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6 LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
7 BEING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2026
8 100 NORTH STREET
9 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
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23 Reported stenographically by:

24 YOLANDA J. PENA, CCR, RPR
25 (CCR #2017002)
(RPR #970346)

A P P E A R A N C E S

ALBERT VANZANT

ERIC BURTON

CHRISTINA SMITH

ERIC BARKLEY

SEN. J. ADAMS BASS

DR. JEROME BULLER

YARVA COBBS

REP. RAYMOND CREWS

LT. GEN. RET. BOB ELDER

CHRISTOPHER J. GOODE

LT. COL. DOUGLAS JUDICE

COL. STEPHEN LUEBBERT

JOHN E. MANION III

LOGAN MORRIS

WESLEY MUELLER

REP. CHARLES OWEN

DEBORAH B. RANDOLPH

GUESTS:

JON ARNOLD

CONNOR JUNKIN

1 (Commencing at 1:03 p.m.)

2 MR. BURTON: At this time, I call this
3 meeting to order.

4 First off, obviously, there's a lot of
5 people that can see myself and Albert are new
6 here, so we're going to take a few minutes
7 just to introduce ourselves, give just a
8 little bit of background on ourselves.

9 So for me here, I'm the director of
10 business development at LED; a lifelong
11 resident of Baton Rouge; graduated from LSU;
12 have over now 19 years of state service with
13 13 years of it being here at LED. Previous, a
14 majority of my time before then was in law
15 enforcement with alcohol and tobacco control.

16 But I'm honored to be part of this
17 council, definitely excited to be working with
18 everybody in this room.

19 And at this point, I'll turn it over to
20 Albert.

21 MR. VANZANT: Well, for those who don't
22 know me in this room, I'm Albert Vanzant. I'm
23 the director of project operations at LED
24 FastStart. I've been working for LED for over
25 eight and a half years. In my previous

1 career, I worked for various manufacturing
2 industry for 20 years. I'm retired military,
3 Louisiana State Guard, 35 years, 6 months,
4 19 days, but who's counting?

5 But like Eric says, this is my first
6 time at this, but this is near and dear to my
7 heart, and I'm proud to be part of it.

8 MR. BURTON: Obviously, we're getting
9 everything started. Just have some patience
10 with us getting everything up and running.

11 But at this point, if we can, we'll have
12 Ms. Yarva Cobbs go through our roll call.

13 MS. COBBS: Yes. Please forgive me if
14 I do mispronunciations. Feel free to correct
15 me.

16 Eric Barkley?

17 MR. BARKLEY: Here.

18 MS. COBBS: Adams Bass?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. COBBS: Clarence Beebe?

21 (No response.)

22 MS. COBBS: Raymond -- Susan Bourgeois.

23 In her absence, we do have a
24 presentation.

25 Christina Smith?

1 (No response.)

2 MS. COBBS: Raymond Crews?

3 (No response.)

4 MS. COBBS: Robert Elder?

5 MR. ELDER: Here.

6 MS. COBBS: Thomas Friloux?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible). I'm
8 here for Thomas Friloux.

9 (Reporter clarification.)

10 COL. LUEBBERT: General -- she was
11 asking for General Thomas Friloux, and I'm
12 here for on his behalf. I'm Colonel Stephen
13 Luebbert.

14 MS. COBBS: Robert Gatti?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. COBBS: Brian Jakes? I was informed
17 that he is now deceased.

18 Douglas Judice.

19 MR. JUDICE: Here.

20 MS. COBBS: John Manion?

21 MR. MANION: Here.

22 MS. COBBS: Charlton Meginley?

23 DR. BULLER: He is not here. I'm
24 representing. Jerome Buller, B-u-l-l-e-r.

25 MS. COBBS: Logan Morris?

1 MR. MORRIS: Here.

2 MS. COBBS: Charles Owen?

3 MR. OWEN: Here.

4 MS. COBBS: Michael Poche?

5 (No response.)

6 MS. COBBS: He's not here.

7 Deborah Randolph?

8 MS. RANDOLPH: Here.

9 MS. COBBS: Michael Reese?

10 MR. REESE: Here.

11 MS. COBBS: Ronald Richard?

12 (No response.)

13 MS. COBBS: Gary Silbert?

14 (No response.)

15 MS. COBBS: Ronnie Slone?

16 (No response.)

17 MS. COBBS: And Joel Whitehead?

18 (No response.)

19 MS. COBBS: Thank you.

20 MR. BURTON: Okay. So we'll move on to

21 item number 2. If we could get everybody to

22 please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

23 (Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

24 MR. BURTON: All right. We'll go to

25 item number 3. We're going to go through -- I

1 think everybody should have received the
2 minutes for the previous meeting. I know it's
3 been little bit of a time.

4 But is there any questions, comments, or
5 notes for those meetings?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. BURTON: Okay. Hearing none, does
8 anybody have a motion to adopt the minutes?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Move to approve
10 the minutes.

11 MR. BURTON: Second?

12 MR. CREWS: Second.

13 MR. BURTON: It's been seconded. All in
14 favor say "aye."

15 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

16 MR. BURTON: We're going through this.
17 Number 4. At this time, I want to turn the
18 floor over to our executive director of
19 operations, who's also Secretary Bourgeois's
20 designee for the LMAC board member here. So
21 we're going to give Ms. Christina Smith some
22 time to give us an update from LED.

23 MS. SMITH: Thank you, board members,
24 for having me here.

25 Just a little bit about me: I probably

1 will attend frequently for Secretary
2 Bourgeois, so a little bit of an introduction.
3 I am new, as well, to join the newness of our
4 crew. I have been here a year, but under the
5 tutelage of these two fantastic team members,
6 I'm definitely up to speed over the last year
7 with LED.

8 So the military is a near and dear thing
9 to my heart. I am not a Louisiana -- I was
10 not born and raised here, but I did come here.
11 Funny story, I had the amazing 244th National
12 Guard Engineering Company, who I was stationed
13 with in Bagram, Afghanistan -- or not Bagram,
14 but in Afghanistan. And they actually said,
15 "Sergeant Fogle [ph], why don't you come on
16 down to Louisiana. Come visit us." So I got
17 off -- off of the -- off the airport -- off
18 the plane, came directly to Tony's Seafood
19 from -- from the Baton Rouge airport, and I
20 have not left since.

21 So I thank you very much for welcoming
22 me to the great state of Louisiana. I've been
23 here about 20 years now. I wouldn't leave
24 if -- if I had to.

25 So the -- as I stated, I was in the

1 Army, and I was in for about ten years,
2 definitely not the 35 years of my colleague
3 here. But the military is definitely very
4 near and dear to my heart and also now, too,
5 Louisiana. I'm married with three children,
6 and hopefully, they'll stay here just as long
7 as I have, if not longer.

8 So with that being said, I'll go ahead
9 and give the report from Secretary Bourgeois.
10 We can provide additional details if needed.
11 My boss is telling me I need to make it short
12 because we got a lot to do today.

13 MR. BURTON: Some people are flying out
14 real soon after this, so...

15 MS. SMITH: Okay. So -- so first things
16 first, we -- from -- the 2026 legislation
17 session concluded, and we had additional funds
18 that were provided to LED. One of those was
19 125 million for our high impact jobs, which
20 is -- is very integral to the discussions that
21 you'll be having at the table here, especially
22 bringing in economic development and military
23 and tech businesses here into the state of
24 Louisiana.

25 So this is going to support projects

1 currently in our pipeline while also providing
2 us room to grow, and with this funding in
3 place, Louisiana secured an important
4 competitive tool which is going to allow
5 businesses to grow, attract our new
6 investment, and encourage our wage growth for
7 the people here in Louisiana. So LED will
8 continue to track the program and participate
9 in interest and budgets the -- accordingly in
10 order to responsibly manage these future
11 commitments.

12 We also received additional funding for
13 our Louisiana Opportunity Campaign which
14 launched back in fiscal year '26. So now
15 we've received additional funding for fiscal
16 year '27. So we look forward to continuing
17 that campaign -- campaign.

18 We've also received funding --
19 additional funding for our sites and
20 infrastructure fund, which we received 150
21 million up front in fiscal year '26. We've
22 received -- we are going to be receiving
23 another 15 million for fiscal year '27. So
24 this is -- having a \$200 million to develop
25 sites to bring businesses that are going to be

1 beneficial to our military and to our
2 technology sector, we couldn't have asked for
3 more at that point.

