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LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Held on April 17, 2024

AT THE LASALLE BUILDING

GRIFFIN ROOM, FIRST FLOOR

617 North Third Street

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70802

REPORTED BY: KELLY S. PERRIN, C.C.R.

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COURT REPORTERS OF LOUISIANA - A Veritext Company

9522 Brookline Avenue, Suite 217

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. ABBOUD:

All right. Good afternoon, everyone. Great to look out to see so many smiling faces this afternoon. I'm showing a few minutes after one, so I think we can go ahead and call today's meeting to order.

Just a couple of quick housekeeping things, in your folders, you should have a copy of your agenda for today's meeting as well as a roster of the LMAC Board Membership. As you look through that, if you see any updates, revisions, or corrections that need to be made, please don't hesitate to let me know and I'll be sure we capture that in our system.

I know we have a very busy agenda today. So what I'll do is quickly call the roll for the record. And as always, please correct me should there be any mispronunciations. Okay. Mayor Rick Allen?

MAYOR ALLEN:  
Present.

MR. ABBOUD:  
Mayor Clarence Beebe?

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1	APPEARANCES:
2	SECRETARY SUSAN BONNETT BOURGEOIS, (CHAIRWOMAN)
3	GENERAL ROBERT J. "BOB" ELDER
4	MS. DEBORAH B. RANDOLPH
5	SENATOR MIKE REESE
6	MR. GARY B. SILBERT
7	MR. RONNIE L. SLONE
8	MR. MURRAY W. VISER
9	REAR ADMIRAL JOEL R. WHITEHEAD
10	ROBERT M. "ROBBY" ABBOUD, JR., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
11	FOR LMAC
12	COLONEL CHARLTON J. MEGINLEY
13	ERIC BARKLEY
14	MAYOR RICK ALLEN
15	BRIGADE GENERAL THOMAS FRILOUX
16	MAJOR GENERAL RONALD G. RICHARD
17	
18	
19	Reported by:
20	Kelly S. Perrin, Certified Court Reporter
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

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(No response).  
Secretary Susan Bourgeois?

SECRETARY BOURGEOIS:  
Present.

MR. ABBOUD:  
Representative Raymond Crews?  
(No response).  
General Robert Elder?

GENERAL ELDER:  
Present.

MR. ABBOUD:  
Brigadier General Thomas Friloux?

BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
Here. Thank you.

MR. ABBOUD:  
Mr. Robert Gatti?  
(No response).  
Mr. Brian Jakes?  
(No response).  
Mr. John Manion?  
(No response).  
Secretary Charlton Meginley?

AUDIENCE MEMBER:  
On his way.

MR. ABBOUD:

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1 Deborah Randolph?  
 2 MS. RANDOLPH:  
 3 Present.  
 4 MR. ABOUD:  
 5 Senator Mike Reese?  
 6 (No response).  
 7 Major General Ronald Richard?  
 8 MAJ. GEN. RICHARD:  
 9 Present.  
 10 MR. ABOUD:  
 11 Mr. Gary Silbert?  
 12 MR. SILBERT:  
 13 Here.  
 14 MR. ABOUD:  
 15 Mr. Ronnie Slone?  
 16 MR. SLONE:  
 17 Present.  
 18 MR. ABOUD:  
 19 Mr. Murray Viser?  
 20 MR. VISER:  
 21 Present.  
 22 MR. ABOUD:  
 23 Rear Admiral Joel Whitehead?  
 24 RADM WHITEHEAD:  
 25 Present.

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1 MR. ABOUD:  
 2 Okay. All in favor, please say "Aye."  
 3 ALL:  
 4 Aye.  
 5 MR. ABOUD:  
 6 Okay. Thank you very much. Now, moving  
 7 into our remarks and introductions. I know we  
 8 have a few new LMAC Board members joining us  
 9 today, so I certainly appreciate having the  
 10 opportunity to welcome and introduce them  
 11 today. Earlier this year, Governor Jeff  
 12 Landry announced his new appointment for  
 13 Secretary of the Louisiana Economic  
 14 Development. She previously served as CEO of  
 15 the Northshore Community Foundation for 17  
 16 years. And in our short time together thus  
 17 far, I've learned that she's a very strategic  
 18 thinker and an exceptional communicator, and I  
 19 know that she will -- we'll be well-positioned  
 20 as a state under her leadership.  
 21 So with that, it's my pleasure to  
 22 introduce the LED Secretary, Susan Bourgeois.  
 23 Thank you.  
 24 SECRETARY BOURGEOIS:  
 25 Thank you, Robby, very much. If y'all

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1 MR. ABOUD:  
 2 Thank you. Thank you very much,  
 3 everyone. Please take a seat there, Counsel.  
 4 Okay. So I do see we have a quorum today and  
 5 I would like to welcome all of our new LMAC  
 6 Board members to today's meeting. Since we  
 7 typically begin our meetings with the Pledge  
 8 of Allegiance, I'll ask that you please all  
 9 rise so you can join me in saying the Pledge.  
 10 ALL:  
 11 (PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE)  
 12 MR. ABOUD:  
 13 Thank you. You may be seated. All  
 14 right. We can go on to the approval of the  
 15 prior meeting's minutes. I believe those have  
 16 been shared with you all before today's  
 17 meeting. Does anyone have any questions,  
 18 comments or any edits to the prior meeting's  
 19 minutes?  
 20 MR. SILBERT:  
 21 Move to accept.  
 22 MR. ABOUD:  
 23 Okay. Any second?  
 24 MR. SLONE:  
 25 Second.

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1 are comfortable, I'll stay here. I don't know  
 2 how you typically do this and I'm not going to  
 3 make many remarks today. I just wanted to  
 4 thank you all for your service, first and  
 5 foremost, on many different levels.  
 6 And as Robby said, so I am now about two  
 7 and a half months on the job. And so for a  
 8 little bit longer, I'm going to continue to  
 9 claim new-girl status if you don't mind  
 10 because I think there's great flexibility that  
 11 comes with that. But I'm really thrilled to  
 12 be here today to hear a little bit about what  
 13 y'all do in your work. But in the bigger  
 14 picture, we have so much going on at LED and  
 15 it's all coming at me very fast.  
 16 And having been in the private sector for  
 17 so long, I actually served in state government  
 18 under Governor Foster, and left state  
 19 government and have been out in the private  
 20 sector ever since. And so having to adjust to  
 21 state in government time is a little bit  
 22 different for me because I'm ready to get  
 23 everything done, I'm ready to get it done now,  
 24 right.  
 25 So I will tell you, the most significant

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1 thing that we have going on at LED is we have  
2 a major restructure of our department and how  
3 we look at, treat, and execute economic  
4 development services in Louisiana. There is a  
5 legislative track. I'm very happy to say that  
6 our pretty significant restructure bill passed  
7 Senate and Commerce Committee this morning  
8 without opposition. There's just such hunger  
9 for growth and opportunity in Louisiana that  
10 the Commerce Committee was all very excited to  
11 hear what we had to say. And then we have a  
12 lot of internal reorganization going on.  
13 There are many elements to that. And  
14 there's one I want to focus on with you today  
15 so you hear this and you hear the importance  
16 of this. There's a fundamental opportunity we  
17 have in Louisiana that we are capitalizing on  
18 very quickly in the Department, and that is  
19 engaging partners in the private sector to  
20 assist with the work that we do; people who  
21 have expertise. You know, my theory, again,  
22 and from the private sector, my theory is why  
23 would we reinvent inside of government the  
24 expertise and the assets that we already have  
25 outside of the government?

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1 So a tremendous focus of our work, and  
2 actually, Rachel Shields is here with me  
3 today. For those of you who don't know  
4 Rachel, Rachel is the longterm Chief of Staff  
5 of GNO, Inc. Her role with the Department is  
6 to manage all things private sector  
7 engagement. And our goal is to engage with  
8 people, as I said, who have expertise and a  
9 desire to see the state succeed in ways that  
10 drive and form and drive the work that we do.  
11 And so if you take that element, combined  
12 with, as we begin upon a very aggressive,  
13 strategic planning process, we're going to  
14 identify the sectors that the Department needs  
15 to focus on. We're going to identify the  
16 opportunities in the state. But I do think it  
17 is very safe to say that whatever words we  
18 choose to describe, military defense veterans  
19 in that bucket is and will remain a priority  
20 sector for the state. And so I know a lot of  
21 the work that y'all do here will inform that  
22 work.

23 So I'm grateful for that. I'm grateful  
24 for the opportunity that Governor Landry has  
25 given me. And most importantly, I'm grateful

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1 to work alongside people like you who really  
2 just want to see the state succeed. So,  
3 Robby, if you want me to speak to any of our  
4 work specifically, I'm happy to, but  
5 otherwise, I appreciate being here and it's  
6 nice to meet you all.

7 MR. ABBOD:

8 Thank you, Secretary. I'll take this  
9 moment just for any questions from the Council  
10 or anyone in attendance for Secretary  
11 Bourgeois at this time. Okay.

12 SECRETARY BOURGEOIS:

13 Great. And I'm going to step out  
14 shortly. I have to go to Shreveport, so I'm  
15 not -- I hate that I can't stay for the  
16 duration of the meeting. Thank you.

17 MR. ABBOD:

18 Thank you, Secretary. I wanted to move  
19 us kind of into our reports and overview  
20 section of today's agenda. I know there's  
21 been a lot of great work going on in pretty  
22 much every corner of our state and that's from  
23 military installation support to work with the  
24 defense industry to supporting our veteran and  
25 retiree population here in Louisiana.

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1 And so to that point, I wanted to first  
2 call on Colonel Charlton Meginley who has a  
3 report for Veterans Affairs. Colonel Meginley  
4 served in the U.S. Air Force as Judge Advocate  
5 on active duty for more than 20 years. He  
6 completed his military career as an appellate  
7 military judge on the Air Force's court of  
8 criminal appeals at Joint Base Andrews. So  
9 we're grateful to have Colonel Meginley back  
10 in Louisiana. And I'll turn it over to you,  
11 sir, for your presentation.

12 COL. MEGINLEY:

13 Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone.  
14 I'm sorry for our late entrance. We've been  
15 in Committee since, I think, 9:30, so we just  
16 got wrapped up. So here's me. I want to  
17 introduce my deputy over here, Jerome Buller.  
18 Colonel Buller -- Dr. Buller is a retired Army  
19 doc of over 30 years of Army service.

20 Over here, is my Undersecretary John  
21 Phillips. Lieutenant Commander Phillips did  
22 20 years with the Navy. So, obviously,  
23 between the three of us, we have 70 years of  
24 active time helping and assisting veterans.

25 So our mission is very clear. We are

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4 (Pages 10 - 13)

1 going to advocate for veterans every day until  
2 I walk out and then probably for the next  
3 person and the next person and the next  
4 person, because that's what we do. And so  
5 we're going to ensure that they receive  
6 superior service, connect them to all the  
7 benefits they've earned, not just from the  
8 federal but from the state.  
9 And, of course, my vision, right now,  
10 Louisiana is not considered a very favorable  
11 place for veterans to live in, despite the  
12 fact that we have one of the strongest  
13 benefits packages in the country. So we've  
14 got to figure out how to change that and what  
15 we can do in our role as the DVA.  
16 Budget: We have right now about 800 --  
17 850 employees, about \$92-million budget.  
18 Approximately, I think, about \$60 million of  
19 the work is actual federal passthrough that  
20 goes through our five veteran homes. Right  
21 now, we have about \$17 million in state  
22 allocated funds, comes out to about \$64 per  
23 vet. So we are a -- we're not -- we don't --  
24 we do a lot with what little funding we get in  
25 allocated money.

