2 we're working with our delegation to talk  
3 to military leaders to say look, you know  
4 we've done everything you've asked. We've  
5 got great quality education. We've rebuilt  
6 all this road infrastructure. We've built  
7 multiple schools. We've sold you forty-  
8 seven thousand acres of land. And now you  
9 have us back at this tipping point. The  
10 boom and bust cycle Fort Polk has often  
11 suffered that's made our job very difficult  
12 to attract the kind of investment that the  
13 Army's asked for by the community. At the  
14 same time, having this great military value  
15 asset there. We're going to really work  
16 our delegation to bring that home with  
17 those military decision makers. Shared  
18 services, this is another area that we're  
19 really proud of. Our mayor in Leesville,  
20 our police jury president and other  
21 community leaders around the region are  
22 heavily engaged in the opportunity for  
23 shared services at Fort Polk. We've  
24 recently signed, Vernon Parish Policy Jury  
25 has signed an agreement to do the Waste

1 Management services on Fort Polk. This is  
2 going to be a great win for Fort Polk.  
3 It's going to save Fort Polk between two  
4 and three million dollars a year in what  
5 they currently pay for Waste Management  
6 services. And will earn Vernon Parish  
7 Policy Jury a couple of hundred thousand  
8 dollars a year. Which is very, very  
9 significant for rural policy jury in terms  
10 of their budget. Great win-win for  
11 everybody involved. That's working it's  
12 way through a few legal hurdles.  
13 Obstacles, as you would expect. We're very  
14 thankful the Roosevelt Group when there was  
15 a legal challenge applied on the last hour  
16 of the last day that it could have been  
17 done, we had about forty-eight hours to  
18 respond to the report in Washington D.C.  
19 and through the work we had previously  
20 done, we were able to find the right person  
21 for the job willing to do it. Quickly come  
22 up to speed on the topic and present on  
23 behalf of the community, at the process.  
24 That's working it's way through and I know  
25 that they're going to be successful. The

1 city of Leesville is working on a range  
2 maintenance contract with Fort Polk. This  
3 is another great opportunity where Fort  
4 Polk has some of the equipment to cut grass  
5 on the ranges of Fort Polk, the city of  
6 Leesville has personnel and the ability to  
7 perform the service. It's going to be some  
8 opportunity for the city to make some money  
9 and it's going to be an opportunity for the  
10 military to save quite a bit of money.  
11 Those are kind of the great partnerships,  
12 just to better connect our local  
13 communities and the military out there for  
14 everybody's benefit. We had a significant  
15 signing ceremony with all the key leaders  
16 that approve these shared service  
17 arrangements while we were in San Antonio a  
18 couple months ago. Really got some great  
19 feedback from that. There are many  
20 opportunities for partnerships. We've  
21 worked at a very detailed committee  
22 structure where we've brought people in  
23 from all across the region and all the  
24 different records of Fort Polk. The  
25 brainstorming opportunities and we continue

1 to sign new agreements developed almost on  
2 a daily basis. I've got to say too, with  
3 Mayor Beebee being here and he cut the  
4 ribbon on his C & G filling station in  
5 Leesville just last week. That's another  
6 opportunity to bring in clean energy  
7 alternatives to Fort Polk for its fleet.  
8 Whether it's busses or other cars and  
9 vehicles that was not available to Fort  
10 Polk before for lack the ability, now a  
11 filling station. I think there's going to  
12 be some great community partnership  
13 opportunities in terms of clean energy at  
14 Fort Polk, because of the investment of the  
15 town of Hornbeck and Mayor Beebee has made.  
16 Lots of great opportunities for that and I  
17 think it's the kind of thing that other  
18 installations across the state can share  
19 good ideas and best practices on so that  
20 everybody benefits from these  
21 opportunities. I-14 strategic highway,  
22 they just placed the first sign on the  
23 first portion of I-14 in Texas, just  
24 outside of Fort Hood. The Vernon Parish  
25 community has been in CENLA with Deborah

1 Randolph and the CENLA Chamber of Commerce  
2 has been very engaged in what's called the  
3 Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition for  
4 probably the better part of thirty years.

5 That's resulted in a number of upgrades to  
6 that whole corridor across central Texas  
7 and central Louisiana over that period of  
8 time. Like the four laning of LA-28 which  
9 connects Fort Polk back to England Air

10 th

11 Park. On the 8 of May, they will turn  
12 the dirt on the construction of a new  
13 Sabine River Bridge on LA-8 which is a  
14 major portion of what's going to ultimately  
15 connect this corridor highway. I have an  
16 eight month old daughter and there is some  
17 likelihood in her lifetime that she'll  
18 drive on something in central Louisiana  
19 that has a sign that says I-14. I'm  
20 cognizant of that, but we know it's the  
21 right move from a strategic standpoint and  
22 we're ok to put that out there knowing it  
23 may take many, many years to develop. It  
24 will help inform us as we do planning along  
25 that route and start making some of those

1 upgrades on portions of that highway. We  
2 expect our Congressional delegation, maybe  
3 in this calendar year to be able to get  
4 that designation as a future I-14 corridor,  
5 which is a general statement, but again,  
6 you have to start somewhere. We're really  
7 proud of that. This is the one I'll leave  
8 you on today. One of the things we're most  
9 proud of as a community support  
10 organization is the work we're doing in  
11 education. I think as a community we have  
12 a huge responsibility to support our  
13 military families and let the soldier do  
14 the job of a soldier out on Fort Polk.  
15 Fort Polk does a great job of training them  
16 for their missions, but our communities  
17 responsibility to provide a great education  
18 for their families. I'm proud to say that  
19 in the Vernon Parish School District, not  
20 only do they have a quality infrastructure  
21 having built over forty-five million  
22 dollars worth of schools just in the last  
23 couple of years, but we're doing a great  
24 job in the classroom. Just between the  
25 '15-'16 school year to '16-'17, we had five



1 more schools improve from a "B" to an "A."  
2 Which is exceptional. We're now the fourth  
3 ranked school district in our state. We  
4 have, through our Fort Polk Progress  
5 Education Initiative, we've added about two  
6 and a half million dollars worth of  
7 education grants just last year that we  
8 were able to attract with some matching  
9 dollars. This year, we'll announce another  
10 national math and science initiative at  
11 DeRidder High School that has a smaller  
12 percentage, but still has some military  
13 connected students that will increase their  
14 STEM related Advanced Placement course  
15 offerings. That's something that we're  
16 really, really proud of. It's something we  
17 hear from the military over and over again.  
18 Which is a negative misconception about the  
19 quality of education in Louisiana, in  
20 general, but in Vernon Parish specifically  
21 sometimes, they think being stationed in  
22 Fort Polk means that they're exposing their  
23 children and families to poor quality  
24 schools. It's not true and it's something  
25 we work hard everyday to make sure we're

1           educating military decision makers in the  
2           quality of education that's there and  
3           complimenting our school staff and  
4           personnel who have been able to do this  
5           with very, very limited resources and  
6           declining resources as they increase their  
7           education outcome. Very, very proud of  
8           that. That concludes my presentation.

9           VETERAN AGENT:

10           Mike, I have a question. Will the  
11           deployment of the 10th Mountain Brigade,  
12           how is that going to effect the mission of  
13           the JRTC?

14           MR. REESE:

15           The JRTC will continue to perform it's  
16           joint training mission, so that will leave  
17           behind the operations group that performs  
18           all that training. It will leave behind  
19           the hospital, the garrison, the dental  
20           command. Forty-six engineers. The MPs, a  
21           couple of those other smaller missions.  
22           But, the training mission will continue.  
23           In fact, we anticipate that the tempo of  
24           the training base will actually increase,  
25           but they do have to figure out how do you

1 do that when you don't have enough  
2 permanently stationed soldiers and you  
3 don't have the money in the budget to hire  
4 civilians to back fill some of those  
5 garrison-level jobs.

6 SECRETARY PIERSON:

7 Mike, thank you for your leadership and  
8 the great work that's happening there, in  
9 and around Fort Polk. We look forward to  
10 continuing to partner with you on these  
11 important efforts. Now, I'm going to call  
12 on Gary Silbert. I hope our technology's  
13 working well. He's been standing by and  
14 monitoring this meeting via the  
15 teleconference. Gary, are you there? Can  
16 you report on behalf of SEMA?