4 Something to highlight is that this is
5 the first time that we all can sit around this
6 table and say that Louisiana has 110 billion
7 announced investments since January 2024.
8 We've never been able to say that before, so
9 this reflects Louisiana's growing momentum by
10 aligning our strategy, our strengthening
11 partnership, and delivering the speed and
12 certainty Louisiana is definitely -- we're
13 turning into a front-runner across the state,
14 and that shows in a lot of the metrics and the
15 polls that we see throughout -- throughout
16 the -- America.

17 We received the Gold Shovel Award for
18 the third year in a row. This is the third
19 consecutive year. No other state has done
20 that in our -- in our metric. It's the three-
21 to five-million population category. Only one
22 state is recognized in that category, and
23 we've held the running for three years
24 straight. So this award highlights
25 Louisiana's 2025 project portfolio and

1 reflects the high level of direct job
2 creation, capital investment, and overall
3 strategic economic development.

4 Got to skip some because I'm getting
5 kicked. No, just kidding.

6 So for Louisiana and -- and just for our
7 country in general, we're coming up on
8 250 years. So from a military perspective,
9 we -- how is Louisiana influenced and
10 shaped -- shaped our 250 years near America?
11 We've had the Louisiana Purchase, the
12 Mississippi River energy production, our
13 agriculture, our music, our foodways, and our
14 global trade.

15 The message that we're going to be
16 taking to the 250-year exchange going on
17 inside of D.C. is going to be: Louisiana is
18 not only historic, but it's current,
19 competitive, and consequential to the future
20 development and economic growth of our
21 country.

22 So we actually will have a pavilion, so
23 if anyone is going to be there, please stop by
24 our Louisiana NOW Pavilion. It's not only
25 Louisiana's past, but our present and our

1 future in one integrated experience. Our own
2 team members will be staffing that. And
3 we'll -- we'll be there the entire time.
4 Please stop by if you're -- if you're there.

5 So this is a statewide story of
6 momentum, business investment, job creation,
7 infrastructure, culture, and our opportunity
8 to move in one narrative together.

9 And this also goes into Secretary
10 Bourgeois and, of course, the governor and
11 all -- all of our state agencies where we
12 are -- we're working together as one -- one
13 collective unit, right, and this allows our
14 economic growth to prosper and continue
15 because we make business easier here in the
16 state of Louisiana from our tax incentives to
17 our incentives that we have here along with
18 our -- our great business development and our
19 project managers. We're all working together
20 to ensure that not only does Louisiana -- but
21 the actual military has a place here in
22 Louisiana going forward.

23 So thank you so much for your time
24 today. If you'd like any other additional
25 metrics, we'd be more than happy to get those

1 to you, but we know that we also have a lot
2 going on today. So we want to ensure that we
3 can get everybody to the airport on time and
4 of course get through all the important things
5 for this session today.

6 MS. CHEATHAM: May I say quickly?

7 MS. SMITH: Yes.

8 MS. CHEATHAM: I'm sorry. Excuse my
9 voice. Sunday, June 28th, is actually
10 Military Defense Day and that's being
11 highlighted at the Louisiana NOW Pavilion.

12 MS. SMITH: Thank you so much,
13 Ms. Tedra.

14 MR. BURTON: Thanks, Tedra.

15 MS. SMITH: Absolutely. And for any of
16 y'all, please do not hesitate to reach out to
17 Albert, Eric, or myself. We will make sure
18 that we can get you a contact who is
19 physically on the ground in D.C. whenever
20 you're there, and that's for your colleagues
21 as well.

22 MR. BURTON: Thank you, Christina.

23 MS. RANDOLPH: I'm taking shifts on the
24 3rd and 4th of July, so it's going to be fun.

25 MS. SMITH: So happy to have you there.

1 Thank you so much.

2 MS. RANDOLPH: We sent items from our
3 region, so it'll be great.

4 MS. SMITH: Fantastic. Thank you so
5 much.

6 MR. BURTON: All right, Christina.
7 Thank you for that update. Definitely a lot
8 of -- we've got to make this four years in a
9 row, so we have some -- some work to do.

10 So at this point, we're going to move on
11 to agenda item number 5, which we're going to
12 start getting into our reports. First, we
13 have retired colonel and current deputy
14 secretary Dr. Buller presenting for Louisiana
15 Department of Veteran Affairs.

16 DR. BULLER: Thank you.

17 Good afternoon, everyone. I'm honored
18 to be here on behalf of Secretary Charlton
19 Meginley, who is in Hawaii enjoying a
20 much-needed vacation with his family. I'm
21 happy to present to you today to give an
22 update on what we're doing.

23 Next slide, please.

24 So we remained decisively a supporter of
25 Louisiana's veterans and their families, doing

1 everything we can to make sure that they have
2 support, benefits, and the assistance needed
3 that's well-earned and well-deserved.
4 Currently, we have 247,000 veterans in the
5 state, and that number across the board
6 continues to decline. There only three states
7 that haven't declined: Texas, Florida, and
8 California.

9 Next slide, please.

10 Especially at this time of year --
11 Memorial Day just behind us, Veterans Day
12 coming up quickly, 250th anniversary of the
13 nation -- there's a lot to be thankful for,
14 for veterans. And I encourage you-all to hear
15 their stories and get to know those veterans
16 in your community.

17 There's also a significant economic
18 impact that they have, and I wanted to share
19 this with you. 4.55 billion in direct federal
20 funds are infused in the State and
21 communities. 2.5 of that is direct comp and
22 pen payments to veterans. VA home loans and
23 GI Bill is the remainder of that. That does
24 not include another roughly 200 million for
25 retiree payments in the state as well.

1 Next slide, please.

2 I wanted to just take a moment and talk
3 about that 2.5 comp and pen for a second.
4 Even though there's a decline in veteran
5 population, we have had an increase in
6 veterans receiving benefits. If you look at
7 the far right at the bottom, the national
8 average of increase is 2 percent. Ours was
9 three times that at 6 percent. So that's us
10 getting out and about, making sure that they
11 have access to those who can help them apply
12 for benefits and get those benefits.

13 Next slide, please.

14 Part of that getting out and about is
15 engaging them where they are. This is this
16 past year's engagements. That's myself, the
17 secretary, and our assistant secretary. For
18 outreach, we've already surpassed that number
19 this year. And we really try to do whatever
20 we can to get out and engage academic
21 institutions, industry, and veterans
22 themselves and, of course, veteran service
23 organizations. And we take that role very
24 seriously.

25 We'll also talk about our role in

1 supporting veteran-friendly legislation.

2 There's two of the biggest allies in the room
3 here, but I'll let my executive counsel talk
4 about that in just a bit.

5 Next slide.

6 Just a quick remainder, Military Family
7 Assistance Fund, if you're aware of veterans,
8 particularly with hurricane season upon us
9 now, who are in need urgently, this is an
10 annual grant that we can provide to veterans
11 in need, you know, literally as much as every
12 12 months if needed. So please keep that in
13 mind.

14 Next slide, please.

15 I'll just mention before we talk about
16 cemeteries, our five veteran state homes
17 continue to provide excellent, high quality,
18 safe patient care. We have a nursing ratio --
19 nurse-to-patient ratios that far exceed any
20 other organization in the state and across the
21 nation, actually. Wonderful, wonderful
22 facilities. If you haven't been out to see
23 the one closest to you, please do.

24 With regard to the cemeteries, very,
25 very high customer satisfaction rate and, I

1 should say, family satisfaction rate for
2 cemeteries. And we do a really remarkable job
3 honoring the death of those who have served in
4 the military. So two of our -- well, this
5 year, two -- together, three of our cemeteries
6 have received national recognition awards for
7 operational excellence.

8 As an example, there are 245 state,
9 tribal, and territorial cemeteries across the
10 nation. This year, 11 received this award.
11 We had two of them. So, again, just an
12 example of the kind of work that we're
13 providing for our veterans in the state.

14 Next slide, please.

15 Again, recognizing those who serve, we
16 take every advantage to do that. The
17 Louisiana Honor Medal is one way that we do
18 that. If you know of veterans, whether it's
19 in your organizations, in your community, and
20 they haven't had a Louisiana Honor Medal, we
21 would love to go up to the region and help
22 recognize them.

23 We also typically are intimately
24 involved in selecting Veteran of the Year for
25 the governor's office of leadership in --

1 disabilities awards. So if you have
2 recommendations of someone going above and
3 beyond as a veteran and deserves that
4 recognition, let us know.

5 Of course, last year, a legislative
6 change allowed us to give out Civilian Honor
7 Medals to those who perhaps never served but
8 were intimately involved with significant
9 support, advocacy, and assistance to a
10 veteran.