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1 But I want to talk about this -- the Boot  
2 Program real quick. And I'm lucky enough to  
3 have Mr. Andrew Ward here. The Boot is a  
4 program that is really going to go to a vision  
5 that we start to have to recruit, retain, and  
6 return our service members back to Louisiana.  
7 So we need to give reasons for our folks who  
8 left to come back home. We need to make sure  
9 that we have at least given -- we've made our  
10 pitch to those who are still here, so retain,  
11 particularly those who are at Barksdale or  
12 Johnson, and then maybe we can get some new  
13 veterans coming back here to Louisiana. We  
14 want to do that as well.  
15 There's an importance to all of this and  
16 that's because the DVA and the veterans  
17 themselves bring almost \$2 million of federal  
18 money into the state, and that's only from  
19 77,000 veterans. That is a tremendous return  
20 that the state is receiving by having veterans  
21 living here. That's tax dollars. That's  
22 money being pumped into your economies. And  
23 they really have -- we really have a massive  
24 economic presence in the state.  
25 We also bring in \$150 million in GI bill

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1 money. So we are in the process right now of  
2 talking to all the colleges and universities  
3 here about how they can help bring in more GI  
4 bill participants.  
5 My daughter is on my GI bill. She's  
6 living her best life at LSU. I want more of  
7 those. And the number right there, almost  
8 10,000 or so who are on GI bill benefits.  
9 There is one thing about this slide that  
10 I think is worth noting that we didn't put up,  
11 it is anticipated that the veteran population  
12 in Louisiana is going to continue to drop.  
13 Right now, we have 267,000 vets. A few years  
14 ago, it was over 300. Projections are, in at  
15 about 25 years or so, it will be well below  
16 200,000. This is not just Louisiana, but it  
17 is many others states as well, not counting  
18 Texas, Florida, and other places where there's  
19 no state income taxes as one of the primary  
20 drivers.  
21 Here's your parish impacts. These are  
22 the number of vets. This is VA data, so this  
23 is something that they have put out. East  
24 Baton Rouge has the most number of vets. But  
25 St. Tammany has the most money coming in from

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1 VA sources at \$146 million. Again, Mike  
2 Cooper should love every veteran out in  
3 St. Tammany.  
4 And so what's important to note about  
5 this 1.987, this is not military retirement.  
6 This is VA dollars. DOD retirement dollars,  
7 it's almost \$700 million, and that comes from  
8 the 26,000 retirees that we have in the state.  
9 So two kinds of money, \$2.7 billion federal  
10 money coming in from military retirees and  
11 those who are receiving VA compensation.  
12 How we serve: Most everybody knows, we  
13 have five beautiful veteran homes. My  
14 predecessor, this is one of his passions, he  
15 did a great job with it. Whenever you walk in  
16 one of these veteran homes, it feels like  
17 you're in a tiny military installation.  
18 They've got -- they're wearing their hats,  
19 retired. You know, they're calling each other  
20 by rank. We've gone by several times now. It  
21 really is a fun experience oftentimes to go to  
22 the vet homes.  
23 We have five cemeteries right now. The  
24 one in Jennings is just a couple of years old.  
25 But I do note, even though it's just a couple

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1 of years old, it just won a national award  
 2 right of the gate coming in. The same one  
 3 that we have a Rayville, of note, the Slidell  
 4 Cemetery is very, very fast growing. They've  
 5 got almost 4,500 veterans buried there and  
 6 their family members. And we anticipate that  
 7 Slidell will continue to grow quite rapidly.  
 8 Contact assistance: This is one of the  
 9 primary jobs of my veteran assistant  
 10 counselor. They are the ones who are helping  
 11 veterans with their benefits with whatever,  
 12 you know, VA disability, and of course state  
 13 benefits and making sure they have the  
 14 document and paperwork. We have 74 VACs.  
 15 There is one in all 64 parishes. We have six  
 16 claims paralegals.  
 17 One of the things that y'all should know,  
 18 I haven't been too shy about this, I'm  
 19 probably going to leave here in a little bit,  
 20 I've got a Bill on the floor right now that  
 21 addresses VAC offices. If you have not been  
 22 to some of our offices, some of them are not  
 23 well taken care of. And so we brought this to  
 24 the attention to a lot of the parishes and  
 25 said, fix our offices, because this is the

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1 first impression that veterans have when it  
 2 comes to getting benefits and they need to be  
 3 inviting, they need to look professional. And  
 4 I want that for them, I want that for my VACs.  
 5 The LDVA also helps, of course, with GI  
 6 bill benefits, LAVC core students are taken  
 7 care of, you know, student vets. The one  
 8 gigantic benefit that the state offers is the  
 9 Title 29 benefits. So if you have a 90  
 10 percent rating, your kids go to college in the  
 11 State of Louisiana for free; huge benefit. Of  
 12 note, the schools need that, not the state.  
 13 Again, MFA, this is a tremendous resource  
 14 that we have. It allows us to help veterans  
 15 who are in need. Since '08, we've assisted  
 16 almost 5,000 folks with a million dollars. We  
 17 have a healthy fund right now and we are  
 18 continuing to push money out through the MFA  
 19 fund.  
 20 (Inaudible) jobs, we're coordinating  
 21 right now with each of these agencies. We  
 22 also have private organizations that we're  
 23 talking to right now; the next stop, Acadiana  
 24 Veterans Alliance, who is bringing folks,  
 25 employers in. We're tracking businesses and

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1 organizations. And so -- but what I'm really  
 2 happy about right now is we met yesterday with  
 3 Workforce and we've met with LED. And we're  
 4 meeting with as many people who want to bring  
 5 in veterans as employees. And that's going to  
 6 be one of our kind of new shifts right now is  
 7 how do we help, again, retain, return and  
 8 recruit vets who want to work, who are not --  
 9 don't want to be drinking sweet tea on their  
 10 front porch essentially.  
 11 And, again, our partnerships, VA Medical  
 12 Center, we've gone to all three of them now.  
 13 And, in fact, we were talking to the VA in New  
 14 Orleans quite frequently trying to see how we  
 15 can get more involved in their operations.  
 16 Bastion is an incredible community down in New  
 17 Orleans that helps with TBI and treatment for  
 18 veterans.  
 19 We just signed an updated MOU with  
 20 Southeast Louisiana Legal Services to help  
 21 veterans who have various legal problems.  
 22 And, again, National Veteran Legal Services  
 23 Program, they help with veteran appeals.  
 24 Upcoming initiatives: You're going to  
 25 see a lot more of Come Home Louisiana campaign

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1 for veterans. Right now, one of the things  
 2 that I quickly recognized was we have a media  
 3 problem and that is, we're not pushing out our  
 4 story. And I know Susan has talked about  
 5 pushing out LED's story.  
 6 SECRETARY BOURGEOIS:  
 7 You notice I looked back here.  
 8 COL. MEGINLEY:  
 9 Yeah. We haven't done that as well  
 10 either. And so, while we are on social media,  
 11 I want to get much, much louder on social  
 12 media; because oftentimes, our vets don't  
 13 know. Right now, we know for a fact there are  
 14 vets in this state right now who have a  
 15 healthy VA disability rating who do not know  
 16 about the property tax exemption. We are  
 17 trying to get to each one of those to let them  
 18 know about that gigantic benefit that the  
 19 state has afforded them.  
 20 Again, the Boot coming up, I'm really,  
 21 really excited about this. This is going to  
 22 be our 501C that's going to handle the three  
 23 R's that I want. Expansion of veteran courts:  
 24 We just sent out a notice to all the DA's last  
 25 week telling them and advocating for more

Page 21

1 veteran courts to keep our vets who commit  
 2 relatively small crimes, but who were under  
 3 the influence of substance abuse or mental  
 4 health issues, keep them out of jail. And if  
 5 you were tracking what's happening in the  
 6 22nd, the 22nd by far has the best veteran's  
 7 court. They're not just the local model but  
 8 the national model as well.

9 And then, something else we've talked  
 10 about with Southeast Legal Services, we were  
 11 talking about those veterans who are forced  
 12 out through the vaccine policies. Apparently,  
 13 that's quite the big deal. If we can help, we  
 14 will.

15 Again, our initiatives, I'll be meeting  
 16 with some Congressional leaders in DC in a  
 17 couple of weeks. Our website is from 1993. I  
 18 want -- we're going to update that here soon.  
 19 We're talking about partnerships with Portrait  
 20 for Patriots. One of the things that you  
 21 realize when you're looking for a job, who do  
 22 most employers want? They want a headshot.  
 23 Well, Portrait for Patriots supplies them with  
 24 headshots. We're going to bring them down to  
 25 Louisiana and get our service members, who are

Page 22

1 transitioning out, a headshot so they can  
 2 present that to employers.

3 SkillBridge: We talked about this  
 4 yesterday with Workforce. There's not a lot  
 5 of companies who are participating in  
 6 SkillBridge. If you don't know about  
 7 SkillBridge, it's an amazing program for  
 8 transitioning vets. And so I want more  
 9 companies in Louisiana to set up SkillBridge.

10 Longterm plan for the Alexandria VA  
 11 hospital: Some of you may have heard that  
 12 there was a lot of talk that the VA in  
 13 Alexandria would close. That's been put on  
 14 hold, scrapped for now. But the Alexandria VA  
 15 is one of the primary sources for healthcare  
 16 for veterans in Central, Louisiana. And we  
 17 have to do our part to make sure that that  
 18 facility, not only stays open, but thrives.

19 And then, again, what are we doing with  
 20 the university and college systems to attract  
 21 out of the state vets with the GI bill? That  
 22 was relatively fast, I know. I could talk for  
 23 an hour or two or three if you let me, but  
 24 does anybody have any questions?  
 25 All right. I'll turn it back over to

Page 23

1 Robby.

2 MR. ABOUD:

3 Appreciate it, sir. Thank you very much,  
 4 Colonel. And just to the Colonel's point, he  
 5 mentioned the small business work that we do  
 6 at LED, we have a Veterans First Business  
 7 Initiative in which we work closely with the  
 8 Department of Veterans Affairs to certify  
 9 veteran-owned businesses, and I'm happy to  
 10 announce that we're at 1,255 total  
 11 veteran-owned certified businesses in the  
 12 state. And that reaches every region in  
 13 Louisiana. And so, again, just building upon  
 14 the partnership that we have at LDVA, kind of  
 15 improving that strategic alignment and finding  
 16 ways to continue to work together to further  
 17 some of those critical efforts.

18 Moving along on the agenda, I'd like to  
 19 call next on the Louisiana National Guard  
 20 appointed as the 51st Acting General of  
 21 Louisiana by Governor Jeff Landry earlier this  
 22 year. It's my pleasure to introduce to you  
 23 General Thomas Friloux and invite him up to  
 24 report out on his guard activities.

25 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:

Page 24

1 Thank you. And thank you to the Council  
 2 for hearing my report today and allowing me to  
 3 give an update on what the Guard is doing and  
 4 my strategic vision for Louisiana National  
 5 Guard. And I'd like to acknowledge the  
 6 support by the Governor that he continues to  
 7 give to our Guardsmen every day.