17 MR. SILBERT:

18 I can Mr. Chairman. Thank you and my  
19 apologies for not being there in person.  
20 I'll be brief. First, I'm pleased to  
21 report that the SEMA website has been built  
22 and is up and running. If any of you in  
23 the meeting have the opportunity in your  
24 own time take a look at [sema.la](http://sema.la). It's  
25 really our way to try to communicate with

1 the region. The value of our military  
2 assets and how important they are and  
3 separately to hopefully link some regional  
4 businesses with some of the potential  
5 defense contractors to potentially pick up  
6 some business. I guess moving along, I'm  
7 pleased to also report that for the first  
8 time in five years, we just last weekend  
9 had our Belle Chasse Air Show which was a  
10 big success. So, we're very pleased to see  
11 that's been reinstated. Also, speaking of  
12 Belle Chasse, we continue to play defense  
13 with our two hundred and four River Rattler  
14 Reserve Unit. The unit has fourteen jets,  
15 but only about six or seven can fly. We  
16 continue to try to shore up, try to get new  
17 airplanes for that unit. Along those  
18 lines, the Navy's reported a shortfall of  
19 about a hundred and fifty to a hundred and  
20 eighty air craft. We understand there  
21 could be an attempt to buy Super Hornets as  
22 an interim solution over the next number of  
23 years. We hope that this recapitalization  
24 of the Super Hornets may make some Hornets  
25 available in the fleet to the reserve. We

1           certainly want to work hard to our  
2           delegation and the military through the  
3           Navy to support those purchases. We still  
4           also think that the purchase of the used  
5           two eighty Hornets is a viable option to  
6           shore up the reserves. Additionally, we're  
7           hearing that the Navy is looking to step-up  
8           maintenance repairs at the Repair Depot  
9           which could also make more air craft  
10          available which could certainly help our  
11          cause. With respect to the International  
12          Guard. We continue to be concerned about  
13          retiring the F-15s sooner than expected  
14          Representative Abraham's staff is working  
15          through committee to help recognize the  
16          value of the air frame and that retiring it  
17          early will create a capability gap. If  
18          this were to happen, we'd been  
19          transitioning through three air frames, the  
20          F-15 to the F-16 and then to the F-35. So,  
21          we need to see what happens in the budget  
22          and if selected, we'll continue on the F-  
23          15's. If the F-15 is canceled, then we'll  
24          obviously be looking to push very hard at  
25          the F-35 basing position. I guess on the

1 offensive side of things, the Louisiana  
2 International Guard, we understand is in  
3 the very early and exploratory stages of  
4 pursuing a new light attack squadron with  
5 the Air Force. The squadron would most  
6 likely be based upon either the T-6 Texan 2  
7 Air Frame or the Umbrera Super Tachato and  
8 could be located in Alexandria at the  
9 former Eglin Air Force Base or in Belle  
10 Chasse. The unit would contribute roughly  
11 a hundred and twenty full-time jobs and two  
12 hundred part-time jobs with an economic  
13 impact of fifty million a year or more. We  
14 believe this could be advantageous because  
15 the greater activity occurring supporting  
16 Camp Beauregard, Fort Polk, and Camp Shelby  
17 in Mississippi ultimately help reinforce  
18 the strong, but vulnerable military  
19 presence in the state. Lastly, I just  
20 wanted to mention that this isn't directly  
21 military related, but some of you might  
22 have heard about the devastating tornado  
23 that hit the New Orleans area. It pretty  
24 much wiped out the Department of  
25 Agriculture building at the NASA Michoud

1 facility. We're working through our  
2 delegation and through the newly appointed  
3 Secretary of Agriculture Purdue in trying  
4 to keep those jobs at NASA in the New  
5 Orleans area. I know Dr. Don, your team is  
6 engaged with that as well, but that's  
7 pretty critical to us. We don't want to  
8 see those jobs go elsewhere. I think  
9 that's all I have to report for now, unless  
10 there are any questions.

11 SECRETARY PIERSON:

12 Hearing none. Thank you for that report  
13 Gary, I'm so impressed you've mastered the  
14 military speak on this journey that you've  
15 recently embarked.

16 MR. SILBERT:

17 I've got a ways to go. But, thank you.

18 SECRETARY PIERSON:

19 Any further from Calender commitment?

20 MR. SILBERT:

21 We are meeting. You might have heard  
22 that Stan Mathis retired and Bruce is  
23 picking up. The meetings were discontinued  
24 for a couple months, but I'm pleased to  
25 report that they have been restarted. The

1 main focus of the most recent meeting was  
2 the air show, obviously, but we will be,  
3 again, starting a monthly meeting.

4 SECRETARY PIERSON:

5 Thank you for that and your efforts to  
6 support that important organization. We  
7 know the important role that they play,  
8 especially as we try to be active on the  
9 federal level. Having the grassroots  
10 portion of this is obviously very  
11 important. With that we will move to our  
12 federal report from the Roosevelt Group,  
13 Mr. Chris Goode.

14 MR. GOODE:

15 Great. Thank you. Chris Goode with  
16 the Roosevelt Group. We gave a similar  
17 update back in November and I thought in  
18 the midst of all the ongoing appropriations  
19 bills, I thought it might make sense to  
20 give you a quick update on where we at  
21 least see things. This is us. I think I  
22 met most people in the room in D.C.  
23 Established in 2012. While you're up on  
24 Capitol Hill if you need a bottle of water  
25 or a place to make a phone, please come by,



1 we're in great supply right up on the  
2 summit side. We're growing. We're doing  
3 fine. We're bi-partisan and we really try  
4 to stay in our lane. We're not health care  
5 lobbyist or education or transportation  
6 lobbyist. We stick to defense, defense  
7 companies, and defense communities. Back  
8 in November, we talked a lot about this.  
9 I'm happy to say there is a solution.  
10 There is a five-day continuing resolution  
11 next week. I don't want to pour my heart  
12 out about my frustrations, but I'm going to  
13 anyway. Watching this, everybody left town  
14 for the Easter recess, and we all knew  
15 there were only four days left to pass  
16 every single appropriations bill except one  
17 and they left anyway. Low and behold, they  
18 couldn't get it done. Back in November I  
19 said, you know it would have been very easy  
20 to pass all of the appropriations bills if  
21 they were all negotiated and ready to go.  
22 But, the Republicans said, no, we can't do  
23 that. Now, we're half-way into the fiscal  
24 year and we're going back into a CR in a  
25 week. I think it will get done, it's just.

1           It may be kind of nerdy and wonky, but  
2           you've got to keep in mind the Chiefs of  
3           Staff were up just two weeks ago right  
4           before the Easter recess and it's really  
5           startling what they now are saying. You  
6           have the Army Chief of Staff saying it's  
7           malpractice what is going on today. Ships  
8           aren't going to get away. The Air Force,  
9           Goldfein said, we're not going to fly out  
10          in June if we don't have the budget. If we  
11          have a full year's crew. The Marine Corps  
12          Aviation Program I saw. The facts are, we  
13          keep talking about all this money and more  
14          money and supplementals. But, there's not  
15          a penny that has been appropriated yet.  
16          You know, the Air Force, you know these  
17          stats, they're ripped. I think it's come  
18          down to a couple of problems. I figured  
19          this out. You guys have all been around  
20          this arena for a long time. I think part  
21          of the problem up there now is DOD gets the  
22          job done no matter how much you cut them,  
23          when there's a problem, sailors, airmen,  
24          soldiers, marines, they step up and they  
25          still get the job done. We have just said,

1 we'll take the risk. Ultimately, that's  
2 going to hurt us. It could hurt us very  
3 soon. The second thing I have thought  
4 about is the Budget Control Act has put  
5 this weird dynamic in place, that now, by  
6 law every defense dollar has to be matched  
7 by discretionary non-defense dollar. We've  
8 never had that phenomenon in our history.  
9 We also have, you have real open  
10 skepticism, not among just Democrats,  
11 Republicans about defense spending. I  
12 really do believe, and no offense to  
13 defense contractors, years and years of  
14 major, massive defense acquisition failures  
15 have created a lot of zombies on Capitol  
16 Hill. Hearing after hearing about massive  
17 failures, it wears people out. Last, is  
18 situational awareness. Tell me one example  
19 of one member of Congress that will bang  
20 his shoe on a table like Nikita Khrushchev  
21 and say, "I'm going to the mat for this  
22 program." Strom Thurmond, you know, he's  
23 dead. John Warner's retired, lives on a  
24 nice farm. They're gone. It's just not.  
25 You gotta ask yourself, you're a small