11 Next slide, please.

12 I went through that pretty quickly.
13 Some -- much of this came from a report that
14 we generated. I have a few up here if anybody
15 is interested in learning about (inaudible).
16 I'm happy to share this with you. I can also
17 send it to you electronically.

18 As I mentioned earlier, one of the ways
19 we support veterans is working with our
20 legislature to try to push veteran-friendly
21 legislation. And so I want Connor Junkin, our
22 executive counsel, to give us a brief overview
23 of this past legislative session, veteran
24 legislation specifically.

25 MR. JUNKIN: Good afternoon. Connor

1 Junkin, executive counsel for Louisiana
2 Department of Veteran Affairs.

3 This past session, we had three priority
4 measures that we were able to really push
5 through, the first of which that I'd like you
6 to notice is -- was Senator Kleinpeter's SB51,
7 which became Act 203. This was our push for
8 the stolen valor to be added to the kind of
9 lexicon of district attorneys' toolbox. So
10 now, we were one of about 15 states that did
11 not have any laws on the books regarding
12 stolen valor. Instead of relying of the
13 federal DOJ to effectuate those, now district
14 attorneys across the state can utilize that if
15 they find -- if they find a case, of course,
16 worthy of bringing.

17 The second one I'd like to highlight is
18 HB609 by Representative Chassion [sic] that
19 because Act 558. And what that did is provide
20 an exemption for fees from private healthcare
21 facilities. So if any veteran wants to go get
22 a rating increase and they've been attending a
23 private healthcare facility, typically there's
24 a fee associated with getting their medical
25 records from those facilities. Now there is a

1 one-time exemption, so they will not have to
2 pay any money to those facilities in order to
3 get their healthcare records in order to apply
4 for an increase for their benefits.

5 The third was by Senator Foil, SB180,
6 which became Act 39. It was actually a
7 constitutional amendment that will be
8 appearing on the ballot, we believe, in the
9 fall. And what this is -- does is it asks the
10 citizens of Louisiana to allow the surviving
11 spouses of deceased disabled veterans to --
12 right now, the disabled veteran receives an
13 additional tax exemption on top of their
14 homestead exemption; however, it has to
15 remain -- it had to remain -- well, it
16 currently has to remain on the home that
17 they've lived in.

18 Unfortunately, some spouse -- surviving
19 spouses, once the veteran passes, they do need
20 to maybe move closer to family. Maybe they
21 need to downsize their home. We believe that
22 tax exemption should follow them, and that's
23 what this constitutional amendment is going to
24 ask for.

25 There's a few measures that were not

1 initiated by LDVA but I do want to point out.
2 First was, of course, by Senator Reese, and
3 that was to expand this board by two members,
4 adding the chairs of the Senate and House
5 committees on military affairs to this body.

6 Representative Dickerson had HB62, which
7 became Act 529. And that added a secretary or
8 his designee to the membership of the
9 Louisiana Women's Policy and Research
10 Commission because we believe that women
11 veterans' issues are unique and have their own
12 challenges, and that voice needed to be on
13 that council. So that is now been put in law.

14 And finally, I wanted to note two
15 resolutions. The first was by Senator Cloud
16 to -- urging passage of the Major Richard Star
17 Act that some of you might be familiar with.
18 Right now, there's an offset -- for
19 combat-injured veterans who are medically
20 retired, to receive their military retirement
21 payment and their VA disability compensation,
22 right now, there's an offset of those. And
23 the Major Richard Star Act would eliminate
24 that offset and allow these medical --
25 combat-injured medical retirees to have all of

1 their benefits with no offset.

2 And the second that -- and final thing I
3 want to highlight is HCR89 by Representative
4 Owen, and this was -- is to promote the
5 Louisiana Maneuvers Museum and Trail
6 Feasibility Study.

7 If y'all are not familiar, we can fill
8 you in on the additional details. But
9 basically, prior to deployment in World War
10 II, Louisiana, particularly Fort Polk, was a
11 major center of training and organization for
12 the U.S. military prior to deployment in World
13 War II.

14 And this is being done in concert with
15 LSUA in order to see if we can put together
16 some type of museum just to honor those -- the
17 history of our state with regard to those
18 maneuvers. And we, of course, have had other
19 updates and -- but trying to keep it short for
20 everyone. If you have any interest, I have a
21 full update I can provide to you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Any questions?

23 MR. BURTON: You definitely took one of
24 my talking points already with the addition of
25 the two members.

1 But any questions?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. BURTON: Do we want to go through
4 the other two slides?

5 MR. JUNKIN: No.

6 MR. BURTON: Moving on, next, we're
7 going to have -- presenting for the Louisiana
8 Nation Guard is Colonel Stephen Luebbert.

9 COL. LUEBBERT: Good afternoon.

10 I am Colonel Stephen Luebbert. I'm the
11 director of strategic plans and policy for
12 General Friloux. And so in that capacity, in
13 a nutshell, my job is to focus on -- on
14 General Friloux, the governor's LANG 2052
15 strategic plan, and my primary focus is kind
16 of up and out as opposed to some of my peers
17 that focus on the day-to-day operations at the
18 National Guard.

19 Just a -- a very brief point that I'll
20 make, I only recently came back to Louisiana
21 as an active-duty guardsman after doing some
22 time on the East Coast in Washington, D.C.,
23 and in Boston. And I got to spend a lot of
24 time with some other states and their national
25 guards.

1 And I just want to point out to the
2 council how unique the relationship is between
3 the Louisiana National Guard and the state
4 government and our -- and our communities. It
5 is -- it is not normal. We have a very
6 special relationship between our guard and the
7 rest of Louisiana, and it's formed through
8 things like Katrina and the oil spills and the
9 War on Terror.

10 But I don't want anyone on the council
11 to think that what we have is normal. It's
12 absolutely unique, and I have had the
13 experience within the past five years to -- to
14 see that and be able to come home and share
15 that.

16 Obviously, our federal mission, it --
17 I call this the "we remain busy" slide. The
18 Louisiana National Guard, in addition to what
19 we provide for the state, is obviously the --
20 the strategic and operational reserve of both
21 the Air Force and the Army. And to that end,
22 we presently have 470 soldiers and deployed
23 and another 315, we -- actually, like, in
24 the -- in the chute to go out the door and
25 then just another 38 recently mobile -- or

1 notified of a resource requirement.

2 The biggest change since the last time
3 the council met is 700 soldiers. The 256
4 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the Louisiana
5 Tigers, that Sergeant Vanzant and I were
6 members of recently returned from their
7 deployments from Kosovo and Africa. And so we
8 just kind of reintroduced them to their home
9 state, and they're resetting right now and
10 getting ready for the hurricane season.

11 On the home front outside of Louisiana,
12 we continue to have Louisiana soldiers
13 supporting security requirements in
14 Washington, D.C., and in fact, just this
15 month, we sent another mission set of
16 Louisiana guardsmen to support the America 250
17 celebration. We'll have guardsmen present at
18 your venue for the Louisiana NOW tent, and
19 we'll -- we'll be there probably until the end
20 of the fiscal year.

21 In addition, we maintain Task Force
22 New Orleans, which is currently present in the
23 French Quarter, where it's been since January.
24 And we continue to support operations by DHS
25 throughout the state of Louisiana.

1 Next slide.

2 All right. So, you know, probably the
3 slide that's most important to everyone in
4 here and -- and probably the number one thing
5 that the Guard gets leaned on and provides in
6 Louisiana when things are truly bad, right, is
7 our emergency hazard -- emergency preparedness
8 and all hazard responses.

9 I already kind of spoke that we
10 responded to the emergency in New Orleans, the
11 security situation that stemmed from the
12 terrorist attacks. We've been there.

13 We had kind of a real-world requirement
14 with the winter storms this year that occurred
15 along the I-20 corridor, and that gave our new
16 involvement with GOHSEP as well as some of our
17 new plans and opportunity to be exercised in a
18 real-world environment with real customers,
19 right, and real people in need. And it was
20 instrumental. We learned a lot of from just
21 that one exercise, that one event, and we're
22 already learning those lessons, and we're
23 applying that in how we were preparing for the
24 hurricane season.

25 In the last two months, we have

1 completed both a large-scale command post
2 exercise across Louisiana as well as a
3 commodities distribution exercise, making sure
4 that we can get, you know, all those essential
5 post-storm supplies where they need to go.
6 Both of those were very successful.

7 The takeaway here is June 1st is
8 hurricane season, and your Louisiana National
9 Guard is -- is ready right now to respond.