8 Today, the National Guard remains  
 9 operationally engaged in federal and state  
 10 deployments, state responses, cybersecurity  
 11 missions, and state -- second state  
 12 operations. And each of these lines of effort  
 13 will be enhanced by supporting our strategic  
 14 priorities which include zero cost TRICARE for  
 15 National Guard service members, the  
 16 acceleration of the F-15EX fielding in  
 17 conjunction with the closing of the F-15  
 18 Charlie funding cap, and I'll explain that in  
 19 a little bit, as well as continuing to support  
 20 the National Guard military construction  
 21 across the state.

22 And we'll start with the current military  
 23 posture of the Louisiana National Guard.  
 24 Unlike what you're hearing across the nation  
 25 in other services, recruiting is going much

Page 25

1 better here this fiscal year. We just  
 2 finished midyear at 103 percent mission;  
 3 103 percent mission, with 130 enlistment just  
 4 last month. We haven't had that since April  
 5 of 2021 pre-COVID.  
 6 We're also hitting up last year with  
 7 retention. That's four straight years of  
 8 80 percent plus retention. A good year for  
 9 retention for us, a goal was 78 percent. So  
 10 we've had 80 plus in the last four years. It  
 11 looks like this year, we may actually have the  
 12 highest of those last four. I'm pleased with  
 13 the current trajectory. The glide path for  
 14 both recruiting and retention are on. The  
 15 fact that they are on will enable us to build  
 16 personal readiness and support mobilizations  
 17 and gain additional fore-structure in the  
 18 future. And I'll talk about that as well.  
 19 In fact, in part because of our strength  
 20 and success, we've succeeded in gaining the  
 21 addition of a mobile protected fire battalion.  
 22 That's a medium tank battalion that's coming  
 23 back to Louisiana. We haven't had tanks in  
 24 Louisiana in almost between 15 to 20 years.  
 25 And this is not going to be a tank that we're

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1 going to get from active duty as, you know, a  
 2 used piece of equipment. This is straight off  
 3 the assembly line, the M10 Booker tank; as  
 4 well as the cyber operation squadron in our  
 5 Air National Guard. These additions will add  
 6 fore-structure and additional personnel to our  
 7 state's military, and just like was discussed  
 8 by the VA, it's also going to give more  
 9 full-time jobs. Just the mobile protective  
 10 fire battalion, there's probably 50 full-time  
 11 jobs in the state with probably, when we talk  
 12 reserve components, so probably 300 as well.  
 13 Louisiana National Guard men and women  
 14 remain mobilized and deployed around the world  
 15 supporting our nation's efforts. We have  
 16 soldiers and airmen ready to answer the call  
 17 for federal activation both this year and the  
 18 next. They have ultimately deployed over  
 19 22,000 service members since 2001.  
 20 As part of the Emergency Management  
 21 Assistance Compact, we mobilized 50 soldiers  
 22 to the Texas border last month with the first  
 23 group just getting back this week and the  
 24 second group arriving this week. We'll  
 25 continue with the third rotation in May. We

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1 thank the state's legislators for approving  
 2 the funding to assist us with helping our  
 3 neighbor state in Texas.  
 4 Cybersecurity threats continue to  
 5 increase. To mitigate these threats, we  
 6 received the authorization in FY'23 to  
 7 establish the Louisiana National Guard Office  
 8 of Cyber Readiness. This office includes  
 9 cyber professionals that provide vulnerability  
 10 assessments to state, local, territorial and  
 11 tribal agencies in order to respond to cyber  
 12 attacks. And make no doubt, even as with the  
 13 current situation in the world right now, the  
 14 cyber domain is the most active domain of war  
 15 that we have going on today.  
 16 We remain ready to respond to all hazard  
 17 events and are in the middle of our annual  
 18 disaster response exercise that focuses on  
 19 combat post operations, search and rescue,  
 20 commodities and distribution and integration  
 21 with emergency managers. In fact, immediately  
 22 following this meeting, I have a command  
 23 update debrief on the scenario of the  
 24 hurricanes striking Louisiana.  
 25 We completed our 17th annual all hazards

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1 coordination workshop at the end of March with  
 2 participants from all 54 states, territories  
 3 in the District of Columbia to allow for  
 4 preplanning in the event of a catastrophic  
 5 event and solidify our emergency management  
 6 assistant contact with our fellow states. In  
 7 June, we're going to conduct our comprehensive  
 8 tabletop exercises with a final check to  
 9 ensure we are prepared to execute hurricane  
 10 response missions as the season commences.  
 11 And I don't know if you've seen the news,  
 12 it's supposed to be a -- I don't even want to  
 13 say it -- a very tough year this year. Yes,  
 14 it's predictable, you know. Like the Governor  
 15 and I were talking about it yesterday, we're  
 16 praying. And I'm confident we are ready and  
 17 able to answer calls. Just like I told the  
 18 Governor, no matter what happens, not only is  
 19 the Louisiana National Guard prepared, our  
 20 entire team of state agencies are prepared to  
 21 respond.  
 22 My soldiers and airmen are trained and  
 23 remain readied all year long to support the  
 24 state and nation. They receive food,  
 25 equipment, bullets and gear and basic

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1 necessities to assure they remain at their  
 2 best. A service member is required to  
 3 maintain his or her fitness throughout the  
 4 duration of their service. But one thing the  
 5 military does not provide, a reserve component  
 6 member, not just a National Guard, any reserve  
 7 component member is free healthcare. We ask  
 8 our soldiers and airmen to be ready at a  
 9 moment's notice. And many times, we ask them  
 10 to do this on their own dime, seeking  
 11 treatment and medical attention through their  
 12 own insurance plans if they have it.  
 13 We just did this in March and again in  
 14 April for the Texas border mission. I'm  
 15 asking this Council to support us in our goal  
 16 with our CODEL to gain zero cost healthcare  
 17 for our Louisiana Guardsmen. We're recently  
 18 engaged with -- I am recently engaged with our  
 19 Congressional Delegation on our initiatives  
 20 during the meeting in March, and I'll continue  
 21 to provide input to our members of Congress  
 22 and the state legislators in order to make  
 23 this happen. I appreciate any support you can  
 24 provide for my soldiers, my airmen, and their  
 25 families.

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1 My second priority is accelerating the  
 2 F-15EX fielding, and at the same time, closing  
 3 the gap with the F-15 Charlie. As you may be  
 4 aware, last year we were awarded Boeing  
 5 F-15EXs to replace our aging F-15 Charlie  
 6 aircraft. The catch is that the Air Force  
 7 plans to stop funding operations and  
 8 maintenance of the Charlies by the end of  
 9 FY'25. And we don't expect to get the new EXs  
 10 until some time in '27 to '29.  
 11 This will potentially remove the F-15 --  
 12 this will potentially remove the 159th Fighter  
 13 Wing from a flying mission for two years.  
 14 Without a mission, there is risks there; of  
 15 course, could pull that fighter wing from  
 16 Belle Chasse. Even if they don't pull the  
 17 wing from Belle Chasse, having F-15 pilots not  
 18 fly for two years, even when they got in the  
 19 aircraft and started flying again, it would  
 20 take another two years just to get everybody  
 21 certified again to fly.  
 22 The answer is to accelerate the F-15EX  
 23 fielding and continue to fund the operations  
 24 of maintenance of the F-15 Charlie. We will  
 25 probably, in a probable scenario if this works

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1 out, be flying F-15 Charlies and F-15EXs until  
 2 we eventually get the 18 F-15EXs that we're  
 3 supposed to get. They're not going to be able  
 4 to get us in one shot.  
 5 My final priority is to support the  
 6 protection of our military construction  
 7 projects across the state. Our longterm goal  
 8 is to align our arm ranks and installations  
 9 with the population centers in Louisiana. We  
 10 have a very, very old set of infrastructure  
 11 across the state that was designed in the  
 12 '20's and '30's when the majority of Louisiana  
 13 was (inaudible). Things have changed.  
 14 Over the past few decades, much of the  
 15 population in Louisiana has shifted from rural  
 16 to urban areas. To protect our personal  
 17 readiness and our ability to recruit, we have  
 18 to make adjustments, including how we align  
 19 our readiness centers. We have armories that  
 20 are in very rural locations that nobody in the  
 21 unit is from the local city, or in the case,  
 22 sometimes the parish. So it actually becomes  
 23 a -- it could become a recruiting and  
 24 retention constraint to get those people to go  
 25 to drill an hour, two hours from where they

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1 live, which is a population center that has  
 2 armories.  
 3 We'll continue to refine our projections  
 4 and look at the economic impacts in order to  
 5 best align our units, armories, and  
 6 installations. And I'm not ignorant enough to  
 7 not understand that that is a political thing  
 8 of moving armories and that's -- and we're  
 9 dealing with that on an individual basis with  
 10 those particular elected officials. I mean,  
 11 that was going to be a longterm and not an  
 12 overnight move.  
 13 Presently, the new readiness center in  
 14 Lafayette is projected to begin in FY'25.  
 15 We're also pushing to align our Abbeville  
 16 readiness center into FY'25 instead of its  
 17 current projection in '27. I have three  
 18 additional projects that need funding  
 19 increases in FY'25, which includes a new  
 20 barracks facility in energy resilience  
 21 training. The project is going to be at the  
 22 Training Center Pineville, formerly Camp  
 23 Beauregard, and a maintenance shop in Lake  
 24 Charles.  
 25 So to the Committee, thank you for any

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1 assistance you can provide in advocating for  
 2 our construction projects. The more we  
 3 improve our facilities and provide clean and  
 4 safe working environments for our soldiers and  
 5 airmen, the more attractive joining the  
 6 Louisiana National Guard can be to our  
 7 citizens in Louisiana and we can continue to  
 8 build readiness to support our state. So  
 9 thank you for your support to the Louisiana  
 10 Guardsmen, the support of you, our state  
 11 legislators, the Congressional Delegation that  
 12 Governor Landry and his team provides is  
 13 monumental to the success of our state as is  
 14 responding to the disasters, federal  
 15 emergencies, and mobilizations, and building  
 16 readiness to answer these calls. So thank you  
 17 for protecting these matters, one team, one  
 18 Louisiana.  
 19 And I'm available to answer any  
 20 questions. Yes, sir?  
 21 MR. SILBERT:  
 22 Yes, General Friloux, just your comments  
 23 about the F-15EX are concerning.  
 24 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 25 They are.