1 program, where do you stand? That's the  
2 big problem, obviously. The frustration  
3 still exists. It's the law of the land. A  
4 couple of problems. A couple of bi-  
5 partisan budget agreements that have pushed  
6 it down the road, but there's still a  
7 trillion in defense cuts over ten years.  
8 That's why these Chiefs are so out of their  
9 minds. Everyone reads the newspaper.  
10 We're all online. We all know this. But,  
11 I do think we're going to see tax reform,  
12 obviously is going to be a big piece.  
13 Trying to kill Obamacare is going to be a  
14 big piece. The infrastructure piece, maybe  
15 you'll see in May, we hope. The amount of  
16 incremental funding is going to be very  
17 small. Going into FY '18, there is no FY  
18 '18. Right, there's not even an FY '17  
19 except for veteran's affairs. FY '18  
20 skinny budget came out about fifty billion  
21 extra. The problem is in that budget, they  
22 get that money from other nondiscretionary  
23 spending. There is not a new dollar  
24 because it's against the law. Because you  
25 still have DCA. You still have

1           sequestration. If you want to live in a  
2           civilized society where you have park  
3           rangers and food inspectors and bridges  
4           that don't fall down, you gotta put some  
5           money into non-defense discretionary  
6           spending. That's precisely where all the  
7           new money's coming from. How do you think  
8           that's going to fare from say maybe a  
9           Senator from New Mexico that has to pay for  
10          Indian health care? Or a congressman in a  
11          big inner city that's dealing with opiates  
12          and crime? It's not. It's all the same.  
13          There's no new money.

14          MR. Gatti:

15                 What's the real threat in Barksdale and  
16          Fort Polk of us not having a representative  
17          on the House Armed Services Committee?  
18          What is the real threat with all these cuts  
19          and these attacks, what does that really  
20          translate to? How do we posture for that?  
21          We're the only district in the nation  
22          that's gotta a four billion dollar economic  
23          impact with these two facilities with no  
24          representation?

25          MR. GOODE:

1           Yeah, I mean, I think with Doc being on  
2           the committee, he's been extremely  
3           accessible to us.

4           MR. \_\_\_\_:

5           Abrahams? Is that correct?

6           MR. GOODE:

7           He really does get it. He believes in  
8           the big military cases in Louisiana. I, at  
9           least, feel comfortable when we go into  
10          him, we are being served. Your new  
11          representative clearly wants to get on the  
12          house and I think there's going, to be a  
13          plan for him to join as well. You look at  
14          a state like Massachusetts, we represent.  
15          Small, tiny state. Two members in the  
16          House. The House Armed Services and the  
17          Senate Armed Service Committee is the key  
18          issue. They're the biggest committees up  
19          there. Getting him on that committee I  
20          don't think is going to be a huge effort.

21          MR. ---:

22          What progress is being made to that  
23          end?

24          MR. GOODE:

25          It's a real threat, though. Us having

1 two bases.

2 MR. ----

3 Abrahams said that office, Mike's  
4 office and they are working very closely  
5 together. I have seen bits of that too.  
6 The better end of that story is going to be  
7 that it looks like Johnson and Abraham end  
8 up on that committee. So that we're better  
9 off than what we are right now.

10 MR. GOODE:

11 You have an appropriations. It was very  
12 smart to replace Landrieu. Cassidy left no  
13 time to go to the budget. That's his  
14 focus. But, you still have an  
15 appropriators and you have somebody on the  
16 opposition. It's not great, but the  
17 delegation has to survive.

18 MR. ----:

19 Do you think anybody's ever going to  
20 take on sequestration? It's the most  
21 horrible thing that we could possibly  
22 imagine, therefore it would never happen.  
23 And we let it happen and now we might not  
24 be able to fix it?

25 MR. GOODE:

1           Yeah. It's not only sequestration.  
2           It's entitlements as well. There's zero  
3           discussion above cutting into more than  
4           half of the federal budget.

5           MR. ----:

6           Let me just say that Congressman  
7           Abraham. I have a great deal of dealings  
8           with him. He doesn't just talk about it.

9           MS. MCCONNELL

10          He does. He's truly committed and we  
11          work with him so closely.

12          MR. GOODE:

13          In terms of just going forward with big  
14          priorities to save money, tax reform. I  
15          mentioned most of these, I think. You may  
16          see some incremental growth, Mike talked  
17          about that. Again, for every meeting we  
18          have, we're going to fill up existing  
19          positions, get people in. They're working  
20          hard on trying to save five percent on the  
21          F-35, which in reality is billions of  
22          dollars. We keep talking about BRAC, but I  
23          really think working on BRAC and dealing  
24          with BRAC for too long, I still think  
25          there's some numbers up there that we'll



1           just say, we're not interested. It's just  
2           not worth it. It's a collateral duty for  
3           these numbers and nothing for them to gain.  
4           You can talk to guys like Brock Whitman,  
5           not interested. A big shipyard in New  
6           Hampshire, it would kill him. In terms of  
7           BRAC, we talk about Barksdale. I think  
8           Barksdale is in very good shape. Let's  
9           talk about Trump. Trump's budget, we got  
10          the skinny budget that was just an outline.  
11          We expect to see the real budget and get  
12          into details like your funding and BRAC and  
13          everything else, that should be coming out  
14          soon, May, June. We're talking about that  
15          fifty-four billion above sequestration  
16          again that cuts that money the non-  
17          defensive budget. At least when you talk  
18          about that money, DOD really has done a  
19          good job in terms of where to button up  
20          some of these holes. Ammunition  
21          shortfalls, ground force capabilities which  
22          is important for Fort Polk, modernizing the  
23          nuclear option and deterrence, great. I  
24          think it's a thoughtful plan in terms of  
25          where to put this additional money in 2018,

1 if they get it. In terms of supplemental,  
2 we're here at Barksdale Air Force and the  
3 Air Force is going to focus on supplemental  
4 funding. It's not a lot of money. Within  
5 those constraints, we're working pretty  
6 hard. There are always going to be new  
7 missions. We worked really hard on NC-3.  
8 Working very hard on the Army Advise and  
9 Assist Cyber-Brigade. Weapons storage  
10 area. Obviously Air Force increases, which  
11 really does present an interesting  
12 question. If the Air Force is going to  
13 increase fire squadrons, how do you get  
14 green flag back into that discussion?  
15 Nuclear posture review, the delegation has  
16 to get engaged in that. We're working up  
17 some language now to ask some questions  
18 about how Barksdale fits into that nuclear  
19 posture. That's something if these guys  
20 come up for posture hearings and some  
21 budget hearings further in the Spring, we  
22 have to tee off on. Obviously the Air  
23 Force reorganization, we already mentioned  
24 the four-stars. Elder, by the way, is  
25 working that pretty closely in terms of

1           which four stars are going to go away. I  
2           think we have pretty good situational  
3           awareness on that. Then, aligning yourself  
4           to any means to increase your military  
5           value. Obviously, the Office of Energy  
6           Assurance. OEA is one of two big cogent  
7           projects. Barksdale, one. Anslum, number  
8           two. I represent both. Those are big  
9           opportunities. OEA that's your joint plain  
10          view study. Give you money to stay with  
11          them. We talked about BRAC. I think we  
12          have a good handle on BRAC in terms of  
13          Barksdale. When you look at the strategy  
14          here, what's in red, I honestly don't think  
15          that's going to change fundamentally.  
16          Everybody's talking about how BRAC is going  
17          to be such a big difference. It comes down  
18          to really a small group of folks. If you  
19          look at the second column, third down.  
20          Kathleen Ferguson back in 2005. Kathleen's  
21          working for us full time now. She's great.  
22          She knows everybody in the Air Force. Is  
23          very much focused on BRAC for our Air Force  
24          clients. Jerry Peas, Fred Peas up in the  
25          table left, we're looking at getting him

1 more involved as well. This comes right  
2 out of an Air Force briefing we picked up  
3 just recently and twisted it to BRAC and  
4 fit it to Barksdale. This is what they'll  
5 look at. Do you have a core mission?  
6 Yeah. The B-52 is pretty core of the Air  
7 Force. Do you have a major command on the  
8 same base? Do you have proximity to the  
9 air space and ranges? We do. We've got  
10 protection. Encroachment's going to be a  
11 key thing. Along with reducing your costs  
12 and relying on your partnerships in the  
13 community. I think Barksdale does a pretty  
14 good job there. That's it. Questions?  
15 It's come up many times. I would like to  
16 say, yeah we could do it and use our  
17 bandwidth to do it. It's just a can of  
18 worms. I think it would take a huge  
19 coalition to get it done and a lot of time.  
20 Ultimately, I'm not sure Congress is really  
21 focused on these.