10 Next slide.

11 So cyber. So this is a slide where I
12 had to call -- call for help from friends.
13 This is probably one of our -- our largest
14 and -- and most emerging mission requirements
15 for Louisiana. This is only kind of really
16 come to bear in the past eight to ten years,
17 and we continue to expand in what we do. To
18 the extent now that -- just like the alert
19 that we have at Belle Chasse or the task force
20 that we have in New Orleans, this is a daily
21 mission of Louisiana National Guard, is
22 providing cybersecurity and cyberdefense.

23 We help protect the Orleans emergency
24 management system, their communication system.
25 We work with the Louisiana State Police,

1 GOHSEP, and ESF #2 to project our public
2 school systems, our hospital systems. And
3 this is something that we're -- we're growing
4 our capability in and that we need your help
5 in ensuring that we can -- we can find that
6 talent.

7 The hardest thing with cyber is -- I'm
8 an infantryman and a tanker. It's not hard to
9 find somebody that can drive a tank. It's
10 really hard to find somebody, right, that can
11 be a cyberdefense specialist, and even more
12 important than that is once we find them and
13 we educate them, it's retaining them.

14 And we do that by ensuring that while
15 they're in the Guard, they have a job and an
16 education in the state, right, that's going to
17 encourage them to stay in the Guard, right,
18 because they're getting both. They've got a
19 pathway in the state, right, to be a
20 cyberspecialist, right, and then they have a
21 military role to play in the Louisiana
22 National Guard, and we ask you all to, please,
23 continue to support that.

24 Since we last met, we've added a new Air
25 National Guard cyber squadron, and so we're

1 growing that capability. And of course, as we
2 grow that capability, we get more federal
3 resources, more state resources, and that
4 absolutely benefits the state on multiple
5 levels.

6 Next slide.

7 The air sovereignty mission. So if
8 there's anyone in the room -- and it looks
9 like we have a room of experience -- that
10 isn't familiar, the Louisiana Air National
11 Guard maintains two F-15 air superiority
12 fighters 24/7 on alert at NAS Belle Chasse in
13 New Orleans, and those two F-15s are on a --
14 essentially a Title 10 mission the moment that
15 the gear tucks inside, and they're responsible
16 for protecting our airspace for most of the
17 Gulf region and a lot of the Southern United
18 States. They answer directly to NORAD, and
19 they are on duty, like I said, 24/7.

20 This is an enduring mission. It's very
21 important to the wing to retain that mission.
22 And while we don't see any threat to losing
23 that mission, what we are concerned about -- I
24 think many of you have heard about this;
25 certainly, The Roosevelt Group has -- is the

1 F-15C is an aging platform. It's a phenomenal
2 platform, but it is literally at the end of
3 its life span. We're down to less than five
4 years.

5 And so what's important here is that
6 Louisiana gets the F-15EX, a brand-new
7 aircraft, brand-new platform coming off the
8 factory floor. It's 4.5 gen, so it's a very,
9 very capable aircraft, and it's what's going
10 to allow the 159th Wing to continue to be
11 relevant, right, and, more importantly, to
12 protect our airmen because whether they're
13 defending the airspace in the Gulf Coast or
14 they're going over the Persian Gulf, we want
15 them in the absolute best piece of equipment
16 they can be.

17 And it's to say that this -- this
18 possibility is -- it's not to say that there
19 isn't a threat to this, but we are competing
20 with both international customers and with
21 other wings. So like, right now, Kadena, for
22 example, in Japan is in front of us, and they
23 want their F-15EXs, and they want them
24 arguably more than they think we do. It's not
25 the case. We want ours.

1 There is good news. The Air Force just
2 recently decided to double their procurement
3 of the F-15EX, so they went from about 127
4 aircraft to 257, I think, so almost doubled
5 it.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 267.

7 COL. LUEBBERT: It's 267. Thank you.

8 The better part is -- in the new NDAA
9 for 2027 is they introduced multiyear
10 procurement for both Boeing and Lockheed,
11 which means if you're one of those companies,
12 we're ordering years' worth of aircraft,
13 right, as opposed to just one year's worth of
14 aircraft. So you can think about the impact
15 that has on things like supply chain, right,
16 and Boeing and Lockheed's confidence in
17 producing aircraft at the rate we need.

18 So I say all that to just ask you to
19 continue to advocate. The CODEL and Louisiana
20 government has been instrumental up to this
21 point in ensuring that we're being considered
22 for that. We don't to see us fall to second
23 place to another air guard wing, right, or to
24 another active duty (inaudible).

25 Next slide.

1 This is just a good news slide. Because
2 of so many people in this room, because of how
3 we take care of our Louisiana guardsmen,
4 because of what I kind of talked about in my
5 opening remarks, we are killing it on
6 recruiting.

7 We're like six, going on seven years in
8 the running for things like the Patriot
9 Scholarship, which I didn't have. It only
10 recently came around, I think, in 2023.
11 Tuition exemption. Community support for
12 guardsmen, whether it's police departments,
13 fire department, those kind of things. We've
14 obviously asked a lot of our guardsmen in the
15 past couple years, and employers continue to
16 support them.

17 And we just historically recognize --
18 the medal, for example, I had no idea there
19 was such a thing, but we recognize and honor
20 our guardsmen to make them feel important, and
21 they continue to join so they can be like
22 their brother, their dad, right, or they can
23 be like what they see in New Orleans, right,
24 or during our hurricanes.

25 Slide. Go back one.

1 All right. So economic impact. I -- I
2 wasn't even fully versed on -- on just how
3 much Louisiana National Guard contributes. A
4 little bit less than -- or a little bit around
5 half a billion dollars is the Louisiana
6 National Guard's economic impact to Louisiana.
7 And the interesting thing and one of things
8 that makes us unique is that we touch every
9 corner of the state as the Louisiana National
10 Guard. From one end to the other, our
11 economic input is stellar. And, again, it has
12 a lot to do with what we're doing in this room
13 and across the state. The economic impact
14 serves these communities.

15 We continue to invest, whether it's a
16 new armory like they have in Lafayette at ULL
17 that I had the privilege of helping break
18 ground on or its our new campus armory
19 concept, which I'll talk about in a little bit
20 further, like we're starting to see in Lake
21 Charles. A new one is going in, in Abbeville.
22 We've upgrades to places like Hammond. We
23 just continue to invest, right, and we're
24 seeing the return on those investments.

25 And this relates back to that recruiting

1 piece. Obviously, the more we can recruit
2 above what we currently have (inaudible)
3 structure, then the more we're going to be
4 given by our Army and Air counterparts, right,
5 in Louisiana. So with that comes federal
6 dollars and obviously more money for the
7 State. So the economic impact continues to be
8 felt as a result of our investment in the
9 Louisiana National Guard. We ask you to
10 continue to support that.

11 Slide.

12 The LANG 2052 plan. So as the J5, this
13 is my focus, is taking the governor and
14 General Friloux's vision of what the Louisiana
15 Guard needs to look like in 2052, right, and
16 getting that plan in action and making it
17 something tangible and viable, that we can
18 actually see it, and we are seeing it. The
19 results are there.

20 If you're not familiar with the idea of
21 the campus armory, the vision is -- is that we
22 have a lot of smaller armories that existed in
23 rural communities back in -- originally in the
24 1950s. And what we're trying to do is create
25 newer armories that are modern. They have

1 fitness facilities. You can get your hair
2 cut. You can stay overnight. You know, a
3 young soldier doesn't have to go stay at a
4 hotel, right, or sleep on the armory floor.
5 They're closer to our centers of gravity, so
6 we can recruit against them. And they don't
7 have to drive so far. And then obviously, it
8 gives us much better facilities of which to
9 project power from because we have the
10 infrastructure there to support it.

11 And so instrumental to 2052 Campaign
12 Plan is this campus armory plan, and like I
13 said, we've seen it in Lake Charles,
14 Abbeville. Next step is Lafayette. And
15 they're truly beautiful facilities if you
16 haven't had a chance to see them.

17 Jackson Barracks, the headquarters of
18 the Louisiana National Guard, it remains our
19 center of gravity. It's the economic
20 stronghold of the Louisiana National Guard.
21 We are currently planning a conference center
22 there at -- on the -- essentially the area
23 (inaudible) the Jackson Barracks. This is --
24 will be a kind of multipurpose conference
25 center.

1 And there's a lot of appetite for this
2 conference center from our other 54 states and
3 territories. Obviously, there's a lot of
4 reasons to come to New Orleans. People enjoy
5 it, and we believe this conference center will
6 bring additional business to Orleans,
7 St. Bernard Parish. It'll put Louisiana on
8 the map, where we want it, like we do with
9 tourism in the southern part of the state, and
10 it's instrumental to the Louisiana National
11 Guard's ability to influence our other
12 partners, right, by bringing them to a nice
13 facility at our headquarters in Jackson
14 Barracks.