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1 MR. SILBERT:  
 2 And so can you help me understand? I  
 3 mean, we've been led to believe this  
 4 sovereignty mission is very important for the  
 5 country and for the Air Force and for the role  
 6 that they play. That doesn't go away, so...  
 7 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 8 You're absolutely right.  
 9 MR. SILBERT:  
 10 I mean.  
 11 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 12 So and I don't remember the exact number  
 13 that we have across the nation. I think it's  
 14 13 -- 13 or 16. Whatever the number is,  
 15 that's what we have right now in our air  
 16 sovereignty alert missions. If we were to --  
 17 and, again, obviously, if we can't fly for two  
 18 years, that mission has to go somewhere else  
 19 for a while. Now the entire country is  
 20 accepting the risks because you already said  
 21 the minimum you need is 13.  
 22 So if it happened to us, it's going to  
 23 happen to -- there are other units that are  
 24 going -- there's three units right now that  
 25 are in the National Guard getting F-15

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1 Charlies -- I mean, they have F-15 Charlies  
 2 getting replaced with EXs, they're all in the  
 3 same boat. So imagine if 13 is the number.  
 4 Now, we're down to 10 to cover. That's a  
 5 significant issue.  
 6 So, again, we're -- I am working this  
 7 with our CODEL and the NDAA. The National  
 8 Guard added -- or requested for to add an  
 9 F-15EX. The regular Air Force did not have it  
 10 on there. The National Guard can only -- it  
 11 was not put in by their service. The National  
 12 Guard will form what the Air Force put in to  
 13 only address the active component, the  
 14 F-15EXs. We're addressing this with the  
 15 Reserves or the National Guard.  
 16 So more to follow and I plan to give a  
 17 report on the F-15EX strategy at every one of  
 18 our meetings. Yes, sir?  
 19 GENERAL ELDER:  
 20 I just want to comment. I'll get with  
 21 you offline. What's interesting is that the  
 22 active duty Air Force right now, on the  
 23 fighter side, actually has squadrons that they  
 24 can't pilot because they don't have enough  
 25 pilots. No one's looking at a possible

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1 solution. They've got airplanes without  
 2 pilots. You've got pilots that are about to  
 3 not have airplanes. It seems like it should  
 4 be an obvious opportunity.  
 5 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 6 We call it -- at the strategic level, we  
 7 call it the fighter recapitalization and it's  
 8 ongoing, it is out there. It's ongoing.  
 9 It's, as any other thing, it's hitting  
 10 roadblocks at times. But that has -- it's  
 11 actually moving forward and getting better, so  
 12 that issue was addressed.  
 13 MR. GOODE:  
 14 Part of the reason, the F-15, the new  
 15 F-15, to build itself, has been truncated by  
 16 about 50 aircraft, 198 to -- 144 to 98. And  
 17 we're retired -- we're going to retire about  
 18 500 aircraft and replace some with about 300.  
 19 So it stays in the same category as F-16s.  
 20 Congress knows about it. It's going to have  
 21 to be a big left and we're going to have to  
 22 either buy new additional aircraft, which we  
 23 can do, or we're going to have to postpone the  
 24 retirement and keep those aircraft going;  
 25 because you're right, once you lose them,

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1 you're done.  
 2 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 3 We're currently kind of in competition  
 4 with China.  
 5 MR. GOODE:  
 6 It's the -- yeah.  
 7 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 8 We've already identified, we can't lose a  
 9 simple fighter squadron or a fighter that we  
 10 have now. We're already behind in power, so  
 11 it's getting to that level. Thank you.  
 12 MR. ABBOD:  
 13 Thank you very much, gentlemen.  
 14 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 15 Yes, sir, thank you.  
 16 MR. ABBOD:  
 17 So next, I'll call on Mr. Gary Silbert  
 18 from the Southeast Military Alliance for your  
 19 report.  
 20 MR. SILBERT:  
 21 Good afternoon. It's an honor to be with  
 22 you all today. I'm Gary Silbert. I'm the  
 23 Director of Business Development with GNO,  
 24 Inc. Regional Economic Development Group  
 25 serving the ten parishes of southeast

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1 Louisiana. I welcome my fellow LMAC member  
 2 from this region, Ronnie Slone, marine from --  
 3 also being --  
 4 MR. SLONE:  
 5 Oorah. Sorry.  
 6 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 7 We say Hooah.  
 8 MR. SILBERT:  
 9 So about eight to nine years ago in  
 10 partnership with LED, we formed SEMA, the  
 11 Southeast Louisiana Military Alliance operated  
 12 through GNO, Inc. It's a part-time job of  
 13 mine along with business development, and  
 14 we've had some pretty good successes along the  
 15 way working with LED, our local military  
 16 missions and, of course, with the Roosevelt  
 17 Group. Thank you, Chris, for all you do. We  
 18 have some significant missions in southeast  
 19 Louisiana but, today, I'm pretty much going to  
 20 focus on the Navy.  
 21 The first item I'd like to talk about is  
 22 NIWC. It used to be referred to as SPAWAR,  
 23 but in the last several years, it's referred  
 24 to more as NIWC, Naval Information War Center.  
 25 And for those of you who don't know, that's

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1 primarily the information, technology and  
 2 electric engineering system support and  
 3 operations support for our war fighting  
 4 information systems.  
 5 The reason I bring this up is because  
 6 about the '97 time frame, Senator Vitter and  
 7 Scalise helped arrange for SPAWAR to be  
 8 established at UNO, the Lakefront facility.  
 9 It has grown to something in the range of 600  
 10 employees, primarily white-collared  
 11 contractors in the information technology  
 12 arena, very important jobs and important part  
 13 of our regional economy.  
 14 In the last year, a new lease was  
 15 negotiated at market rates between the Navy  
 16 and UNO, the University of New Orleans, for  
 17 the facility there at the beach. When that  
 18 happened, it triggered a BCA or Business Case  
 19 Analysis, which it just happens because this  
 20 is the new impact to the capital budget of the  
 21 Navy. It just falls. And so they're looking  
 22 at the existing facility, the usage of space,  
 23 comparing it to other facilities in the region  
 24 and it's caused us some indigestion because  
 25 we're worried about facilities staying there

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1 at the campus and not moving elsewhere.  
 2 So we've been working closely with UNO,  
 3 with LED and with the Roosevelt Group. As a  
 4 matter of fact, our delegation is well aware.  
 5 They've been communicating with the Navy to  
 6 ensure they know how important this facility  
 7 is to our region and to New Orleans. So we'll  
 8 be tracking that. I will tell you that UNO  
 9 has made a very strategic effort to offer a  
 10 continuation lease to demonstrate how critical  
 11 it is to keep the Navy at the facility. So  
 12 we're tracking that and, hopefully, that will  
 13 work out.  
 14 More specifically to the Belle Chasse  
 15 Naval Base, I wanted to mention that we're  
 16 working very closely with the Naval Reserve to  
 17 create a new squadron of KC-130Js on the base.  
 18 This is a priority of the Naval Reserve. They  
 19 have a mission, the Naval Reserve does, to  
 20 provide the logistic support to the Navy.  
 21 With what's happening in the Pacific and  
 22 elsewhere around the globe, at this point in  
 23 time with the existing aircraft, there's the  
 24 C-130s, they would be unable to fulfill this  
 25 mission if we went to war and things went

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1 south.  
 2 So in working with the Roosevelt Group  
 3 and the Reserves, we are looking to add  
 4 appropriations, the creation of four new  
 5 C-130Js at the base. As you'll see in that  
 6 picture there at the recent airshow,  
 7 three-star Admiral, the Chief of the Naval  
 8 Reserves was in town. I had the chance to  
 9 visit with him, and he committed that this new  
 10 squadron would be at Belle Chasse, which was  
 11 really, really very gratifying. It's a  
 12 priority of theirs.  
 13 We have one aircraft that was approved in  
 14 '24. It will be used as a training platform  
 15 and could be used in Dallas and New Orleans  
 16 and other locations, but we're very optimistic  
 17 that this will materialize and our delegation  
 18 will be laser focused on ensuring that the  
 19 appropriations are there.  
 20 One thing that also came up while talking  
 21 to Vice Admirable Mustin, while he was at the  
 22 airshow, is we continue to track the existing  
 23 air frame that the Naval Reserve uses there.  
 24 They have an interim solution, the F-5, and  
 25 that could be good for some years into the

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1 future. And there needs to be a more medium  
 2 to longterm plan to replace that aircraft.  
 3 And Mustin -- Admiral Mustin said that his  
 4 solution is the F-16. So we will supporting  
 5 that to ensure that that -- those placed in  
 6 aircraft materialize.  
 7 There's a lot of reasons that the  
 8 Reserves have a priority. That airspace out  
 9 in the Gulf is gold, and they play a very  
 10 important adversarial mission in that regard  
 11 in training our pilots to be readied no matter  
 12 what happens moving forward.  
 13 I think that covers my remarks. I'm  
 14 happy to answer any questions y'all may have.  
 15 Thank you. Oh, oh, and by the way, just with  
 16 respect to Belle Chasse, I hope that, you  
 17 know, General Friloux, we don't want to wait  
 18 until the next LMAC just in terms of circling  
 19 the wagon with you and your legislative team  
 20 and the Roosevelt Group just to get ahead and  
 21 get the right messages out --  
 22 **BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:**  
 23 Absolutely.  
 24 **MR. SILBERT:**  
 25 -- on the F-15EX. So we'll find a way to

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1 communicate with your team.  
 2 **BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:**  
 3 Sure. And also, I'm very interested in  
 4 the fact that the Navy went to the squadron in  
 5 regards to sending the C-130s to Belle Chasse.  
 6 As we develop in the Louisiana National Guard,  
 7 we develop a 25- to 30-year strategic plan, we  
 8 called it LANG 2052, part of that is eventual  
 9 acquisition of a heavy squadron. We have  
 10 F-15s right now. We'd also like to eventually  
 11 get either C-130s, KC-135s or their  
 12 replacement one day or C-17s. And we'd like  
 13 to do it in our -- in the fighter wing. We'd  
 14 have a fighter squadron and a heavy squadron.  
 15 So it would be great in the longterm.  
 16 Again, you're way farther in concept than  
 17 we're even near, but imagine having a joint  
 18 facility with both of those heavies in Belle  
 19 Chasse. So, obviously, the economic impact it  
 20 would have in the Belle Chasse area --  
 21 **MR. SILBERT:**  
 22 We'd love to help you hatch that.  
 23 **BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:**  
 24 Yes, sir.  
 25 **MR. SILBERT:**

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1 Thank y'all.  
 2 **MR. ABOUD:**  
 3 Thank you very much, Gary. So next up on  
 4 the agenda, I do want to call up Mr. Eric  
 5 Barkley with Barksdale Forward for his  
 6 comments.  
 7 **MR. BARKLEY:**  
 8 Thank you, Robby. While he's getting  
 9 that up, I just wanted to say thank you for  
 10 the chance for speaking with the Council on  
 11 behalf of Barksdale Forward. I'm the  
 12 President and CEO of Barksdale Forward. And  
 13 my most important thing that I have to do  
 14 today and need to do is to recognize  
 15 Mr. Murray Viser, our immediate past President  
 16 and COO. Murray has stepped down, but Murray  
 17 is not stepping out. He will still be very  
 18 involved with our group. And he's a valuable  
 19 resource to me, and I appreciate all you've  
 20 done for 30 years. So if you'd join me in  
 21 saying thank you for all you've in your 30  
 22 years.  
 23 **MR. VISER:**  
 24 Thank you.  
 25 (APPLAUSE BY ALL)

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1 MR. BARKLEY:  
2 Barksdale Forward is honored to be the  
3 education and advocacy group for Barksdale Air  
4 Force Base. And I feel like I'm preaching to  
5 the choir, but I'm going to preach anyway a  
6 little bit. Barksdale is massively important  
7 to our nation because it's the home of Air  
8 Force Global Strike Command. And Air Force  
9 Global Strike Command is responsible for two  
10 of the three legs of our nation's nuclear  
11 triad; that being the bombers and the  
12 missiles.  
13 It's also one of the very few bases that  
14 you will find a major command, a numbered Air  
15 Force, an active Air Force wing, and a reserve  
16 wing all located on the same base. So it's a  
17 unique place. It's very important to our  
18 state, to our nation, to our little corner of  
19 the state. And I know you all know that, but  
20 I just wanted to reemphasize that to the  
21 group.  
22 So we appreciate the chance to talk about  
23 Barksdale and what we do at Barksdale Forward.  
24 Very, very briefly, obviously, we also work  
25 with Mr. Goode, at the TRG group, and Bob