22 SECRETARY PIERSON:

23 Any other questions for Mr. Goode

24 MR. -----:

25 If I could just make a couple remarks

1 and follow-up on what Mr. Gatti opened up  
2 there. We need to acknowledge that our  
3 congressional depth on the bench with  
4 respect to the authorization is in the  
5 rebuild mode. But, being a newcomer to the  
6 state of Louisiana and my capacity now, the  
7 state of Louisiana on the national security  
8 stage is very significant. Installations  
9 we have and the missions we host and harbor  
10 in our state are critical now, more than  
11 ever. Our Fort Polk not only is sending  
12 troops to fight the Isis and associated  
13 conflicts in the desert. But, every other  
14 battalion and brigade that goes to do so,  
15 trains at Fort Polk. We have direct impact  
16 on the success of our campaigns on that  
17 part of the world. Also, on a national  
18 security stage, we house the headquarters  
19 of Air Force Global Strike Command. Which,  
20 is the Air Force nuclear leader for bombers  
21 and ICBMs on a world stage now that is ever  
22 more concerning. Take five minutes and  
23 listen to the news. There's China and  
24 North Korea. There's Russia and there's  
25 Iran. And Syria is on that same pedestal

1 as well. We not only have the leadership  
2 and decision makers with Global Strike  
3 Command that are supporting national  
4 security in that endeavor as you'll see  
5 here in a little while. Which also then  
6 gives our equipment to do so. From the  
7 state of Louisiana just last month, there  
8 were strikes using Air Force bombers on  
9 Libya. Although those originated round-  
10 trip out of Missouri, those were Global  
11 Strike Command airplanes and the planning  
12 element that put those strikes together was  
13 right here on this base in Eighth Air Force  
14 in Air Space Operations Center that it has.  
15 We have a very significant mission from the  
16 state of Louisiana for national security.  
17 All of us in our elected capacities or in  
18 our professional capacities need to make  
19 sure that those that carry that message  
20 forward to D.C. are pretty clear on that.  
21 SECRETARY PIERSON:

22 Thank you for those remarks. We're  
23 moving at 11:36 right now with probably a  
24 hard stop at noon. So, I want to keep this  
25 important dialogue going. I do want to add

1 a little bit to our agenda. At this time,  
2 I want to call on Craig Spohn who heads up  
3 the Cyber Innovation Center. Maybe not  
4 specific military as wearing a uniform, but  
5 a lot of interaction with our federal  
6 budget. With the Department of Defense  
7 budget. It's a key element of our economy.  
8 Particularly in northwest Louisiana. I  
9 want to invite Mr. Craig Spohn to make a  
10 report at this time.

11 BY MR. SPOHN:

12 Thank you Secretary Pierson. I  
13 appreciate all the advance notice on that.  
14 I was talking with Rick Bateman and Les  
15 Guice yesterday for a chance to work with  
16 them and Louisiana Tech, respectively.  
17 There's much attention we'd like to do from  
18 a training perspective, but I see us doing  
19 things that no body else will do. In  
20 conjunction with the Office of Economic  
21 Development, we built some facilities that  
22 are very important to the growth of the  
23 things that we do to support the Fitz  
24 Industrial Base and the Air Force. No real  
25 estate development speculator is going to

1 spend the kind of money that's necessary to  
2 provide that kind of infrastructure.  
3 Fortunately, Bossier City, Bossier Parish,  
4 and the State of Louisiana invested in that  
5 and that's led to some real good outcomes  
6 for us. We have the old space in this part  
7 of the state and area from this part of the  
8 state in which to do that kind of  
9 classified research. We don't talk a lot  
10 about that, but what's happening is we're  
11 seeing knowledge based work in the defense  
12 and intelligence industry growing in this  
13 part of the state. Which would not have  
14 happened in my mind, but for the investment  
15 to provide for that type of infrastructure.  
16 Some of the things that Chris was talking  
17 about. The correlation of what you have  
18 and the ability to do to fend off and  
19 improve your posture for future  
20 developments. Making sure Barksdale stays  
21 strong. There's things we can do  
22 legislatively to shore it up on all the  
23 fronts that are analyzed in that  
24 realignment process. The Roosevelt Group  
25 has got a lot of experience with that and



1           they guide us in those things that we need  
2           to do. Where those things are not in their  
3           wheel house, we try to back fill with where  
4           we're able to support. We have a few  
5           agencies now in our community that prior to  
6           the construction of the CIC weren't thought  
7           to be in this part of the state. If you  
8           step back and look at the things that we  
9           do, we're kind of taking advantage of  
10          things that have happened to us in  
11          industry. It may not have been obvious  
12          when Century Link purchased a company  
13          called Quest that a Louisiana company  
14          became a long haul backbone service  
15          provider of all the intelligence  
16          communities communication core. By virtue  
17          of that fact, the extension of that fact  
18          now comes through Interstate 20 and we are  
19          on that fact. Because of that, there's  
20          diversification value to agencies who want  
21          to have the benefit of that diversification  
22          for redundancy purposes of having things in  
23          this part of the state. Now, we're  
24          fortunate to have some agencies who do that  
25          kind of work and what comes beyond that

1                    additionally is companies like CSRA,  
2                    Louisiana Economic Development Secretary  
3                    Pierson instrumental in getting the  
4                    equivalent of what Baton Rouge got in  
5                    Bossier City. Now we've got eight hundred  
6                    jobs for our kids to be able to find  
7                    employment in the technological sector that  
8                    didn't exist in this part of the state  
9                    before. We just didn't have that. By some  
10                  of the strategic investments that we've  
11                  made, we're improving quality of life as an  
12                  issue as it relates to base realignment in  
13                  Bossier. We're improving spousal  
14                  employment opportunities as a function of  
15                  base realignment in Bossier processes. All  
16                  of that serves to the community of Bossier  
17                  City to a selfish outcome. We want, and  
18                  everything that we're getting, is a  
19                  function of doing this. We get a higher  
20                  quality citizen. We get a better tax base.  
21                  We get a more stable ability to project and  
22                  forecast revenue from tax standpoint and we  
23                  get discretionary dollars and higher  
24                  velocity in our local economy because of  
25                  the types of jobs that we're attracting.

1 All of that serves to support work. It  
2 also serves us very well. The cooperative  
3 spirit, I hope we can stay small enough to  
4 continue to enjoy that. It seems like size  
5 breeds competitiveness. We, as a community  
6 work very well together. Work very well  
7 with our state department together. What I  
8 think that leads to is this is an easy  
9 place to get things done that are  
10 beneficial for all of us. If we don't get  
11 in our own way and as a result, we're able  
12 to move faster and better. A dollar here  
13 goes a long way towards doing economic  
14 development work. I give the mayor all the  
15 credit. When I'm not thanking him, I'm  
16 thanking God because God likes us. We're  
17 doing very well right now in this part of  
18 the state. I think that's where we need to  
19 point to. A record of support, that's  
20 where it's coming from. Being prepared to  
21 be on the receiving end of that is  
22 something I think this community has done  
23 very well. We're poised now for some  
24 things that are going to be supporting  
25 Barksdale. There are some things that

1           they've outgrown on this installation.  
2           They're going to have some midterm means  
3           that the infrastructure that Cyber  
4           Innovation provides and so we're excited to  
5           have some of those folks coming over there.  
6           I'm really not at liberty to describe much  
7           of what is being anticipated. But, one of  
8           the things that I can talk about is we went  
9           to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and  
10          visited with their Wright Brothers  
11          Institute and what they do there is produce  
12          rapid prototyping of solutions that are  
13          needed in that local base so that the  
14          airmen don't have to wait in these long  
15          protracted acquisition cycles to see if  
16          what they want to try and test out and have  
17          for future use is a viable proof of  
18          concept. We're working with economic  
19          development right now to re-purpose some  
20          things that are sitting somewhat idle in  
21          the community to do that and get those  
22          folks on the runaway or up in the air that  
23          are maintainers or weapons loaders. The  
24          opportunity cost of professors and students  
25          to say if I had this, I could do that

1 better. We can go make that and see if in  
2 fact, that is the case. The Air Force  
3 material can go off and build those things.  
4 There's a lot of stuff that you were  
5 talking about on the radar. Some of the  
6 deficiencies that our fighting forces are  
7 having to live with, we can jump start,  
8 accelerate a lot of that stuff with this  
9 kind of rapid prototype and separated  
10 acquisition activity. We have something in  
11 the Air Force called the Partnership  
12 Intermediary Agreement and it is what it  
13 says. It's a partnership and we go and  
14 find technology that is beneficial of them  
15 and we serve as the trusted agent of the  
16 government to broker that activity. I look  
17 forward to continuing to grow in a much  
18 more meaningful way that helps the airmen  
19 to get that which they need without these  
20 ten, twenty per life cycle in acquisition  
21 currently plagued with military. Someone  
22 said earlier about how we've become our own  
23 worst enemy anyway. You need to look and  
24 find what problems that occurred over time  
25 that have led to giving you camera with in