15 Camp Villere is -- is beginning to
16 provide additional opportunity for local law
17 enforcement at ranges and complexes there.

18 Many of you are familiar with Camp
19 Minden and what we're doing with that very
20 large facility adjacent to our (inaudible)
21 space. We've got a lot of Department of War
22 industries expressing interest in the acreage
23 out there and the capabilities that it offers.
24 Partnerships with LED, the North Louisiana
25 Economic Partnership, and building our

1 region's future, all of that has been on the
2 tagged agenda just in the past few weeks --
3 heavily involved.

4 I already spoke to the Lake Charles
5 Readiness Center as the example of the campus
6 armory concept kind of in action.

7 And then I spoke a little bit about
8 Lafayette Readiness Center and the brigade
9 headquarters there at ULL and what that offers
10 to both the campus and the Lafayette community
11 as far as shared opportunities at the campus
12 to utilize our new headquarters and what it
13 offers in terms of things like secure
14 communications, cyber, so forth.

15 And so all that is to say your Louisiana
16 Guard is invested. It's busy and continues to
17 contribute to the state from a financial
18 standpoint as well as a security and readiness
19 standpoint. And on behalf of General Friloux,
20 thank you for the opportunity to be here and
21 speak to the counsel.

22 MR. ELDER: I'm one of the people who
23 has to leave early. Two questions. One, is
24 the Guard doing anything in the current UAS
25 space? I ask that because you've heard about

1 the stuff in Barksdale. Because of your
2 unique Title 32 capabilities, are you doing
3 anything with that now, or is that something
4 you're possibly getting involved with?

5 COL. LUEBBERT: So we -- we have to. We
6 have to be involved with it. I mean, that is
7 the emerging threat. To answer your question,
8 we just had Louisiana guardsmen at a Louisiana
9 State Police event in North Baton Rouge like
10 two days ago or so where they were looking at
11 different types of threats that are being --
12 that are in the UAS-type of realm as well as
13 countermeasures.

14 We are in communication with Barksdale
15 about some of the threats that they've been
16 presented with, but the answer to your
17 question is that we're going to be irrelevant
18 if we're not focused on UAS. And so we're
19 looking for all those opportunities and
20 avenues to be more involved.

21 MR. ELDER: My other question was,
22 Jackson Barracks, in particular -- you named
23 some of the other ones. Will any of those
24 places be capable of holding, like, a
25 classified conference, Jackson Barracks, for

1 example?

2 COL. LUEBBERT: Yes, sir. So you can do
3 it on an smaller scale at Jackson Barracks.
4 The new campus -- the brigade headquarters
5 that's going in Lafayette, that's a much
6 larger facility that we're currently working
7 on. So we've got three -- three or four
8 different locations in Louisiana where you can
9 do that. Obviously, the federal government is
10 very particular.

11 So in some cases, like with UL -- ULL
12 and the new headquarters, we have to turn one
13 off, right, in order to turn on the newer one.
14 All right. So kind of the -- the older one
15 that we have, my old armory at the Lafayette
16 airport, that one will have to essentially
17 turn off to turn on a more modern facility.
18 Obviously, there's an auditing kind of
19 requirement for every one of those secure
20 facilities in the United States. So the
21 federal government tries to limit that number.

22 MR. ELDER: Thank you.

23 COL. LUEBBERT: Yes, sir.

24 MR. BURTON: Any other questions?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) House

1 committee on homeland security (inaudible) UAS
2 incursions. I find it interesting. The FBI
3 came and -- and the state police were there,
4 and that was most interesting what --

5 MR. BURTON: Can you repeat that for the
6 court reporter?

7 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. I'm having
8 trouble hearing you.

9 MR. MORRIS: I'm sorry. I don't think
10 that's ever happened to me before. I don't
11 mean to mumble.

12 The House committee on homeland security
13 held an oversight hearing, and at the end of
14 the session on this very topic, general was
15 asking about looking at the concerns over the
16 incursions of Barksdale. So it is on the
17 House website. I'll be glad to share it with
18 y'all.

19 MR. BURTON: Any other questions?

20 Colonel, thanks for the update.

21 COL. LUEBBERT: Absolutely.

22 MR. BURTON: I actually toured Camp
23 Minden last week.

24 COL. LUEBBERT: Oh, did you?

25 MR. BURTON: So it's a good spot.

1 COL. LUEBBERT: It's come a long ways
2 since they first gave it to us.

3 MR. BURTON: Next up, it looks like we
4 have Chris Goode with an update. He'll be
5 presenting for SEMA and GNO.

6 MR. GOODE: Thank you.

7 Go to the next slide.

8 Gary Silbert couldn't be here, so I'll
9 do my best on his behalf. But, you know,
10 let's -- let's start with some -- some good
11 news on the KC-130J recapitalization, VR-54.

12 And, again, Belle Chasse, it's the
13 biggest sort of center of gravity for the
14 military found in the New Orleans area, so we
15 do put a lot of emphasis on that base. It's
16 too important to lose, and, you know, when you
17 don't have a base with a clear owner, any kind
18 of joint base is always a little vulnerable in
19 my opinion.

20 But the mission is there. I think that
21 that stabilized really well with the help of
22 the State and delegation.

23 And this is a really good example. You
24 know, if you remember a few years back,
25 there's been a lot of back-and-forth on this

1 whole F/A-18 adversary piece and the F-18s and
2 so forth. But, you know, one -- one place
3 that was really lacking was this small mission
4 but really important one, that being the
5 KC- -- it was C-130s at the time.

6 Somebody on our team, Bucket Loiselle --
7 Admiral Loiselle, who consults with us, he's a
8 former N98, the OPNAV general that owns naval
9 aviation. He said we have got to get on this
10 problem because this reserve mission is vital.

11 Like I said, we only have 27 in the
12 entire fleet, and that's it for intermobile
13 movement of people and equipment in the
14 Pacific. During a war with China, we just
15 don't have enough capacity there. The -- the
16 aircraft that they have are constantly on the
17 road. They're C-130 Tangos, Ts, that are
18 ancient.

19 So we decided let's take a run at this.
20 We -- we coordinated -- actually met with
21 Lockheed, and Lockheed said, "Go for it."
22 But, you know, we started back in '24, and I
23 think we got one aircraft. And we took a lot
24 of -- we -- we really were very happy about
25 that. We sort of broke the mold, and

1 everybody got involved in the delegation,
2 senators Troy Carter, Mr. Scalise.

3 And one aircraft was a big deal at the
4 time. And that bought us a lot of credibility
5 with the Navy Reserve. At the time, it was
6 Rear Admiral Luke Frost that came over to the
7 office a bunch of times. Then you know, that
8 led to -- to getting more and more. In two
9 years, we were up to three. And at that
10 point, he said Belle Chasse is going first.
11 They are definitely going to get the aircraft
12 first, and we want to get as many there as we
13 can.

14 Shift to the Trump Administration. Five
15 aircraft last year, which was a big deal.
16 Part of those, I think, were in One Big
17 Beautiful Bill. And that's fine because it
18 passed. And this year, there could be nine,
19 which is great. So caution, two are in the
20 discretionary presence budget. Seven are in
21 mandatory funding for Reconciliation 3.0,
22 which hasn't happened yet.

23 But the good news is we're going for
24 four at Belle Chasse. I think Belle Chasse
25 could get to six or seven per squadron. We

1 wanted to see if we could get two squadrons,
2 but there's going to be more aircraft there
3 than before. And they're going to be
4 brand-new and that mission is not going
5 anywhere. So that's a -- that's a good win.
6 There's some quotes there about their
7 performance, which they're important.

8 So moving on, next slide.

9 So let's talk about the F-18s. Again,
10 you know, from the start, the F-18 problem
11 down there is simple. They were old F-18
12 models. They couldn't fly. Their mission
13 capability rates were in the toilet, and the
14 Navy had to do something.

15 And the Navy presented a plan that was
16 basically like "we don't have new F-18s for
17 you yet, but we have an older aircraft called
18 the F-5." It is an old aircraft. I mean, you
19 know, you've got to pump it with air really to
20 get the engines turning -- the engine turning.
21 And, you know, it's a small endurance, but it
22 kept a mission there. And -- and now we're at
23 a point where the -- that they're going to
24 move those F-5s out, and we're going to get
25 twelve F-18s back.

1 And the better news is the F-18s will be
2 equipped with actual radar -- modern radar,
3 some more modern than the other. But the
4 radar is what is key to be able to advertise
5 and be able to provide value proposition to
6 their adversarial mission, and that's --
7 that's going to be great, and it's going to
8 happen.