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1 Elder also supports our group. So I'm certain  
2 they will have some things to follow up on my  
3 brief report.  
4 At the end of last year, we became aware  
5 of the plan on Secretary Kendall's part to  
6 re-optimize the Air Force in preparation for  
7 Great Power Competition. And we were very,  
8 very zeroed in on that, as you can well  
9 imagine. All the people in this room were in  
10 significant discussions and questions  
11 regarding what was going to happen in regard  
12 to that re-optimization. And we are very  
13 happy to report that nothing of great  
14 significance, really even minor significance  
15 has come out of that.  
16 The two gentlemen that follow me will  
17 probably have some more detail that they could  
18 cover. But, basically, what it is, is what it  
19 still will be at Barksdale, no loss of Four  
20 Star, no loss of mission. All the other  
21 things that go along with that, we're very,  
22 very pleased with regard to that. Still new  
23 to my role over the last year, but I know  
24 Murray's been doing this for many years, we  
25 continue to be in good communication with our

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1 CODEL as well, met with all of them a couple  
2 of times already this year.  
3 I'd like to talk about the major  
4 projects, MILCONs, and all the other things  
5 that we have going on at Barksdale, but  
6 there's two things that I will be talking  
7 about in my little presentation that we're  
8 very proud that we're kind of kickstarting up  
9 in our neck of the woods. One of those is the  
10 DCIP Program, I'm sure you're all familiar  
11 with the Defense Community Infrastructure  
12 Program and the grant proposal that goes along  
13 with that. As I get down into my  
14 presentation, I'll be talking about that in a  
15 little bit.  
16 We also have a project that will qualify  
17 for the Intergovernmental Service Agreement  
18 Program. And, again, both of those, we're  
19 trying to get more community participation.  
20 All the meetings that I go to, that's what  
21 resonates is that the military and,  
22 specifically, the Air Force in our case is  
23 very interested in more partnerships with the  
24 local community. And I feel like that's a  
25 great initiative that we can fill and we're

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1 glad to be a part of your group in doing that.  
2 And then, finally, I did go to the ADC  
3 meeting last week and we met with several  
4 senior Air Force officials regarding these  
5 projects that I'm going to bring up. First, I  
6 want to talk about our current investments.  
7 Barksdale has a lot of construction going on  
8 right now. The major thing that we have is  
9 the Weapons Generation Facility. I was out  
10 there a couple of months ago and saw a little  
11 bit of the progress going on. But that thing  
12 is fully authorized and it's being phased in  
13 with the Congressional appropriations.  
14 And you see the numbers there, I don't  
15 even need to read them off to you. But most  
16 of what's going on in Barksdale right now as  
17 far as that and the future is the outgrowth of  
18 the growth of the Weapons Generation Facility  
19 and the additional personnel that they're  
20 going to have at Barksdale, mostly security  
21 people. But there will be some things that  
22 we're doing up there that are an outcome of  
23 the growth of the Weapons Generation Facility.  
24 First of all would be the Child  
25 Development Center. I'm sure that's a problem

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1 at most bases around the country, I continue  
2 to hear that. It certainly is an issue for us  
3 up there. What we have is we have a two-wing  
4 child development center. One is relatively  
5 new and the other one is relatively old. And  
6 the older one was the one that we feel like  
7 needs to be replaced.  
8 We did have some P&D dollars that were  
9 approved this year, \$2 million for that  
10 center. And we feel like, and I'll let Chris  
11 elaborate on that, that we have a unique  
12 opportunity to move the fiscal year, the  
13 budget up from, I think it was 27, Chris, is  
14 that right --  
15 MR. GOODE:  
16 (Nods.)  
17 MR. BARKLEY:  
18 -- to 25. So we will be working with the  
19 TRG group to try to move forward \$22 million  
20 in fiscal year '25 to go ahead and start  
21 getting that child development center coming  
22 out of the ground. Let me go back, because  
23 there's one thing that didn't make the slide.  
24 We also have \$7 million for P&D dollars to  
25 build a new dormitory for those incoming

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1 security forces. And that will -- I believe  
2 it's a fiscal year '26 project.  
3 Here's really what I wanted to get to.  
4 Can y'all hear me if I don't stand behind  
5 there? It makes me nervous to stand behind a  
6 microphone. From a partnership standpoint  
7 with the community, we've probably not done as  
8 well as we could have done, no fault of  
9 anyone's, but we did put a reemphasis on that  
10 this year. And we believe we have got a very  
11 attractive DCIP project. The local commander  
12 is a big believer in the Junior ROTC. And the  
13 Barksdale School Board has also gotten on  
14 board with the possibility of having a Junior  
15 ROTC facility that could be used not only by  
16 the Bossier Parish kids, but all the kids in  
17 that northwest corner of the state. They're  
18 in negotiations right now to purchase a fairly  
19 significant piece of land in the parish.  
20 And it will not be just for this project  
21 that I'm talking about, but there's other  
22 needs that the Bossier Parish School Board  
23 would have for that land. You can read just  
24 like I can, it will have a training facility,  
25 classroom space, and creative grounds. So

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1 it's a very exciting project there.  
2 Basically, you should be extremely supportive  
3 of this.  
4 And, you know, we like the concept via  
5 Air Force or whatever branch of the military,  
6 this is an opportunity to grow our military  
7 recruits, people that want to enter into the  
8 military as a career field. And we're just  
9 very, very excited about that. And I look  
10 forward to the next few meetings to report  
11 more progress of that to you.  
12 Here's the other biggy, very, very  
13 interested in this one. Just came out of a  
14 meeting with Colonel McGinnis this past  
15 Monday. Barksdale is -- you folks in  
16 Leesville know that Barksdale sends down some  
17 of its security forces to shoot their  
18 long-range weaponry to qualify. So, you know,  
19 that's a fairly good round trip there.  
20 And in addition to that, the local  
21 Barksdale firing range for pistols is showing  
22 its age. So in keeping with the desire to do  
23 more community partnerships on the part of  
24 both the Air Force and the local people, we've  
25 come up with an idea of partnering with the

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1 Bossier Parish Sheriff to have a joint firing  
2 range facility. We've toured it, very, very  
3 nice. The Air Force would have some more  
4 needs that they would like to add on to it.  
5 And, frankly, you know, there is a --  
6 there is a template out in Spokane,  
7 Washington. I don't know if you've heard it,  
8 the Spokane Fairchild Firing Range that's run  
9 by the Sheriff's Department out there that we  
10 feel like that might be a route that we could  
11 go where we could either build a new facility  
12 or renovate what we have and add to what we  
13 have and do it under an IGSA.  
14 Currently, I believe the rules allow for  
15 a 10-year period to pay this thing off, but  
16 the thought would be, find the funding  
17 mechanism, the Air Force would enter into an  
18 IGSA agreement to guarantee repayment by the  
19 end of the 10 years, plus operational  
20 expenses. So it's got a lot of legs right  
21 now. It's a very positive momentum. I can't  
22 tell you that we're there. I can tell you  
23 that we'll ultimately get there, but there's a  
24 lot of interest in the facility. And if we  
25 can pull that off, we will certainly feel like

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1 we've done something to really support our  
 2 Barksdale Air Force Base.  
 3 That's the extent of my comments. Any  
 4 questions that you might have, and I'm sure my  
 5 gentlemen will follow and clean up whatever I  
 6 didn't say right. Yes, sir?  
 7 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 8 Yes. Two things, in your first comment,  
 9 you talked about having the Air Force and the  
 10 Air Reserve on your base.  
 11 MR. BARKLEY:  
 12 Yes, sir.  
 13 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 14 We don't have the Air National Guard on  
 15 Barksdale. And part of our strategic plan  
 16 over the next 30 years is try to get a  
 17 foothold in Barksdale. I know we've talked  
 18 about we're getting a cyber fighter squadron,  
 19 and we hope eventually they increase that with  
 20 the possibility of the Global Strike Mission  
 21 for Barksdale to get into the cyber mission  
 22 there as well, as well as security forces is  
 23 another thing that we can probably move on as  
 24 well.  
 25 MR. BARKLEY:

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1 Yes, sir.  
 2 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 3 And the last thing is, if it doesn't work  
 4 out with Bossier Parish, we'd be interested in  
 5 looking at a possibility of Camp Minden, it's  
 6 right down the road to the east. If we can  
 7 get on (inaudible) and actually have, you  
 8 know, whether it's a small arms range or  
 9 pistol range and/or a 5.56 range, that would  
 10 be a great opportunity as well.  
 11 MR. BARKLEY:  
 12 I've actually thought about it and I  
 13 appreciate you saying that.  
 14 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 15 Absolutely, yes, sir.  
 16 MR. BARKLEY:  
 17 And I'll tuck it right back here in my  
 18 mind. And by the way, on your first comment,  
 19 part of our goal, like all the people in this  
 20 room, is to grow the mission of what we have.  
 21 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 22 Absolutely.  
 23 MR. BARKLEY:  
 24 So we'd love to continue to hear about  
 25 that from you, sir.

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1 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 2 Thank you.  
 3 MR. BARKLEY:  
 4 Thank you.  
 5 COL. MEGINLEY:  
 6 The Bossier Parish Community College was  
 7 just deemed to be one of the most military  
 8 training schools in the country. So I don't  
 9 if y'all have heard that, but that is awesome.  
 10 MR. BARKLEY:  
 11 It's -- it was very highly recognized  
 12 over the years as a community college and the  
 13 adjacent property, the CIC, and all the other  
 14 military related facilities. Actually, that's  
 15 where the Secretary is going tomorrow to tour  
 16 that facility, so we really appreciate her  
 17 coming up there.  
 18 Okay. Anything else? Thank you for your  
 19 time.  
 20 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 21 Thank you, Eric.  
 22 MR. ABOUD:  
 23 All right. Next up, Mayor Allen, report  
 24 out Louisiana Armed Forces Alliance. I  
 25 believe, I think we have slides for the

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1 presentation.  
 2 MAYOR ALLEN:  
 3 I hope not. It's no surprise that  
 4 recently Fort Johnson was again on the  
 5 chopping block and, you know, we could have  
 6 lost a full brigade. But thanks to all the  
 7 way from our great senator, Senator Reese,  
 8 thank you for everything you did in that  
 9 process to our Speaker and our Secretary and  
 10 all worked together to try to minimize those  
 11 cuts. And, unfortunately, we wound out up  
 12 with a cut, but something that's manageable to  
 13 us, we feel.  
 14 Recently, we also attended ADC in  
 15 Washington and we had several great meetings,  
 16 one of those with the G9 General Vereen. And  
 17 we discussed significant investments that are  
 18 currently going on at Fort Johnson and what  
 19 the very near future might look like. One of  
 20 those is the RUBA, which is barracks that will  
 21 be in the drop zone and utilized by brigades  
 22 that come in for training there at Fort  
 23 Johnson.  
 24 We discussed several other projects with  
 25 him. And one of those, beings we took a cut

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1 at Fort Johnson, one of the things that they  
 2 pulled off the table was some of our new  
 3 barracks. They said, well, you don't need  
 4 those anymore and the money had already been  
 5 allocated. And our whole deal was, you know,  
 6 the money has been allocated, don't take it  
 7 from Fort Johnson, let's reallocate it and use  
 8 it on something that will benefit our current  
 9 mission and possibly the new missions there at  
 10 Fort Johnson.