1 the Air Force with the acquisition folks  
2 and the JAG folks and that is slowing  
3 everything we need to get done for the war  
4 front down pretty significantly. I'm  
5 really excited about the things that we get  
6 to do. Brian is going to mention that on  
7 the veteran's side, there's quite a number  
8 of jobs that are open in this I-24 and  
9 growing. And they're in the technology  
10 sector. Those jobs didn't exist five years  
11 ago. Now, they're in addition to the ones  
12 that we've got staffed an additional three  
13 thousand available for people to take and  
14 fill. What we want to do is work with our  
15 partners in higher ed and education and see  
16 if in that last six months where these  
17 military professionals are separating, they  
18 have the latitude to do training as opposed  
19 to their full-time uniform service job. If  
20 we could have them, they've got clearances  
21 that these jobs demand. Those clearances  
22 right now are taking upwards of a year or  
23 two years to get the clearance process. If  
24 I can get an air man that's got top secret  
25 clearance and give him three months of

1 training, I just beat the time line by  
2 eighteen months because I don't have to  
3 wait that time for him to get cleared.  
4 What I hope to see, is that veteran get a  
5 job with much better earning income  
6 potential and upward mobility, then what  
7 the opportunities that they're currently  
8 afforded as a function of the way the  
9 economy serves them as separating members  
10 today. We can do a lot to help that  
11 situation. The folks at Bossier Parish,  
12 Bossier City Government give us the  
13 latitude with which to do those kind s of  
14 things, so it's great. I won't give you my  
15 job, but I'll tell you it's a good job.  
16 Secretary Pierson does an awful lot to help  
17 with that as well. I'm grateful for the  
18 opportunity. I think what you'll see is a  
19 function of it is all things in Bossier can  
20 continue to improve because what we pursue  
21 continues to improve the quality of life in  
22 our community. Thank you.

23 SECRETARY PIERSON:

24 Great. Thank you for your leadership  
25 and your partnership. We hope to continue

1 in the pursuit of the growth of this  
2 important sector. We have the resources to  
3 do this. It's just a matter of focus and  
4 attention. We'll do some of that. I know  
5 you're in dialogue right now with one of  
6 our project managers. We're seeking to  
7 continue to augment the resources necessary  
8 to grow this program. I believe, unless  
9 there is a report available from General  
10 Curtis who could not be with us today from  
11 the Louisiana National Guard, does anyone  
12 have substitute report from him? Alright,  
13 hearing none. That will conclude the  
14 reports. Thank you to all those who have  
15 contributed with that today. We do have a  
16 number of business items that we'd like to  
17 move through. Those will also include some  
18 presentations here in our last few minutes.  
19 One of the important elements is attached  
20 in your packet relative to a proposal that  
21 we received from the Roosevelt Group. It's  
22 dated for April. One of our requirements  
23 every four years is to update our status on  
24 an economic impact study. This is embedded  
25 in the legislation that created the



1 Louisiana Military Advisory Council and we  
2 had a initial impact study that was done  
3 approximately four years ago by Roosevelt.  
4 It was very cost effective for us to go  
5 back and ask for an update as opposed to  
6 going external and seeking another company  
7 to do another deep dive and to have to do a  
8 lot of data collection that already exists  
9 in the Roosevelt's domain of information  
10 and all the reference material they have  
11 for all our military installations around  
12 the state. The proposal would be as shown  
13 to you in your packet to engage the  
14 Roosevelt group for a update of our  
15 economic impact study. The engagement, it  
16 would be proposed for a fee of forty-three  
17 thousand dollars plus expenses which are  
18 estimated at three thousand dollars. We  
19 have at LED the funding necessary to  
20 execute on this. Would offer this proposal  
21 for the boards consideration with staff  
22 support.

23 MR. Walker:

24 I'll make a motion to engage the  
25 Roosevelt Group in the terms you just

1 described for us.

2 SECRETARY PIERSON:

3 Has been moved by Mayor Lo Walker.

4 MR. REESE:

5 Second.

6 SECRETARY PIERSON:

7 Second by Mike Reese. Any discussion?

8 MR. -----:

9 Mr. Secretary, why is the 377 support  
10 command not listed? Is it because it's not  
11 in installation? It's the largest reserve  
12 activity in the United States? It's a two-  
13 star slot.

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 We can certainly add that. Maybe Chris  
16 Goode can speak to that. We anticipate a  
17 comprehensive look at all our  
18 installations. All our flags and we would  
19 anticipate that would be included. But,  
20 I'd like to make specific note of that and  
21 give Mr. Goode a chance to respond to it.

22 MR. GOODE:

23 We can add it. We essentially took the  
24 scope out of the thirteen analysis when we  
25 looked at the 8th transport. We did cover

1 the military DOD and U.S. Coast Guard  
2 contracts.

3 MR. —:

4 I think at last count they had thirty-  
5 seven thousand people in that command.  
6 Pretty significant.

7 MR. GOODE:

8 Is it 377th? Use to be theater support  
9 command? In New Orleans?

10 MR. ----:

11 Yes, sir.

12 MR. GOODE:

13 I can get some information on it.

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 Thank you. Mr. Jim Nunn.

16 MR. NUNN:

17 Our Veteran Action Coalition would like  
18 to make available to the Roosevelt Group at  
19 no cost our considerable body of research  
20 on the issue veteran's healthcare in the  
21 state of Louisiana. I will coordinate with  
22 Chris to do that directly.

23 SECRETARY PIERSON:

24 Thank you for that. That's an important  
25 element of documenting the impact of

1 federal DOD dollars that come to our state.  
2 Any other discussion? Hearing none. Those  
3 in favor of adopting, please signify by  
4 saying, "I."

5 ALL:

6 "I."

7 SECRETARY PIERSON:

8 Motion adopted. Thank you. We'll  
9 proceed with the execution of that  
10 business. Upon completion, you will all be  
11 provided with this document. I'd like to  
12 call on Mr. Jim Nunn now to give us an  
13 update, please.

14 MR. NUNN:

15 Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you  
16 gentleman. Thank you Mr. Mayor. I'm Jim  
17 Nunn. I'm a co-chair man of the Veteran's  
18 Action Coalition Southwest Louisiana.  
19 That's primarily Lafayette and Lake  
20 Charles. Our organization stood up in  
21 November of 2010 and we've been fighting  
22 furiously with the Department of Veteran's  
23 Affairs for the last seven-and-a-half years  
24 with some measure of success. We know  
25 what's wrong with the Department of

1           Veteran's Affairs and how to fix it. I'd  
2           be very curious if anybody else has told  
3           you that in the last few months. My other  
4           co-chair, Tom Green, spent ten days in  
5           Washington talking to all of our Louisiana  
6           Congressmen, Senator Cassidy, Senator  
7           Kennedy and a few other influential people.  
8           He left with them some fifteen hundred  
9           pages of data that we've accumulated. On  
10          November 17, the date of our last  
11          commission meeting, our coalition met with,  
12          in Louisiana at our brand new clinic there,  
13          Secretary McDonald, Secretary of Veterans  
14          Affairs. He gave us an hour of his time  
15          and we proceeded to wire brush him gently  
16          with all the problems we've had in  
17          Louisiana and we've had a bunch of them.  
18          If we could turn together to page 4, you'll  
19          see a crude map of the state of Louisiana  
20          that shows the veteran population of the  
21          thirteen parishes around Alexandria and the  
22          fifteen parishes around Lake Charles and  
23          Lafayette. As you can see, we have  
24          essentially twice as many veterans around  
25          Lake Charles and Lafayette as they have

1           around Alexandria, but Alexandria gets more  
2           money for those thirty-five thousand  
3           veterans than we get for those sixty-nine  
4           thousand veterans. We posed that question  
5           in January of 2015 to poor old Jimmy Murphy  
6           who was the stand-in temporary head of  
7           staff in Alexandria and I got the deer-in-  
8           the-headlights look and no answers. After  
9           ninety-days, I started doing our own  
10          research and we struck gold. It turns out  
11          that every year the Department of Veteran's  
12          Affairs publishes a very detailed  
13          expenditures report, down to the parish  
14          level. Your eyes normally glaze over when  
15          you look at spreadsheets, as I discovered  
16          those diamonds of information, my eyes  
17          popped out of my head and my blood began to  
18          boil more furiously. As you know, it's all  
19          about the dollars. If you'll turn to  
20          page 2 on the handout, the question is how  
21          much will the veteran shortage struggle is  
22          the impact, how do we fix it? Turns out  
23          over the last eleven fiscal years, the  
24          veterans around Alexandria got an average  
25          of thirty-six thousand dollars per veteran