9 The other piece to this is the F- -- the
10 maintenance. The F-5s had -- had contractor
11 maintenance. This is coming with actual
12 sailors again, so you're going to have 100 --

13 MR. MORRIS: Chris, are these F-5 our
14 aggressors?

15 MR. GOODE: They were. They were. Yes,
16 yeah. They're great-looking aircraft. But
17 they were aggressives. They just didn't --
18 they go for like an hour. And so they -- so
19 that mission, you know, when they used to go
20 across the country and train, now they're kind
21 of kept to New Orleans. This will get them
22 back to, you know, their original (inaudible).

23 So sailors will come back to
24 Belle Chasse, and -- and we also wrote a
25 report kind of requiring SECNAV to -- to

1 annually report on this process. You know,
2 pinning these guys with a million questions
3 every year I don't think is a good way to do
4 it. This -- this is a good report that the
5 speaker helped get us in to just basically
6 hold the SECNAV to accountability as these
7 aircraft transition in. So I -- I think we're
8 in good shape there.

9 Next slide.

10 The -- the place we're kind of leaking a
11 little bit still is quality of life at
12 Belle Chasse. That still is a problem. You
13 know, I'm going to talk a little bit about
14 the -- the money situation and the reserves,
15 but, you know, we did put a report in. You
16 can say a report doesn't mean anything. It
17 might. It might not.

18 But it was does -- it was put in by the
19 speaker, and it is going to at least establish
20 a better track record. We worked with -- with
21 Mr. Scalise's military fellow, Sal, on this
22 report, and we just wanted a baseline because
23 the -- the Navy does have an explanation on
24 all of this.

25 Okay. We don't necessarily agree in

1 certain places, like dining and food vendors
2 up there. I think it continues to be an
3 issue. There's some potable water issues.
4 There's a pool -- swimming pool issue. All
5 that stuff has to -- has to be addressed.

6 We have been focused on the operational
7 stuff. We're not forgetting about it. I
8 think we're -- I think we are going to have a
9 pathway to fix some of these lingering issues
10 that just need to be addressed. I'll leave it
11 at that.

12 Next slide.

13 We have -- we have started -- and -- and
14 this is really Grady from GNO and Nathan on my
15 team. I haven't been as close to this. The
16 good news is that this Bayou Tech Node,
17 I really like the concept of it. It has been
18 established. There is some need, however, to
19 operationalize it and to get NIWC sort of up
20 to speed in a number of areas.

21 We -- we consolidate those areas in a
22 request for \$10 million. It's a first-time
23 request to Congress. You'll see where we're
24 at. This is kind of an untold story. We
25 didn't get it in the House side. I -- I can

1 talk to that separately if you'd like, but it
2 is before the Senate side. And, you know,
3 we'll see where this one goes.

4 But, you know, NIWC, we're focused on
5 NIWC. We went to keep that mission there. We
6 went through the last couple years some
7 challenging lease issues that I think were
8 resolved, but I think -- I think we have a
9 good future with NIWC, and we'll see how this
10 final appropriations process plays out.

11 The Louisiana National Guard, Colonel is
12 absolutely correct -- yeah, next slide.

13 So the President's budget asked for 24
14 FY -- sorry, F-15EXs. They are coming to
15 Belle Chasse. The latest we have is it's not
16 the schedule we want. The Kadena thing is a
17 difficult one to move past, but it's not like
18 Michigan or California is getting in your way.
19 The -- the Guard is very focused. I had Duke
20 Pirak in my office last week. Louisiana is
21 going to get straight on these fighters, 13,
22 5, and 2.

23 Part of the problem, you're right. They
24 did a multiyear procurement. Part of the
25 issue with these aircraft is they -- this is

1 an old aircraft that is not a new aircraft,
2 but building them -- they're still building
3 them kind of the old way, like the entire back
4 half of that whole entourage is basically
5 built by hand.

6 And Boeing is struggling to build more
7 than two a month, which I know sounds crazy.
8 They have told Congress and have told the Air
9 Force they think they can get to more, but it
10 is a pretty substantial buy at 267 aircraft.
11 And they are now part of the National Security
12 Strategy, the one that we cannot live without.
13 They are a really important piece to how we
14 fight with China and how far they go across
15 the weapon engagement zone. We're not going
16 to get into that, but they are an important
17 piece.

18 Louisiana is not doing lose these
19 aircraft. Belle Chasse is not going to close.
20 All of their major missions have now been
21 recapitalized, and there's been a ton of money
22 put into the infrastructure over the last few
23 years with taxiways, et cetera, alert
24 facilities, et cetera.

25 So I think we're in a good spot, but

1 you're absolutely right. I know you have some
2 Massachusetts aircraft down there now too.
3 They're -- Massachusetts is who we represent.
4 It has not had an aircraft on the ramp for
5 like a year. So all their F-15s left. They
6 just now got their first F-35 last Saturday.
7 So the aircraft are flowing, and they are
8 getting -- and trickling down to these -- to
9 these units. So I think we're in good shape
10 there. So sorry. That's it.

11 COL. LUEBBERT: And my understanding is
12 with the F-15EX, particularly because it has
13 an air-to-ground role, there's some additional
14 infrastructure opportunities that are actually
15 required for the 159 Fighter Wing, and they're
16 going to have to invest in Belle Chasse to
17 incorporate (inaudible).

18 MR. BURTON: Thanks, Chris. That's
19 great news.

20 Next, we have President and COO of
21 Barksdale Forward Eric Barkley.

22 MR. BARKLEY: Last week, we were
23 reminded that freedom doesn't come free. We
24 lost a B-52 in a tragic accident, and we lost
25 eight great Americans, three of which had

1 direct ties to Barksdale. I just wanted to
2 start my comments with some respect and
3 appreciation for those gentlemen and ask you
4 to remember their family as they go through
5 this time. As a matter fact, Friday, we had a
6 memorial service for Colonel Greg Watson at
7 Barksdale and -- yeah.

8 So I also wanted to make sure to thank
9 our litigation, our legislators. What a great
10 job you-guys have done.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Next time, we'll
12 get the ones from Shreveport.

13 MR. BARKLEY: Yeah. We've really seem
14 some extraordinary things from you-guys, from
15 the governor, from the secretary. I'll just
16 point out one thing, is your support you're
17 giving to our new gate at Barksdale. The Air
18 Force is building a new gate, a MAJCOM-type
19 gate, and our State is providing the support
20 for the -- for the community-facing side of
21 the gate. So we really appreciate that. I
22 wanted y'all to know.

23 Okay. Our report. Barksdale Forward,
24 for those of you who have not run across this
25 before or understand who we are, we are a --

1 we are a nonprofit civic group that was formed
2 in 1994 with the specific purpose of
3 supporting the base and families and the
4 people who serve there.

5 Our mission is fourfold. We work to
6 grow Barksdale's role in the regional economy
7 and national security. We work to protect the
8 base's operational integrity, advocate for its
9 continued growth and investment, and educate
10 the public on its strategic importance. The
11 two gentlemen on my left do a fantastic job
12 working with us, both Chris and General Elder,
13 to reach those goals.

14 The investment that the State makes in
15 Barksdale and the work we've been doing up
16 there is shown on the bottom line of that
17 slide. Just a couple years ago, the economic
18 impact from the base was \$1.1 billion. In
19 just one year, it's gone up to \$1.4 billion.
20 And we're very proud of that base, and I know
21 the entire state is.

22 Let me tell you some reasons to be proud
23 of that base you may not know. Barksdale is
24 the only Air Force base that hosts a major
25 command, a numbered Air Force, an active bomb

1 wing, and a reserve bomb wing. And there's a
2 lot that goes on with all that up there.

3 It is the home of Air Force Global
4 Strike Command, which controls two-thirds of
5 our nation's nuclear arsenal. Some of the
6 operations that you've heard of over the last
7 year originated, were planned, controlled out
8 of the Air Force Global Strike Command.
9 Operation Midnight came from there. How proud
10 were we of that? Just this year, Operation
11 Absolute Resolve Venezuela and Operation Epic
12 Fury in Iran.

13 So Barksdale is such a key component of
14 our nation's defense in two categories,
15 really. One is long-range strike, which you
16 hear a lot about. The other one is the
17 deterrent, and that mission is probably more
18 important because that's what says to our
19 enemies this might not be the right day to
20 mess with the United States. And it's a
21 unique mission to the Air Force. It's not as
22 much fly, fight, and win as it is -- it's
23 really great to have that. So just some
24 things to think about in Barksdale.