11 It is our desire that we would increase  
 12 some of the rotations. This year, we have  
 13 nine down from 11, and we don't want to see  
 14 those go any lower and have to protect those.  
 15 As you well know, Barksdale Air Force Base and  
 16 Belle Chasse, and Fort Johnson, we, you know,  
 17 insert \$9.26 billion into Louisiana's economy  
 18 and we can't afford to lose any of those  
 19 assets at any of those bases. So everything  
 20 that happens good at Barksdale Air Force Base  
 21 is good for us. And everything that happens  
 22 good at Belle Chasse is good for us. Because  
 23 at the end of the day, we are a team pulling  
 24 the same weight.

25 One of our -- the new programs that we

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1 learned about and have been tracking is the  
 2 modular nuclear reactors and we're going to  
 3 continue to track that program very closely.  
 4 There is six of those going on Army bases  
 5 across this great country, and we intend to  
 6 keep Fort Johnson on that list and track it as  
 7 well.

8 It was already mentioned about DCIP. The  
 9 City of Leesville was fortunate enough to land  
 10 a \$5 million DCIP for our runway extension of  
 11 the Leesville Airport, which is currently  
 12 underway. And is this a bad time to beg my  
 13 Senator for more money? I know we live in the  
 14 same town, but I don't get to see him very  
 15 often. So when I get an opportunity to beg  
 16 for money, I'm going to do it. But we are  
 17 currently trying to figure out what the  
 18 footprint might look like if we had some  
 19 hangar space at our Leesville Airport and how  
 20 that could benefit our community and benefit  
 21 the rotations that go on out of Fort Johnson.

22 As you know, and also mentioned, IGSA's,  
 23 and as you know, the City of Leesville  
 24 currently holds the largest Intergovernmental  
 25 Service Agreement in the world, and we're very

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1 proud of that. Senator Reese and I traveled  
 2 around and tried to help some other military  
 3 bases across the country to try to land those  
 4 IGSA's because they are crucial to the  
 5 military's success and to our community.

6 So Fountain, Colorado, which is one of  
 7 the ones that Senator Reese and I visited now  
 8 holds the most Intergovernmental Services  
 9 Agreements in Colorado. So they're very proud  
 10 of that. They're much smaller agreements than  
 11 ours but, you know, anything helps.

12 And we are currently working on an EV  
 13 charging station Intergovernmental Service  
 14 Agreement which, you know, pretty typical, we  
 15 have 65 electric vehicles now on Fort Johnson  
 16 and we have the capability to maybe charge a  
 17 remote control car. None of the EV charging  
 18 stations are operable and they work very  
 19 poorly when they are operable. And so we're  
 20 trying to help come up with a solution to  
 21 install those EV charging stations across.

22 But I will tell you this, this is going  
 23 to be very important, an IGSA, if you're  
 24 looking at Belle Chasse or Barksdale is  
 25 looking at that IGSA, as we are working on

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1 now, and we'll be happy to share all the data  
 2 that we come up with on that, but one of the  
 3 things that makes you qualify for that EV  
 4 charging station is your municipality has to  
 5 currently offer that service. So the City of  
 6 Leesville signed an agreement to install one  
 7 at the Police Department and one at the City  
 8 Hall. And I don't really care if they ever  
 9 get used, but it opens the door for us to  
 10 capitalize on an Intergovernmental Service  
 11 Agreement with our military base, and that's  
 12 important to all of us.

13 So if you need any of that data that  
 14 we've compiled, we'll be happy to share it  
 15 with you. Because at the end of the day, we  
 16 are a team. And LAFA now, formerly Fort Polk  
 17 Progress, now Louisiana Armed Forces Alliance  
 18 is fully staffed and we are ready to assist  
 19 you in any way we can and use all of our  
 20 assets to help you in any way. So please  
 21 reach out to us if you would like to look at  
 22 these for a charging station Intergovernmental  
 23 Service Agreement that we're working on, we'd  
 24 be happy to share that information with you.  
 25 And I hope you don't have any questions.

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1 Thank you.  
 2 MR. ABBOD:  
 3 Thank you very much, Mayor. And really  
 4 just to highlight the Mayor's point on the  
 5 DCIP, we've mentioned that a few times now,  
 6 the Defense Community Infrastructure Program  
 7 is run through the Office of Local Defense  
 8 Community Corporation at the federal level,  
 9 and they released that program in 2020. And  
 10 so over the four years, we've been able to  
 11 pull in right around \$35 million. So it's  
 12 been an exceptional process and we're really  
 13 proud of the fact that we've all been able to  
 14 work together to pull those dollars down into  
 15 the state.  
 16 And so moving along on the agenda, I'd  
 17 like to call on Chris Goode with the Roosevelt  
 18 Group. They're often our eyes and ears up in  
 19 DC. And so I think we've got a few slides,  
 20 but thank you for being here, Chris.  
 21 MR. GOODE:  
 22 Thanks. Good afternoon, Mr. Secretary  
 23 and Senator and our new (inaudible),  
 24 congratulations.  
 25 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:

1 Thank you, sir.  
 2 MR. GOODE:  
 3 Yeah. I have some slides I'm going to  
 4 have to look at them myself. Let me start on  
 5 some big picture items. You know, I think  
 6 fiscal year '24, we've really had some good  
 7 wins. We had some real challenges. But, you  
 8 know, we never -- never broke down, we never  
 9 retreated. And I think we had some really  
 10 good wins and I'm going to go through them.  
 11 Some of this has been covered by the  
 12 defense communities, but I want to double tap  
 13 on a few things. And in FY'25, I think we're  
 14 really well-postured. The Mayor was right,  
 15 you know, for the third time in a decade, the  
 16 Army took a real hard look at this brigade.  
 17 You know, the first two looks were serious  
 18 brigade reductions. These are things where  
 19 towns, communities, you either won or you  
 20 lost. We were set up to lose both times. So  
 21 this third look was almost like, oh, God,  
 22 we've been here before; you know, we've done  
 23 it before, and we're not going to lose.  
 24 And that last bullet is really what was  
 25 important. We were tracking this total Army

1 analysis from the start months in advance.  
 2 Nobody panicked, everybody shared intel, we  
 3 had a really good plan. And the negotiation,  
 4 the final outcome is a good one. It's  
 5 probably the best one we could get. And it  
 6 went all the way up to the Speaker of the  
 7 House, the entire Congressional Delegation,  
 8 and right up to the Secretary of the Army.  
 9 Had it not to happened, they would have  
 10 had to deal with it in the National Defense  
 11 Authorization Acts pure and simple, and they  
 12 didn't want to deal with it through law. So  
 13 they dealt with it with a handshake. We know  
 14 what the numbers are, we're watching it. We  
 15 have to be really, really vigilant to make  
 16 sure they don't back off those numbers.  
 17 We had good meetings last week, as the  
 18 Mayor indicated. General Vereen, he's an  
 19 honorable guy. The Army understands the  
 20 numbers, they are the same numbers have. It  
 21 all comes down, you'll hear the term, faces  
 22 versus spaces, right. The original TAA had  
 23 Fort Johnson losing over 4,000 faces. The  
 24 brigade was going away. Half of the Army and  
 25 strength at Fort Johnson would have

1 evaporated.  
 2 Spaces are easier to deal with because  
 3 they're never going to be filled. And if you  
 4 know anything about Army recruiting, it's not  
 5 a pretty picture. So giving up spaces over  
 6 faces was important.  
 7 Meanwhile, about the same time actually,  
 8 the Air Force embarked on this match  
 9 reorganization. Thankfully, we have people  
 10 still like Bob Elder that really pays  
 11 attention to these issues. Mobile Holmes, a  
 12 former Air Combat Commander who is full time  
 13 with us was part of that process as well.  
 14 You know, at the end of the day, the  
 15 Delegation was focused on two things, are we  
 16 going to lose Four Star; are we going to lose  
 17 a significant amount of people? The answer to  
 18 both is no. Will there be some impacts?  
 19 Certainly, there probably will be. Bob knows  
 20 more about it than I do.  
 21 You know, generating requirements instead  
 22 of generating acquirement for a new nuclear  
 23 bomber at Barksdale, that requirement  
 24 generation piece is going to gravitate to an  
 25 entirely new command. It hasn't been stood

1 up. There's no location for it yet. I know  
2 where it's going. But you know, it's the way  
3 that warfare is pressing, you know, you're  
4 just not, you know, specking out an aircraft  
5 today in isolation. It has to be specked out  
6 in that entire echo system, you know, cyber  
7 threats, logistics, equipment that's on the  
8 aircraft. And it probably merits us doing  
9 requirements generation a little bit  
10 differently, and that's what the Air Force is  
11 trying to do. But at the end of the day, you  
12 know, there's no immediate threat at the Air  
13 Force Global Strike Command.  
14 The NIWC piece is a different piece,  
15 right. That was a -- you know, you'd have a  
16 group of contractors and uniformed folks -- or  
17 sorry, civilians over at the University New  
18 Orleans. And, suddenly, the game changed on  
19 them where it's not like Barksdale Air Force  
20 Base where you get a billion dollars to do  
21 your thing and fly your aircraft and to pay  
22 your folks.  
23 The NIWC operation, that's a working  
24 capital fund, they don't get any money. The  
25 civilians get paid to be there, but they had

1 to go out and get their business. They have  
2 to find work from within the Navy. And  
3 sometimes, I think they're allowed to go  
4 outside the Navy, whatever.  
5 So when the price of the lease went up,  
6 you know, things got tougher. And, you know,  
7 we're working that out. Again, the entire  
8 Delegation is well aware of NIWC piece. The  
9 letters are flying. The communication is at  
10 the Secretary and the Navy level. We're going  
11 to get through this and it's going to be  
12 fixed, but you know, it's something the Navy  
13 has to -- they have to go through this PCA  
14 process.  
15 So and, again, a lot of these actions are  
16 driven by a real fight for resources. You  
17 know, we are in a Fiscal Responsibility Act  
18 environment. We're basically sequestered in a  
19 '24/'25 budget where the top lines are pretty  
20 well known. We're in the fight for manpower  
21 recruitment that's driving part of the problem  
22 with this Army analysis. And places like UNO,  
23 whose minor, minor activities, man, they --  
24 they're always fighting for money.  
25 So, real quick, and I won't bore you with

1 this, but in the Fiscal Responsibility Act,  
2 it's \$895 billion, that's the cap for FY'25  
3 for defense spending. When the budget request  
4 went over at Congress, it was for  
5 \$895 billion, right. And that includes, you  
6 know, more increases in pay for two percent  
7 pay raise and 4.5 percent pay raise for  
8 military members next year.  
9 And when you look at it, when that FRA  
10 snapped in, you know, you look at what  
11 happened with the continuing resolution for  
12 '24, that number went down, right. That  
13 number, that 817 was supposed to be higher  
14 because we anticipated a pretty significant  
15 supplemental. That didn't happen. That is  
16 now being renegotiated this week. And that  
17 could, in the end, get tacked onto that  
18 \$850 billion figure.  
19 So when you look at it, you know, that  
20 last column could go up even quite  
21 significantly about \$90 billion, I think, or  
22 \$95 billion, whatever it is. So but when you  
23 really look over time, if you say, oh, how's  
24 the defense budget doing? Well, you know,  
25 experts will say, the defense budget really