1 in direct health-care medical expenditures.  
2 Direct dollars. Around the fifteen  
3 parishes around Lake Charles and Lafayette,  
4 they got sixteen thousand dollars per  
5 veteran. And if you do the math and I'd be  
6 glad to cross swords with any bureaucrat or  
7 bean counter from the Department of  
8 Veteran's Affairs, it comes up that the  
9 veteran's around Lake Charles and Lafayette  
10 should have gotten two billion four hundred  
11 and seventy-five million dollars in health  
12 care if they had received an equal amount  
13 of health care as those around Alexandria  
14 received. Folks that's a shortage, an  
15 amount of lost dollars of one billion three  
16 hundred and fifty million dollars. As you  
17 know a billion here, a billion there, it  
18 adds up over time. It gets worse than  
19 that. If you factor in the economic  
20 multiplier effect, some economist use  
21 seven, we used five, you're looking at  
22 economic activity loss of six and half  
23 billion dollars in the Lake  
24 Charles/Lafayette area. Now, since the  
25 governor's commercial activity tax looks as

1           though it is stalled in committee, I intend  
2           to brief the governor on how we should be  
3           able to bring somewhere between fifty and a  
4           hundred million dollars in additional tax  
5           revenue to the state and local coffers by  
6           making sure the veteran's in southwest  
7           Louisiana get what they deserve in the way  
8           of medical healthcare from the Department  
9           of Veteran's Affairs. It may be a slight  
10          exaggeration, but it looks like the fires  
11          of hell are about to rain down on Peter  
12          Dancy's head and his other staff in  
13          Alexandria, because they refuse, they  
14          absolutely refuse to staff our brand-new  
15          thirty-two thousand dollar clinic in  
16          Lafayette. It also looks like they are  
17          refusing, absolutely refusing to properly  
18          staff the brand new clinic, under  
19          construction in Lake Charles that is  
20          supposed to open on the 28th of August even  
21          though it's six to eight weeks behind  
22          construction schedule. Every time we try  
23          to talk to him about that, it's we're  
24          looking at it, we're studying that. We  
25          think we know what's best. So, we'll see



1           what happens to poor old Peter Dancy in the  
2           next three or four months because we're not  
3           going to be diplomatic anymore and we have  
4           the power of pen. We put our thoughts on  
5           paper. We give it to the power brokers.  
6           We give it to the people with power and we  
7           expect things to start happening. Now, an  
8           example of that occurred on the 3rd of July  
9           in 2015 when former U.S. Senator Vitter  
10          penned a one page letter and signed it on  
11          top of our thirty page research document  
12          and fired that over to Secretary McDonald.  
13          That document bounced around the VA quite  
14          rapidly. It's one of the documents that  
15          got us the clinic in Lafayette and is  
16          getting us the clinic in Lake Charles and  
17          got an additional twenty-six VA clinics  
18          around the country. We got our two built  
19          first. You can see, we all have fire in  
20          our belly in Lafayette. I've got a meeting  
21          of our coalition advisory council this  
22          afternoon where we expect to have staff  
23          members for Senator Cassidy and Senator  
24          Kennedy and Congressman Higgins there. We  
25          don't know if the people are going to show

1 up from Alexandria or not. Things are  
2 getting progressively warmer when we talk  
3 to them. There is, Chris for your bean  
4 counters, page 3 that goes into  
5 considerable detail about the most  
6 egregious governmental bureaucratic  
7 administrative abuse of power that I've  
8 ever seen. The staff in Alexandria  
9 literally denies medical healthcare to  
10 veterans in Lake Charles and Louisiana.  
11 So, we'll see what comes out of that. If  
12 you would turn to page 5, and look at that  
13 night time aerial photograph of southwest  
14 Louisiana, you'll see that little bitty  
15 pinprick of light up in the center labeled  
16 Alexandria/Pineville. It indicates they  
17 have a very low population. It is not very  
18 much activity going on there. I set down  
19 with Senator Cassidy right after he was  
20 elected to the Senate and showed him this  
21 photograph and his jaw was on the floor. I  
22 think this photograph is also one of the  
23 reasons we got our two new clinics in  
24 Lafayette and Lake Charles. This  
25 photograph speaks volumes. If you look at

1           the Lake Charles big blotch of light. That  
2           area is getting seventy-eight billion  
3           dollars in capital investment in the trains  
4           that liquify natural gas. As all of you  
5           know, we've got enough natural gas in  
6           Louisiana to power the country for two  
7           hundred years. Alexandria sits right on  
8           top of the Tuscaloosa Shale, you're all  
9           familiar with the big natural gas boom  
10          right around here, just before it stopped  
11          booming. But, all those wells are capped  
12          off even though they could produce. Are  
13          just sitting there as energy reserves.  
14          Those liquification trains are of great  
15          concern to Prime Minister Putin because  
16          Louisiana can supply liquified natural gas  
17          to Western Europe and tell the Russians to  
18          go pound sand if Western Europe wants to do  
19          that. Lake Charles is growing faster than  
20          the concrete will harden. Mayor Roach is  
21          about to retire after several decades in  
22          office. He's having trouble getting places  
23          for workers to live, getting the title  
24          paperwork done. The activity down there is  
25          amazing. Lafayette has had to cut back a

1           little bit when oil went from a hundred ten  
2           dollars a barrel to fifty dollars a barrel,  
3           but we're still doing ok down there because  
4           we learned the lesson thirty years ago that  
5           you've got to diversify. You can't just  
6           depend on oil. One final note I want to  
7           give Chris on our voluminous pages of  
8           research so that Chris can put all that  
9           together and put his cover letter on it and  
10          charge you guys five thousand dollars for  
11          it. I'd like to take any questions. My  
12          enthusiasm is contagious so don't become  
13          overly optimistic.

14          MR. ----:

15                 How can somebody just agree not to hire  
16          staff?

17          MR. NUNN:

18                 Very simple. Those folks up there  
19          think they're God's gift to administration.  
20          They will stiff arm you in the face and  
21          smile while they do it. My response to  
22          them is the next time you stiff arm me in  
23          the face, the arm may come out of the  
24          shoulder socket. By the way, I don't know  
25          how many of you know of Clay Higgins

1           personally, but, he is a real cowboy. He  
2           doesn't mince words and his hair is on  
3           fire.

4           MR. -----:

5                     Is there a hierarchy from the VA? They  
6           just completed a one billion dollar  
7           hospital with LSU School of Medicine.

8           MR. NUNN:

9                     Fernando Rivero is a prince of a guy.  
10          He's one of our friends. But, he runs New  
11          Orleans. He doesn't run Alexandria. Sky  
12          MacDougall is the overall boss for Fernando  
13          Rivero and Peter Dancey. We have hope that  
14          Sky MacDougall will straighten out the  
15          mess. But, she's running out of time too.  
16          We had a real shoot out telephone  
17          conference call on the 6th of February  
18          where we got Peter Dancey and Sky  
19          MacDougall on the phone with our advisory  
20          group and we just laid it out with our very  
21          long list of dissatisfaction. The  
22          telephone system for Lake Charles, right  
23          now, doesn't work. The telephone system  
24          for the clinic in Lafayette doesn't work.  
25          They have no post-appointment patient

1 satisfaction survey system. I stayed at  
2 the LaQuinta Hotel in North Jackson,  
3 Mississippi about two weeks ago and two  
4 days after I got back home, by email, I got  
5 a ten page guest satisfaction  
6 questionnaire. From a motel. The VA does  
7 not want to know how bad it is. They don't  
8 want dissatisfied veterans to put it down  
9 in paper and send it in. Those are only  
10 three times. I already talked longer than  
11 I wanted to.