25 Next slide, please.

1 I already touched on this. So we can
2 slip right by those, but it's a very
3 nice looking picture there. I'll be as brief
4 as I can as far as the agenda that I want to
5 talk about.

6 You can go to the next slide, please.

7 Our Washington Co Del has also done a
8 fantastic job for us. I don't know how much
9 you are aware of this, but last year, in the
10 NDAA, Air Force Global Strike Command was put
11 in Title 10. It was codified as a major
12 command for the United States, which is a
13 little bit unusual, and it's -- also in that
14 same language calls for a four-star general to
15 be -- to be the leader of that group.

16 There are other things that talk about
17 the various responsibilities,
18 accountabilities, et cetera, that the Air
19 Force Global Strike Command is responsible
20 for, but that was last year. This year, with
21 Chris's help and others, our Co Del has also
22 stepped up to the plate, and we have three
23 provisions that are pending in this year's
24 NDAA.

25 General Elder, if I missed something

1 very important in any of these, would you help
2 us, sir?

3 MR. ELDER: Happy to help you out.

4 MR. BARKLEY: So the first one is the
5 intermediate aircraft maintenance facility.
6 The NDAA calls for an assessment of the need
7 for the possibility of establishing that in or
8 around Barksdale Air Force base. I'll just
9 say it to you this way: There's nothing
10 better than a B-52 than a B-52 that can fly.

11 B-52 is about my age, and the latest
12 I hear is we're planning to fly these until
13 2050s, but the availability and the capacity
14 to keep the planes capable of flying gets
15 harder every year. We just see the need for
16 the possibility of some type of intermediate
17 facility where you don't have to send the
18 plane to a major facility. I think there may
19 be one in Oklahoma City.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Air logistics
21 center.

22 MR. BARKLEY: But things that we might
23 be able to do -- and, again, the general might
24 be able to give more granularity to that. But
25 being able to keep the planes flying by being

1 able to do more work either on the base or
2 close to the base.

3 And the other thing is, is there's a lot
4 of maintenance that's done outdoors, and it's
5 not quite as safe, and if we can pull this
6 off, we think that would give us an
7 improvement in safety and maintenance
8 operations.

9 MR. ELDER: One of the hangers goes back
10 to when the base was first established in the
11 30s. It leaks like a sieve, but the other
12 thing is that the airplanes were smaller then.
13 So if you ever come out to the base, there's a
14 weapons load trainer hanger where they put the
15 whole airplane in, where in all the
16 maintenance hangers, tails have to stick out.

17 And so you might say, well, how much of
18 a problem is that? Well, it can be a huge
19 problem. It means there are some things they
20 can't do unless the weather is good. One of
21 the things that they found is that -- lots of
22 money to buy a new airplane, but if you can
23 improve your ability to -- for aircraft
24 availability, it's like getting more
25 airplanes. And so getting this hanger would

1 probably contribute to significant aircraft
2 availability. Thank you.

3 MR. BARKLEY: The status in the NDAA
4 is -- currently, it's in the House side. It's
5 not in the Senate side. It only requires one
6 side to get a bill sufficient to get the
7 response from the Department of War.

8 Next slide, please. Please interrupt me
9 if you have questions.

10 So this particular provision is actually
11 more like the Air Force Global Strike Command
12 provision I mentioned from last year. This
13 provision would put -- would amend Title 10
14 and put the National Center For Conventional
15 Nuclear Integration designation to Air Force
16 Global Strike Command.

17 I'm going to pretty quickly jump off and
18 let you touch on this as to the reasons why,
19 but currently, it was in the House, the NDAA.
20 The Senate in a companion provision that said,
21 okay, instead of putting it in codified, we
22 just want to study it. But we believe that
23 Senator Cassidy has now committed to offering
24 an amendment with the House language, and he
25 will be cosponsored by -- I'm not sure I'm

1 saying this right. Senator Cassidy will offer
2 a provision. Senator Kennedy will cosponsor
3 it.

4 Bob, would you mind giving a brief
5 explanation as to what that means?

6 MR. ELDER: The reason that it is
7 important: Some people say, well, you already
8 do it. So it's true. Air Force Global Strike
9 Command is the only place in the Air Force
10 that worries about conventional nuclear ops
11 integration. The problem is, is that the Air
12 Force itself looks at Air Force Global Strike
13 Command as the nuclear command, and so when
14 there's a conventional operation, they turn to
15 Air Combat Command, and their logic is that
16 this way, all the airplanes, whether
17 long-range strike or fighter force, are all
18 being kind of controlled in the same way.

19 The problem is, is that there's a --
20 when you do a long-range strike and then
21 you're trying to do integration of
22 conventional nuclear operations, it's very
23 different. And so part of this is to get the
24 recognition that -- that then can be used so
25 that when -- it's the secretary of war now.

1 They look, and the Air Force says if you have
2 a question about, you know, conventional
3 operations, you should go talk to Air Combat
4 Command.

5 Now they're going to say, well, wait a
6 minute. I'm worried about things that involve
7 conventional and nuclear. And this is
8 partially just to get some recognition. It's
9 not going to be anything it doesn't already
10 do. It will give them the recognition that
11 they are doing it, and hopefully, that will
12 allow them to do it more effectively.

13 MR. BARKLEY: Next slide, please.

14 The final provision of the three
15 involves the designation of Eighth Air Force's
16 Joint-Global Strike Operations Center as an
17 alternative to USSTRATCOM's operation center.
18 It's included in both the HASC and the SASC
19 NDAA language, but it's again an assessment as
20 opposed to a Title 10.

21 Bob, over to you.

22 MR. ELDER: So when you talk to people
23 about this even in the Air Force or in -- talk
24 to the secretary of war, they say, "You mean
25 it isn't?" It's obvious that it should be.

1 It's one of these things where we have to get
2 someone from the outside to say you need to
3 look at this because -- and it's not just a
4 matter of having the equipment.

5 They have alternate facilities, but the
6 alternate facilities, in order to actually
7 have a command control facility, I always tell
8 people that one of things you have to have is
9 a commander. So the alternate facilities have
10 equipment, but they don't have the staff.

11 There's already staff at Barksdale to
12 support the missions, and there's already a
13 flag officer, general officer, commander there
14 who can fill the commander role as an
15 alternate. So it's almost -- everything is
16 virtually there except for some authorities,
17 and so this will just basically set up a
18 situation that should be an obvious.

19 And by the way, the Eighth Air Force, if
20 you go back 25 years ago when it had a
21 different construct in the Air Force, it -- it
22 wasn't an alternate command center. It has
23 everything it needs except the designation.

24 COL. LUEBBERT: Is survivability not a
25 requirement?

1 MR. ELDER: Well, so survivability is a
2 requirement, and so the -- but I can tell you
3 classified -- they have the facilities they
4 can go to, and their thought is that if we get
5 attacked, we'll move the people there.

6 But to your point, if something happened
7 and you can't move the people there, then you
8 have a facility with no capabilities. So
9 that's -- that's the reason for having
10 something like this. And it complicates
11 the attack from an adversary.

12 And then I'd love to tell you. There
13 are some other interesting things that occur
14 once you distribute this.

15 COL. LUEBBERT: Yes, sir.

16 MR. BARKLEY: Next slide, please.

17 From an infrastructure and facility
18 perspective, we really don't have a proposal
19 for this year, other than a dining facility
20 plan and design proposal. We're about to have
21 hundreds more security forces, mostly, you
22 know, young folks coming in that need a place
23 to eat. We have a very well-loved, well-used,
24 and undersized dining facility as it is right
25 now. So we are -- although we haven't been

1 successful so far, I know Chris and his team
2 will continue to work on that.

3 As far as ongoing projects, I will not
4 read these to you. We have a lot going on at
5 Barksdale. This is some of the things either
6 currently going or about to get started.

7 Weapons generation facility is, the last
8 I've heard, north of 60 percent complete.

9 Weapons generation facility dorm for
10 those same hundreds of new airmen is -- is now
11 in the budget.

12 Corrosion control facility, which is
13 another vital thing to keep those B-52s
14 flying, our facility currently is -- it's not
15 very good. And although there's \$50 million
16 in the current proposal -- I mean in the
17 current budget, the bids came in higher than
18 that, so they're working through that right
19 now.

20 Next slide, please.

21 The runway renovations, they're
22 basically working on both ends of the runway
23 one at a time so they can still land planes.
24 That's underway.

25 Child development center, I think

1 I mentioned that in this meeting before. It's
2 now funded. It's actually a replacement for
3 one of the wings of the facility.

4 And finally, the alert facility, I grew
5 up in Shreveport, Bossier, and I remember the
6 B-52s being out and the Christmas tree. And
7 that facility right now has water leak
8 problems. There's some upgrades that are
9 needed there, so that's in negotiation, that
10 financial outline.