1 should be at about, you know, six percent of  
2 GDP. Well, we're really now under three  
3 percent, which is pretty low. And, you know,  
4 how that shakes out, we'll see.  
5 So, you know, \$900 billion -- I'll go  
6 through these quickly, but \$900 billion, you  
7 know, think about it, \$50 million goes to the  
8 nuclear enterprise alone. And that's pretty  
9 good for Barksdale. That pays for the bombers  
10 and the Air Force Global Strike Command, the  
11 NC3 Program, and so forth. Another big chunk  
12 is \$61 billion in airpower.  
13 But, you know, the General is right, you  
14 know, when you retire 593 fighters and only  
15 buy 244, that's a problem. When that F-18 --  
16 that F-15 program is truncated, like I said,  
17 from 144 to 98 fighters, you know, that's an  
18 issue. Congress is well aware, and I've read  
19 the National Guard letter, you know, we work  
20 with Gary Keefe.  
21 BRIG. GEN. FRILLOUX:  
22 Yes, sir.  
23 MR. GOODE:  
24 You know, there's going to be a fix,  
25 there has to be a fix. And then, so on, you

1 know, the C-power investments is \$48 billion,  
 2 right. You know, 10 years ago, 15 years ago,  
 3 that number was about maybe \$16 billion for  
 4 shipbuilding. We're up to \$50 billion and  
 5 we're building only six ships. We've been  
 6 building two submarines each year for quite  
 7 some time, we're down to one submarine.  
 8 So everybody is hurting. A hundred and  
 9 forty-three billion in RDT, that's a pretty  
 10 good budget. But, you know, things are a lot  
 11 more expensive today. They're taking longer  
 12 to produce. And, you know, it's -- there's  
 13 not a lot of money left on the floor.  
 14 So when you look at Louisiana, I've  
 15 pointed this out before, but back in '24, that  
 16 just got wrapped up, right. And every one of  
 17 those changes put in by the Louisiana  
 18 Delegation stayed. So getting that little bit  
 19 of money, and you may say, you know what,  
 20 \$900 billion over \$2 million, that's not a lot  
 21 of money. But that \$2 million that was added  
 22 by the Delegation, that's what that got that  
 23 child development center on the unfunded  
 24 priority list this year, and that will get  
 25 built hundred percent.

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1 Planning and design is done. It's in the  
 2 Defense program. All the letters had to be  
 3 collected. They're all done. The request is  
 4 in and we're going to get that thing  
 5 appropriated this year.  
 6 And you've seen that slide before. So,  
 7 you know, you're right, we went through this.  
 8 We've got to stay on top of this old issue  
 9 with the TAA, you know. What's going to keep  
 10 Fort Johnson alive? Those five things,  
 11 investment, investment, investment,  
 12 investment. You know, talk is cheap. But  
 13 getting money in there, keeping mission in  
 14 there, that's what's going to keep Fort  
 15 Johnson alive.  
 16 Just a background, man, if I was on the  
 17 BRAC Commission, that brigade would be out of  
 18 there in 24 hours, gone; easy win, keep the  
 19 JRTC open. Next, what's next on the agenda?  
 20 Got to keep the brigade --  
 21 SENATOR REESE:  
 22 Work to make sure you don't get on the  
 23 next BRAC.  
 24 MR. GOODE:  
 25 Nobody -- every time we see the

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1 Delegation, we say, do not fall for a BRAC  
 2 grant. It will be great for my business. It  
 3 will be bad for defense communities. They  
 4 make way too many mistakes and we don't need  
 5 it. Again, what's driving it? When you look  
 6 at the numbers, when you look at end strength,  
 7 it's going down, you know.  
 8 The Army, they just, they can't  
 9 recruit -- I don't know what it is. But, you  
 10 know, new numbers for '25, you know, active  
 11 went down again. I think that number is going  
 12 to go down to 425. It's that bad. And that's  
 13 not, it's just not helping places like Fort  
 14 Johnson.  
 15 BRIG. GEN. FRILOUX:  
 16 There was a story that came out today  
 17 that the Secretary of the Army made in her  
 18 report that she thinks that we're now in line  
 19 to make the recruiting goal for the regular  
 20 Army this year for the first time in, like,  
 21 four years. That came out today.  
 22 MR. GOODE:  
 23 Yeah, I hope so. I hope so. And then,  
 24 again, you know, I got to throw this back in  
 25 here. I mean this is sort of an old report

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1 but, you know, I'm not an economist, but when  
 2 you at the percentage of regional payroll, I  
 3 think, Mike, anything over 3 percent is, like,  
 4 really good, really significant. So when you  
 5 look at the Central Region, 17 percent, that's  
 6 like off the charts. I mean it's off the  
 7 charts. So --  
 8 COL. MEGINLEY:  
 9 Now, that data is three years old.  
 10 MR. GOODE:  
 11 Yeah.  
 12 COL. MEGINLEY:  
 13 Do you know what it is now?  
 14 MR. GOODE:  
 15 I don't know. And --  
 16 SENATOR REESE:  
 17 We're due for our analysis at our next  
 18 updated economic analysis.  
 19 MR. ABOUD:  
 20 Yeah. Yeah, we're in the process of  
 21 starting that again.  
 22 SENATOR REESE:  
 23 Yeah.  
 24 MR. ABOUD:  
 25 And I think there may be an opportunity

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1 to look at it even more frequently than what  
2 it is in Statute now.  
3 MR. GOODE:  
4 And then just one more, these are  
5 actually Fort Polk slides when we got them  
6 before the name change. But, you know, the  
7 quality of life initiative sort of is churning  
8 in the background and there's only three  
9 installations that are part of it.  
10 And, you know, another thing we need to  
11 keep the momentum on is that the Army sticks  
12 to this quality of life. It's real money.  
13 It's only, like I said, three installations  
14 and it takes us up to 2029. And if anybody  
15 wants these slides, I'll give them to you, but  
16 there's real money behind each of these  
17 projects. This is a good story.  
18 Barksdale, again, just to double tap,  
19 Weapons Generation Facility, huge project.  
20 That's going to keep Barksdale open, I think,  
21 for a very long time. It was huge. It took a  
22 lot of work to get that finally authorized and  
23 appropriated. My hunch is there will be more  
24 money behind those numbers to actually finish  
25 this project, which is enormously complex.

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1 We talked about the Child Development  
2 Center, and like I said, we have a good, I  
3 think we have a really strong FY'23  
4 congressional plan. And, you know, we talked  
5 about the Air Force reorganization.  
6 And, finally, on SEMA GNO, yes, for the  
7 General, we need to exchange information on  
8 F15-EX. The C130 story is really good. We've  
9 been working very closely with the Admiral  
10 Mustin and his key people, and they have  
11 really been quite open with us to say, if you  
12 get the aircraft, they're going to Belle  
13 Chasse, we want to recapitalize Belle Chasse  
14 first. The problem is, there's no money.  
15 There's no money for this aircraft.  
16 And, you know, the Navy Reserves, you  
17 know, they fight for resources like everybody  
18 else, and nobody really listens to them. And  
19 so, you know, they've got one C130 in the  
20 budget last year, it was an unfunded priority,  
21 but Congress gave them money. There was one  
22 in the FY '25 request, we're going to add to  
23 that and we're going to ask for a total of  
24 four, which means the Delegation is going to  
25 have to really cough up three new aircraft.

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1 Congress will probably appropriate for the one  
2 that's already in the unfunded priority list.  
3 Those command about \$125 million each, right.  
4 So if we get four plus one, they'll put  
5 five at Belle Chasse, and then we're sort of  
6 off to the races, because they can actually  
7 fit two squadrons. You could probably put 8  
8 to 10 AC130s right now at Belle Chasse. The  
9 Navy Reserve told us, they said, we can take  
10 two squadrons and you've got the pilots and  
11 the manpower to fly them. So that's a good  
12 story.  
13 This is -- you know, you can chase F18s  
14 all you want, but this is something the Navy  
15 Reserve actually is asking for. They want  
16 them and they're going to get the aircraft.  
17 They're going to use them and they're going to  
18 put them in Belle Chasse. So, again, that's a  
19 good story. And I think that's all I have.  
20 MR. SILBERT:  
21 Just a quick question, and this is kind  
22 of off the wall. But in terms of an  
23 opportunity for the BRAC, you see what's  
24 currently happening in the Middle East and  
25 Ukraine driven warfare, how could we -- I mean

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1 is that a risk or an opportunity for us in  
2 Louisiana? Just, I hate to show my ignorance  
3 about drones, but it seems to be the future is  
4 here with respect to drones. So any thoughts?  
5 MR. GOODE:  
6 Yeah. I mean, when you look at, it's  
7 called CCA, the Combat Collaborative Aircraft  
8 Program, you know, these aircraft cost so much  
9 money, right. You know, they have 35 or  
10 whatever the next version is going to be and  
11 they're building these collaborative aircraft  
12 that are unmanned that will fly alongside  
13 manned aircraft. And they can be queued, they  
14 can fight, they can provide information back  
15 to the manned aircraft. Those things are  
16 going to have to be posted somewhere, but not  
17 this big. They're pretty sizable aircraft  
18 themselves. They have a payload, you know,  
19 lots of avionics, you name it.  
20 But, yeah, they're going to have to be  
21 based somewhere. People are going to have to  
22 learn how to fly them. Is Belle Chasse out of  
23 the question for those? No. You know, when  
24 we're talking about, oh, let's just put new  
25 F-18s at Belle Chasse, well, that's not going

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1 to happen because it's not near a fleet  
 2 concentration area, of which there are only  
 3 two.  
 4 But something like CCA, yeah, that's  
 5 probably a possibility. A lot of places don't  
 6 want them. It may make sense to put them  
 7 elsewhere. I don't know. We're not even  
 8 there yet. They haven't been fielded.  
 9 But that, to me, the Combat Collaborative  
 10 Aircraft Program, they will be built in  
 11 numbers and they will have to be based  
 12 somewhere. We're not -- it's -- they're kind  
 13 of really a need because we have a field of  
 14 them. But that, to me, would be opportunity  
 15 to place them at Belle Chasse.  
 16 MR. SILBERT:  
 17 Thanks.  
 18 MR. ABOUD:  
 19 Any other questions for Chris?  
 20 MR. GOODE:  
 21 All right. Thank you.  
 22 MR. ABOUD:  
 23 Thank you very much. Really, just a  
 24 thank to all the presenters today. I know  
 25 there's a lot of great work going on again in

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1 every region, every corner of our state. It  
 2 also helps us to maintain and bring awareness  
 3 of the challenges, issues, and opportunities  
 4 that are out there. So coming together as a  
 5 Council helps us to better align and go after  
 6 some of those opportunities.  
 7 Moving ahead into other and new business,  
 8 Senator Reese, I have you in attendance, I  
 9 wanted to at least take some time and not to  
 10 put you on the spot, but to at least provide a  
 11 few minutes for you if you'd like to make some  
 12 comments. I know you're between Committee  
 13 meetings and having some votes, but I did want  
 14 to take some time for some brief comments, if  
 15 you'd like.  
 16 SENATOR REESE:  
 17 Yeah. Look, I'll just say thank you to  
 18 everybody that's here today. I think this is  
 19 one of the best examples of bringing together  
 20 our agencies of state government and our local  
 21 communities to advocate for something that is  
 22 truly one of the most impactful industries  
 23 that goes on in the State of Louisiana. And  
 24 we always have a struggle as we change  
 25 administrations. But, you know, people come