12 MR. ----:

13 Those certainly would pay for  
14 themselves.

15 MR. NUNN:

16 Absolutely. Positively. I said I know  
17 what's wrong with the VA and how to fix it.  
18 The union runs the VA. Secretary of  
19 Veteran Affairs is not running the  
20 Veteran's Administration. It's the  
21 American Federation of Government Employees  
22 and the other two people. If you read  
23 their three hundred and twenty page master  
24 agreement, which is really a union  
25 contract, it shocks the conscience. They

1 gave away the store in 2011 when they  
2 signed that master agreement. I know  
3 that's a really red hot item because we are  
4 the only people talking about it. The  
5 issue is beyond importance, no body talks  
6 about it. Well we're waving the flag and  
7 we're using the bull horn and the power of  
8 the pen. We're going to get things done.  
9 Oh, by the way, Joey Strickland was able to  
10 place into the hands of the new Secretary  
11 of Veterans Affairs page 1 of the enclosure  
12 you see. I don't know if the Secretary  
13 read it. I don't know if he tossed it in  
14 the trash can, but he got it. It's page 1  
15 lists three of the big barriers between  
16 patients and their healthcare. We know  
17 what we're talking about. We have very  
18 clear objectives. We're going to get them  
19 done one way or another.

20 MR. ----:

21 It's all connected as you all know.  
22 Communities and retirement and all of this  
23 are important.

24 MR. NUNN:

25 Talk about community.

1 SECRETARY PIERSON:

2 We're going to have to curtail our  
3 talking here. We do want to continue this  
4 discussion over lunch. Certainly, Mr.  
5 Nunn, thank you so much for your advocacy.  
6 Bringing the information to us so that we  
7 can continue to monitor this. It's  
8 obviously an area that we want to see some  
9 improvement on and we'll look forward to  
10 working with all our communities across the  
11 state to include Alexandria to make  
12 progress against these issues. General  
13 Richard, I think you wanted to make a few  
14 remarks.

15 MR. RICHARD:

16 I think the time eluded us here. I'm new  
17 to the committee. I will forgo my  
18 presentation if that pleases the chair. I  
19 would just like to make a comment about  
20 what Jim just talked about. I'm new to  
21 this committee and I don't understand  
22 exactly what this committee can do to bring  
23 attention to certain issues. But, Mr.  
24 Secretary, this issue about veterans and  
25 the healthcare in Alexandria has been



1           around for years now and nothing has been  
2           done. Since I retired for the second time,  
3           I have been dealing with veterans issues  
4           and trying to assist veterans in  
5           transitioning and addressing veteran's  
6           issues pro bono, quite frankly. This issue  
7           needs to be addressed and I'm wondering if  
8           this committee that we are gathered here  
9           today can in fact issue a proclamation,  
10          issue a statement, do something substantive  
11          that can reinforce what Jim has talked  
12          about to bring it to the attention because  
13          giving the cover letter to the Secretary to  
14          those of us that have worked in Washington  
15          doesn't do anything. That letter simply  
16          went to the same people that are causing  
17          the problem to be staffed. I'm a novice  
18          here, but it seems to me with the group of  
19          people we have here, we should be able to  
20          voice our objection and concern about our  
21          veterans. After all, since my retirement  
22          two and a half years ago from the Tiger  
23          Athletic Foundation at LSU, I've heard  
24          nothing but the problems associated with  
25          our veterans. Nothing is being done.

1 SECRETARY PIERSON:

2 I'd like to ask you to make that in the  
3 form of a motion.

4 MR. RICHARD:

5 Absolutely.

6 SECRETARY PIERSON:

7 That the council will communicate the  
8 issues which you've outlined in concert  
9 with our Secretary of Veteran's Affairs and  
10 I think the correct audience for us and I  
11 want to open this to discussion after we  
12 get a second, but I think the audience for  
13 us is our Congressional delegation. Our  
14 Senators and then our Congressmen from each  
15 of the districts that they need to be aware  
16 of this shortcoming in the federal system.  
17 Is there a second?

18 MR. JAKES:

19 Second.

20 SECRETARY PIERSON:

21 So we have a motion and a second for  
22 the Louisiana Military Affairs Advisory  
23 Council to draft correspondence that will  
24 be submitted to our congressional  
25 delegation highlighting the shortcomings of

1 the veterans healthcare facilities both in  
2 Lake Charles and Alexandria. You want to  
3 add something?

4 MR. JAKES:

5 Yeah, Don. The primary culprit that  
6 we're talking about that we have such a  
7 headache with is the VA Medical Center in  
8 Alexandria. We have no problems with New  
9 Orleans or Overton Brook. But, I think  
10 this resolution needs to go through our  
11 Congressional delegation directly to Dr.  
12 Shulkin who is a medical doctor. Who was  
13 there under McDonald and should be familiar  
14 with the problems of Alexandria. We  
15 brought these issues, Jim and I along with  
16 Tom Green who serves on the governor's  
17 veteran's commission to the highest level  
18 that we can. We brought it to the VISN  
19 director. The VISN director, VISN stands  
20 for Veterans Integrated Service Network.  
21 It's got a high-level acknowledgment up  
22 there, but apparently it's not getting to  
23 the Secretary of Veteran's Affairs who can  
24 look into the problem. I think maybe our  
25 Congressional delegation can put maybe the

1 pressure on him to do that.

2 SECRETARY PIERSON:

3 On behalf of the council, we'll draft  
4 this letter. We'll ask that it be  
5 submitted by the governor to the  
6 Congressional delegation and make the  
7 appropriate administrators aware of our  
8 correspondence. That's the motion. We  
9 have a second. Any further discussion.  
10 All in favor, please signify by saying,  
11 "I."

12 ALL:

13 "I."

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 Sorry that our time has run over just a  
16 little bit, but I do want to yield to  
17 Colonel Newman. Thank you for hosting us  
18 today. If you've got some remarks or  
19 presentation, please take the floor.

20 MR. NEWMAN:

21 Absolutely. I'll bring my team first, if  
22 you don't mind. I'll introduce them to you.  
23 First off, distinguished guests and Secretary,  
24 General, Mayor, and all of the other civic  
25 leaders that I get such an honor to work with

1 day in and day out in our local Shreveport  
2 area. Welcome to Barksdale. Great day to be  
3 here. For those that haven't been on Barksdale  
4 before, you are always welcome to come back  
5 here and explore our beautiful base and meet  
6 some of our wonderful airmen that take care of  
7 an incredible mission for us here at Barksdale.  
8 I have a team here that's comprised of some of  
9 my airmen across the base that tell a story of  
10 what happens here everyday. I think once you  
11 hear their story, you guys are going to be very  
12 proud that you have Barksdale Air Force base in  
13 the state of Louisiana, but more importantly,  
14 the young men and women that are continuing to  
15 serve your United States Air Force today and do  
16 an incredible mission. I'll let them. They  
17 have a ten, twelve minute presentation and I'll  
18 follow up and open it up for any questions that  
19 you have. With that, I'm going to introduce  
20 you to my team called Barksdale's best.

21 MR. BELLAMY:

22 Good afternoon everybody, I'm Senior  
23 Air man Derek Bellamy. I'm from New  
24 Braunsfeld, Texas. Here on Barksdale, I  
25 work up in the air traffic control tower,

1 no not the guy on the ground doing the  
2 sticks telling the pilot where to park, I'm  
3 actually up in the tower talking to the  
4 pilots letting them know when they can  
5 land, take off, taxi, all that good stuff.  
6 I've been in the Air Force now for three  
7 years. The reason I enlisted was I bounced  
8 around from menial job to menial job not  
9 really knowing what I wanted to do with my  
10 life. I woke up one day and was like you  
11 know what, it would be so much easier if  
12 someone just told me this is what you're  
13 going to do and I was right. I absolutely  
14 love my career field. I've been inspired  
15 since I've been in it to pursue my  
16 bachelor's degree in aviation science and  
17 airways. I'm also in the process of  
18 collecting equipment and funding to open up  
19 my own gym, which is what I want to do when  
20 I get out of the Air Force. It's been a  
21 great ride here at Barksdale. I've been  
22 here for three years and along with my  
23 fellow airmen, we've been selected by wing  
24 leadership to represent the base, the  
25 second bottom wing, and all of the

1 exceptional war airmen. Barksdale's been  
2 around for awhile, more specifically, in  
3 1924 the local community became interested  
4 in hosting a military fly field. In 1928,  
5 a delegation of prominent citizens hired  
6 Airport Captain Harold Ross Harris to fly  
7 over the local area and find a suitable  
8 site for an air field. Captain Harris  
9 selected what we now know as Barksdale Air  
10 Force Base which originally opened in 1931  
11 as Barksdale Air Field. Today, Barksdale  
12 consists of more than twenty-two thousand  
13 acres. Twenty thousand of that being used  
14 for recreation, oil and gas reserves.  
15 Barksdale's honored to be the host base of  
16 three of the most integral commands for the  
17 Air Force's mission. Air Force Global  
18 Strike Command which is responsible for the  
19 command and control of the Air Force's  
20 nuclear arsenal. The historic Mighty 8th  
21 Air Force which earned it's fame during  
22 World War II as the greatest aeronaut in  
23 history. Our reserve partner, the 307 Bomb  
24 Wing which earned a presidential unit  
25 citation for it's service during the Korean

1 War. With this much history on base, it's  
2 easy to see why the 2nd Bomb Wing continues  
3 to reflect the heritage of it's motto,  
4 "Libertatem Defendimus, Liberty we  
5 defend." The airmen of the 2nd Bomb Wing  
6 are charged with operating the historic  
7 base and legacy aircraft, the B-52.  
8 Colonel Ty Newman is the 2nd Bombing and  
9 Installation Commander. The Bomb Wing  
10 priorities are mission, airmen, pride.  
11 These priorities are key in meeting the  
12 requirements of the Air Force's mission. I  
13 would now like to turn it over to A1C  
14 Hammata to talk about our first priority,  
15 mission.