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1 in with new ideas and new administrations and  
 2 we have new Secretary of LED, and so I think  
 3 it's important that we continue this kind of  
 4 collaborative process.  
 5 I think you just saw here today that  
 6 exchange of ideas about what's happening  
 7 within each of those missions, what's  
 8 happening in the National Guard, that's the  
 9 kind of information when we have a consensus  
 10 driven solution that helps the legislature  
 11 make good funding choices, because we don't  
 12 have to figure out whether or not that's the  
 13 priority of Bossier, we don't have to figure  
 14 out if that's the priority of Leesville or  
 15 Johnson or down in New Orleans or Naval  
 16 Support Activity. When this group signifies  
 17 and identifies something as being the next  
 18 investment available, that helps me sell that  
 19 in the legislature.  
 20 We have a newly-organized Military  
 21 Veterans Affairs Committee at least in the  
 22 Senate, Senator Adam Bass from the Bossier  
 23 area, the Barksdale area is going to chair  
 24 that Committee. We just stood it up and got  
 25 it populated last week and we'll start going

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1 to work in that Committee as well to find a  
 2 more robust legislative response to some  
 3 things. Typically, that has been in the areas  
 4 of spousal licensure, it's been in areas of  
 5 education, making sure that we're taking of  
 6 military connected students and employment  
 7 opportunities for spouses. And so we need the  
 8 input of everybody in this room in this group,  
 9 because that's what's really going to inform  
 10 us to make better decisions. And we're not  
 11 just being sporadic about it, we're being  
 12 targeted and strategic about it.  
 13 So thank you all, all of y'all for the  
 14 time that you put into this. And I really  
 15 want to thank Chris Goode and his team, as  
 16 Anne and I were just visiting about, the level  
 17 of sophistication they bring to the table, the  
 18 money that you saw added in the budget by  
 19 member-directed expenditures, is that what  
 20 we're calling it now instead of an earmark,  
 21 but the money that we're adding in and those  
 22 opportunities takes tremendous -- those  
 23 senators and those representatives are tasks  
 24 with requests from every corner of the state  
 25 to add things into that budget. And the fact

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1 that we get those DOD priorities in there  
2 means that they understand from all of you  
3 that it's a priority for this state. And they  
4 wouldn't get that information if it wasn't for  
5 the work that Chris and the team that they've  
6 built perform. So thank you for all the work  
7 that y'all put into this. And we're just  
8 here, the legislature to be a resource to you.  
9 So, you know, let us know how to do that.  
10 MR. ABBOD: Thank you very much, Senator. Appreciate  
11 those comments. One other item here in the  
12 other business, General Elder, you indicated  
13 that you'd like to provide just a brief  
14 update, so I'd like to just give you the  
15 opportunity here for a few remarks.  
16 GENERAL ELDER:  
17 Yes. We've got most of it hearing from  
18 Eric and also from Chris about what's  
19 happening with the Air Force Great Power  
20 Competition Optimization, as they call it, but  
21 I thought it might be worthwhile to mention  
22 some of the things that are going on affecting  
23 Barksdale. I actually have -- if you want,  
24 there are some handouts. Rather than go  
25

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1 through the whole heart of this thing, there  
2 are a couple of things that are in there that  
3 I think might be of interest to you is the --  
4 when they talk about this Integrated  
5 Capabilities Command, that's going to be for  
6 Integrated Conventional Capabilities, and  
7 there are some things they're still trying to  
8 figure out. But one of the big things that  
9 came out of this was recognition that they --  
10 they were trying to average things out and,  
11 perhaps, too much. And, basically, they used  
12 a thing in the Air Force called core function  
13 leads. And so the decisions that were  
14 affecting bombers were actually being made at  
15 Air Combat Command, which have no bombers.  
16 And so part of this Re-optimization is  
17 that Air Force Global Strike Command now is  
18 responsible for all those things that are  
19 bomber related. And then within the Air Force  
20 (indiscernible) Command, which does the  
21 acquisition, they're actually splitting and  
22 reorganizing that, and there's going to be one  
23 three-star whose only focus is everything is  
24 nuclear related, which is pretty significant.  
25 So that's a big win. It doesn't affect

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1 Barksdale directly; but, indirectly, it does.  
2 And they're also standing up a new wing.  
3 It's actually going to be off it, but another  
4 wing is coming in Air Force Global Strike  
5 Command to do the Nuclear Command Control  
6 communications. So, overall, they made out  
7 pretty well.  
8 The little chart that I have on the  
9 bottom here, it's is a little bit dated, it's  
10 from 2019, but one of the challenges that  
11 Barksdale has is that it's massively  
12 undermanned. And when they stood the Air  
13 Force Global Strike Command up back, that was  
14 about 12, 13 years ago -- almost 15 years ago,  
15 so it's been around for a little while. But  
16 when they stood it up, it was only going to be  
17 a sustainment command. And what was then  
18 called Air Force Base Command was going  
19 continue to do the ICDMs and the Air Combat  
20 Command was going to continue to do all the  
21 modernization things for the model. Well,  
22 they moved all that, the Air Force Global  
23 Strike Command. So the responsibilities was  
24 there are no people.  
25 And so this was actually done by RAND

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1 Corporation back a few years ago. The numbers  
2 haven't improved hardly at all. And there are  
3 a number of people. This is a really good  
4 opportunity. And as long as they're shaking  
5 everything up, this is the right time to look  
6 at, can you get the numbers at the Air Force  
7 Global Strike Command back to where they  
8 belong. And I think there's a lot of emphasis  
9 on doing that.  
10 So for most of you, you won't have an  
11 opportunity. But where you do hear about  
12 this, one of the challenges they have is and  
13 that you need to know about is that people  
14 don't want to go to work at Air Force Global  
15 Strike Command as long as when they get there,  
16 then they leave. Well, the -- they're not  
17 telling the whole story. It's not because  
18 they don't want to go to Louisiana or they  
19 don't want to go to Barksdale Air Force Base.  
20 If you're a civilian and you have the choice  
21 of doing the same work of being a GS13 at  
22 Barksdale or being a GS15 at Langley, which  
23 one would you take?  
24 And so in a lot of cases, they'll come in  
25 to the Air Force Global Strike Command and

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1 they'll there for a while to get a 13 so that  
 2 they qualify to be a 14 or 15 somewhere else.  
 3 So one of the things that we really need to  
 4 expose to people, that that's the real issue  
 5 that's involved here. And the reason that  
 6 those grade structures are lower is it's a  
 7 pyramid structure. So the more people you  
 8 have, the higher your grade structure. So  
 9 when the numbers go up, the grade structure  
 10 will go up. That will actually help us bring  
 11 in people to Air Force Global Strike that we  
 12 need.  
 13 So I did just some little talking points  
 14 that basically describe what is happening with  
 15 the Command. But the -- some of the initial  
 16 things really look bad for what was going to  
 17 happen with Air Force Global Strike Command in  
 18 terms of them trying to, I don't know what the  
 19 right way to explain this is, but they wanted  
 20 to set up these major commands that will be  
 21 focused in a way that is focused on this Great  
 22 Power Competition. Great idea, except the  
 23 number one command in the Air Force that does  
 24 the most Great Power Competition work is the  
 25 Air Force Global Strike Command. Air Force

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1 Secretary understood that. And so Air Force  
 2 Global Strike Command itself is in good shape,  
 3 probably going to get even better as a result,  
 4 but there are some little talking points there  
 5 that you can take with you.  
 6 MR. ABBOD:  
 7 Thank you very much. Any questions for  
 8 General Elder before we move forward?  
 9 Okay. I did want to also highlight  
 10 Mr. Kenny Lynch, who has joined us from the  
 11 Workforce Commission, just thank you for being  
 12 here. I know we had Secretary Schowen join us  
 13 earlier, but I know you're an administrator  
 14 overseeing the Veterans Program at the  
 15 Workforce Commission, so we just wanted to  
 16 highlight that. Thank you for being with us  
 17 today.  
 18 And with that, are there any other items  
 19 to come before the Council today?  
 20 Any other new business before we move on?  
 21 Okay. I am hearing none. So at this  
 22 time, I'd like to open the floor for questions  
 23 or comments from the public?  
 24 Okay. I am hearing none. So I believe  
 25 that covers everything for us today. Again,

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1 just thank you all for joining us, for being  
 2 here with us. It really is great to see you  
 3 all. So thank you for your service to this  
 4 organization and to the state as a whole.  
 5 With that, are there any motions to  
 6 adjourn?  
 7 MR. SLONE:  
 8 So moved.  
 9 MR. ABBOD:  
 10 Any second?  
 11 MR. SILBERT:  
 12 Second.  
 13 MR. ABBOD:  
 14 Okay. All in favor, please say "Aye."  
 15 ALL:  
 16 Aye.  
 17 MR. ABBOD:  
 18 Thank you for your time.  
 19 (WHEREUPON, THE MEETING ADJOURNED.)  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE  
 2 I, KELLY S. PERRIN, a Certified Court  
 3 Reporter, Certificate #23035, in good standing with  
 4 the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom  
 5 this meeting was taken, do hereby certify that the  
 6 foregoing 88 pages;  
 7 That this testimony was reported by me in  
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 10 personal direction and supervision, and is a true  
 11 and correct transcript to the best of my ability  
 12 and understanding;  
 13 That the transcript has been prepared in  
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 16 I have acted in compliance with the prohibition on  
 17 contractual relationships, as defined by Louisiana  
 18 Code of Civil Procedure Article 1434 and in rules  
 19 and advisory opinions of the board; that I am not  
 20 of counsel nor related to any person participating  
 21 in this cause and am in no way interested in the  
 22 outcome of this event.  
 23  
 24  
 25

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3 signature and the image of my State-authorized seal  
4 on this page.

5 Signed:

6

7 KELLY S. PERRIN,CCR

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[afternoon - approved]

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[approving - believe]

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[congress - deal]

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[dealing - efforts]

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[eight - f18s]

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[missions - northshore]

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[northwest - parish]

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[parish - possibility]

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[possible - pulled]

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Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure

Article 1445 and 1446

Art. 1445. Submission to Witness; Changes; Signing

When the testimony is fully transcribed the deposition shall be submitted to the witness for examination and shall be read to or by him, unless such examination and reading are waived by the witness and by the parties. Any changes in form or substance which the witness desires to make shall be entered upon the deposition by the officer with a statement of the reasons given by the witness for making them. The deposition shall then be signed by the witness unless the parties by stipulation waive the signing or the witness is ill or is absent from the parish where the deposition was taken or cannot be found or refuses to sign. If the deposition is not signed by the witness within thirty days of its submission to him, the officer shall sign it and state on the record the fact of the waiver or of the illness or absence of the witness or the fact of the refusal to sign together with the reason, if any, given therefor; and the deposition may then be used as fully as though signed unless on a motion to suppress under Article 1456 the court holds that



the reasons given for the refusal to sign require rejection of the deposition in whole or in part. A video deposition does not have to comply with the requirements of reading and signing by the deponents.

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