16 MS. HAMMATA:

17 Thank you Senior Air man Bellamy.  
18 Good afternoon I'm Air man First Class  
19 Jessica Hammata. I'm originally from  
20 California. But, my parents were both in  
21 the Air Force, so we moved around a little  
22 bit. I also lived in Hawaii, Turkey, and  
23 Rhode Island. My older brother followed  
24 the military tradition and he joined the  
25 Navy, but I rebelled and I went to college



1           instead. I graduated from the University  
2           of Hawaii with a degree in Geography and I  
3           wanted to become a park ranger, but I  
4           couldn't get a job, so after a year of  
5           still living on my Mom's couch, I finally  
6           decided to walk into a recruiter's office  
7           and it was the best decision I've ever  
8           made. I now work at the 96th Bomb Squadron  
9           where I provide geopolitical and military  
10          intelligence updates to our commanders and  
11          air crew to help them better fulfill the  
12          mission of the 2nd Bomb Wing which is to  
13          provide nuclear deterrence, combat power,  
14          and combat support anytime, anywhere. At  
15          home, we provide nuclear deterrence with  
16          the presence of our B-52 and by projecting  
17          it's reach all around the world. Together,  
18          along with our reserve unit, the 307th Bomb  
19          Wing, our mission partners and the men and  
20          women who make up Barksdale, this base  
21          helps America deter our adversaries and  
22          assure our allies every single day. We  
23          protect combat power and combat support by  
24          deploying more personnel than any other  
25          base in this command. This year alone,

1 we've deployed more than one thousand of  
2 our amazing airmen all over the world.  
3 But, what does this mean for our enemies  
4 and our allies? We can drop a multitude of  
5 weapons. Some of them can destroy hard  
6 structures. Some can sink enemy naval  
7 vessels, and some are even designed to  
8 impact the way the enemy makes decisions.  
9 Our aircrews can work with ground forces by  
10 providing close air support and they can  
11 launch weapons from miles out without ever  
12 putting themselves in harm's way. Because  
13 of the capabilities of the B-52 bomber  
14 fleet, this command is a visible deterrent  
15 to our adversaries and a diplomatic tool  
16 used by our government and our allies. At  
17 sixty years old, the B-52 remains a tried  
18 and true asset of the United States  
19 Strategic Command. Our aircrews  
20 participate in various U.S. and NATO  
21 exercise, support the joint inter-agency  
22 task force cell and conduct displays of  
23 overwhelming fire power all across the  
24 globe. In 2016, after ten years of  
25 absence, the B-52 was placed back into the

1 central command area of responsibility to  
2 combat terrorism in support of Operation  
3 Apparent Resolve. To date, the coalition  
4 has conducted more than thirty-three  
5 thousand air power missions. Since April  
6 2016, there have been more than three  
7 hundred and sixty B-52 stories flown with  
8 over two million pounds of munitions  
9 dropped. But, none of these missions could  
10 be possible without the men and women who  
11 continue to keep our legacy aircraft in the  
12 sky. Which brings us to A1C Smith with our  
13 next priority, airmen.

14 MR. SMITH:

15 Thank you Air man Hammata. Good  
16 afternoon everyone, I'm Air man First Class  
17 Will Smith. I'm from Chicago, Illinois,  
18 also known as the Windy City. It arguably  
19 has the best deep dish pizza and I will  
20 argue that. I joined the Air Force because  
21 I did not want to be stuck paying college  
22 loans for the next twenty years of my life.  
23 I currently work in the 2 Operation  
24 Support Squadron, more specifically dotted  
25 wing scheduling where I handle the fly-out

1 program as well as schedule aircrew for  
2 simulators and I also send out the dailies  
3 on effectiveness. During my time at  
4 Barksdale, I've met plenty of airmen who  
5 showed me how unique Barksdale is as a  
6 whole. In addition, Barksdale is made up  
7 of more than eleven thousand personnel  
8 working over a hundred forty career fields.  
9 For us, we consider airmen and their  
10 families and taking care of them just as  
11 critical as the B-52's we put in the air  
12 everyday. We deliver a variety of programs  
13 to support those at home who support us.  
14 Whether it's our fun family first events,  
15 hours of free child care, or support  
16 programs, we do our best to take care of  
17 our families. The close relationship we  
18 have with our local community is  
19 instrumental in completing our mission and  
20 taking care of our enemy. We open our  
21 gates to our community with our annual  
22 Defenders of Liberty Air Show and in return  
23 they open their gates with athletic events  
24 and sports festivals. Just recently, the  
25 local community took part in fund-raising

1           fifty-five thousand dollars to send eighty  
2           young airmen home for the holidays as a  
3           part of Operation Bright Holidays. The  
4           care and support we share with our airmen  
5           is second to none. From our historic roots  
6           to local community, Barksdale has much to  
7           be proud of. I'd like to turn it over to  
8           Senior Airmen Hartline to talk about our  
9           last priority, pride.

10          MS. HARTLINE:

11                 Good afternoon again everyone. I'm  
12                 Senior Air man Jessica Hartline. I'm  
13                 originally from the great state of  
14                 Oklahoma. A big state, but full of small  
15                 towns with funny names that even those who  
16                 live there can't always pronounce. I  
17                 always knew that I wanted to help people.  
18                 After I became the first member of my  
19                 family to graduate high school, I decided  
20                 to take it further and go to college. I  
21                 went to college a little bit and then  
22                 decided I wanted to join the Air Force and  
23                 help pay for that. I made it a goal of  
24                 mine to join the F.B.I. one day so I can  
25                 help as many people as possible. I left

1 for basic training in 2013 with an open  
2 general contract and I let the Air Force  
3 decide where to put me. It made sense that  
4 they put the Oklahoma girl into the weather  
5 career field. Here I am at Barksdale  
6 working with the 26th Operational Weather  
7 Squadron where we forecast for all of the  
8 Air Force and Army bases in the Southeast  
9 portion of the United States. Any pilot  
10 that needs to take off or land in our AOR,  
11 they're going to give us a call and we're  
12 going to let them know what the weather's  
13 going to be to, from, and during their  
14 flight to help them get their safely. I  
15 just reenlisted from my second enlistment.  
16 Like I said, I joined the Air Force as a  
17 stepping stone to get to the F.B.I., but  
18 everyday I wake up, it's getting a little  
19 bit harder to think about leaving this  
20 uniform behind, so we'll see what happens  
21 here in the next few years. I've been here  
22 at Barksdale for about three and half years  
23 now and if there's one thing that I know,  
24 it's that the air men here at Barksdale, we  
25 have a lot to be proud of.

HEARING CONCLUDED AT 12:39 P.M.

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## 1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2  
3 I, Jeanne Bain, Certified Court Reporter in and  
4 for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before  
5 whom this meeting was taken, do hereby certify that  
6 this meeting was reported by me in the stenotype  
7 reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me  
8 or under my personal direction and supervision, and  
9 is a true and correct transcript to the best of my  
10 ability and understanding. That the transcript has  
11 been prepared in compliance with transcript format  
12 required by statute or by rules of the board, that I  
13 have acted in compliance with the prohibition on  
14 contractual relationships as defined by Louisiana  
15 Code of Civil Procedure Article 1434 and in rules  
16 and advisory opinions of the board; that I am not  
17 related to the parties herein, nor am I otherwise  
18 interested in the outcome of this matter.

19 Dated this the 17th day of June, 2017.  
20  
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22 \_\_\_\_\_  
23 Jeanne Bain CCR# 87233  
24  
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