11 Next slide, please.

12 MR. BAS: What is the utilization of the
13 Chennault Air Force Base in Lake Charles with
14 the runway renovations at Barksdale? Are they
15 going to temporarily transition some aircraft
16 down there or...

17 MR. BARKLEY: I don't know if they would
18 permanently move that. That's more the
19 alternate landing sites. If it rains, the
20 runway is wet, to my understanding, they don't
21 land in Barksdale.

22 I think they can go to Forth Worth; is
23 that right? Other than Chennault?

24 MR. ELDER: If they -- they can go to
25 Chennault. If they -- if -- because the

1 runway is shorter, they can still have about
2 8,000 feet -- if they're light enough, they
3 can land with 8,000 feet. But if for some
4 reason they're heavy, then they have to have a
5 longer runway.

6 COL. LUEBBERT: And last year, I was a
7 part of a -- when both the 159 Fighter Wing
8 and Barksdale came down to run F-15s from
9 the -- at Belle Chasse and brought bombers
10 from Barksdale. We met at Chennault, met with
11 the airfield operations people, and -- and
12 talked about opportunities there at Chennault
13 on a couple different (inaudible).

14 MR. BARKLEY: This -- I'm sorry. This
15 last slide, we're very proud of this because
16 this has much more to do than just base
17 support, bill con, infrastructure, or mission.
18 This is an award that we were given this year.
19 It's more related to quality of life and our
20 community support of men and women who serve
21 there and their families. You may be familiar
22 with this.

23 Logan, have you-all won this award
24 before?

25 MR. MORRIS: (Inaudible.)

1 MR. BARKLEY: So the Great American
2 Defense Community Award, which also our friend
3 and former -- has won, is given by the
4 Association of Defense Communities. It is
5 more of a designation than an award.

6 The shield you see on the right is a --
7 is a permanent -- we are able to use that
8 and -- and the designation that we've got in
9 all of our -- all of our marketing materials,
10 anything to do with Barksdale. It just shows
11 people that we are a community that believes
12 and supports our military families, and we do
13 everything we can to support them.

14 So we'll be receiving that designation
15 in Tampa on -- in October at the
16 end-of-the-year ADC conference.

17 MR. BAS: Congratulations.

18 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Congratulations.

19 MR. BARKLEY: Any questions subsequent
20 to that?

21 That's my report, sir.

22 MR. BURTON: That's great news. Thanks,
23 Eric.

24 And next one up, we have the chairman of
25 Fort Polk Progress, Logan Morris.

1 MR. MORRIS: Thank you, sir.

2 Good afternoon. It's pleasure to be
3 here. Thank you to Governor Landry and
4 Secretary Bourgeois and the staff at LED for
5 all you do to support this wonderful mission
6 and my counterparts here and in various assets
7 across the state who are here to make
8 Louisiana better for all military families.

9 So Fort Polk Progress is focused on
10 coordinating the efforts to support the armed
11 forces, the missions of military
12 installations --

13 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry?

14 MR. MORRIS: I'm sorry?

15 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. I'm having a
16 hard time hearing you. Can you slow down a
17 little bit?

18 MR. MORRIS: Absolutely.

19 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

20 MR. MORRIS: So our primary focus is on
21 supporting the mission at Fort Polk.
22 Expanding it and improving upon it. We are an
23 alliance of community, state, and federal
24 leaders, business owners, and retirees, and we
25 believe that success in our mission will not

1 only keep the economic impact of the military
2 in our state stable, but also grow it.

3 We do this because, as you -- as we all
4 know, JRTC and Fort Polk is -- is part of the
5 fabric of our state, as it has been since 1941
6 when it was Camp Polk. And we -- we intend to
7 keep it as the premier warfighting lab for new
8 developments for the Army.

9 The force structure update for you. So
10 right now, we're sitting at 5,816 active duty
11 soldiers. Including the family members and
12 civilians, you're looking at a total bases
13 population of 27,000. I'm -- I'm hopeful that
14 Representative Owen's strongly worded letter
15 and the support of Representative Clay
16 Higgins -- Congressman Clay Higgins will --
17 will be heard. We do know that according to
18 the regional director of the Census Bureau,
19 that -- that we might have missed about
20 60 percent of the population in that region
21 based on their not being able to count or get
22 adequate numbers for the installation.

23 Major General Doyle at the time told me
24 that -- he said, "Mr. Morris, the Army is not
25 in the habit of answering questions that

1 nobody asks." So in the NDAA, you will now
2 see that the Army will be directed to provide
3 that information to the Census Bureau, whether
4 they've been asked for it or not. So we're
5 excited to see that go forward.

6 On the rotational unit billeting area,
7 so the location on north fort where all of
8 your rotational units stay before they go into
9 the box, after they come out is about 15 years
10 past its ten-year life expectancy. This past
11 month, the director of public works took
12 another 11 buildings offline and condemned
13 them there. So we've been waiting and trying
14 to find ways to get this replaced.

15 We received \$55 million in FY25. We
16 have another \$30 million in active FY27 mil
17 con budget. It's going to be a mammothly
18 expensive project, and the Army knew that. It
19 is going outside the traditional mil con
20 acquisition process for construction, so it's
21 been moved from the U.S. Army Corps of
22 Engineers to Army Materiel Command, and it'll
23 be entirely 3D printed.

24 The contract has been awarded to ICON,
25 and I am -- seeing is believing. The

1 groundbreaking is this Friday at 9:00 a.m., so
2 knock on wood. It's been a long time coming.
3 For -- for context, I was a freshman in
4 college when this -- this was first hatched
5 and awarded to now coming to fruition. So
6 glad to see that happening.

7 MR. BAS: And, Logan, very
8 interestingly, it will be a 3D-constructed --

9 MR. MORRIS: That is correct, 3D
10 printed.

11 MR. BAS: Printed building?

12 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, it's going to be --
13 this is being used for --

14 MR. BAS: Does it double the cost of it?

15 MR. MORRIS: I'm not sure, yeah. It's
16 out of concrete. It is concrete.

17 But it's a proof of concept for endo pay
18 com [phonetic]. The goal here is if we --
19 it's going to be more expensive to do it. If
20 we can prove we can provide these quarters
21 and -- and print them as needed on Fort Polk,
22 we can do that pretty easily as well, much
23 easier than you could on a traditional
24 construction method. So I'm excited about
25 that.

1 On the Catalyst Pathfinder Lab, that is
2 another program of record for the Army. It
3 has existed since about 2015 or 2016 to
4 support the Army launched its Army
5 Transformation Initiative. It now fits and
6 coincides completely within that footprint and
7 what the plans are.

8 I'm excited that with the Roosevelt
9 Group's help and Speaker Johnson's office, we
10 did that have that directed at Fort Polk,
11 receiving \$11 million for the first year, and
12 then it's -- I've seen it. It's there, and
13 we're currently standing that up. And then
14 we've got another 20 million in this round
15 coming we hope to -- to add to that. So I'm
16 excited to see what that looks like going
17 forward.

18 We are the ideal location to test and
19 prove new tech capabilities, innovation,
20 primarily because we have on average seven to
21 nine rotational units -- rotations a year with
22 multiple types of rotational units that come
23 through there. So as Secretary Hegseth and
24 Secretary Driscoll intend on replicating,
25 getting these technologies tested and to the

1 front as quickly as possible, Fort Polk is the
2 ideal place to do that.

3 In addition to the Catalyst Pathfinder
4 Lab funding, you know, we also have
5 appropriations requested this year going on
6 the House side for about \$28 million for CUAS
7 and UAS technologies at Fort Polk that will
8 integrate well into this lab. We did not have
9 the budget organically within T2COM.

10 For those who aren't aware, Fort Polk
11 moved from what used to be FORSCOM's command
12 to the new Training and Transformation
13 Command, which was a combination of Army
14 Futures and Training and Doctrine Command. So
15 that's still being fleshed out. We -- we
16 still see lots of boarding because of --
17 airborne and to Western Hemisphere, but as
18 those things converge, we think the future of
19 T2COM and what it's supposed to do will be a
20 good fit for Fort Polk.

21 All right. So our FY27 priorities.
22 Continued funding for the JRTC RUBA. So we've
23 identified here and itemized a little over
24 \$80 million in funding. The expectation right
25 now, based on this process, is that project

1 will cost in excess of \$400 million, and the
2 Army is telling us not to worry about it.
3 Okay. Not really. So we're hopeful that
4 moves forward, but they have made it a
5 priority, that this will be a proof of
6 concept, and they're not really worried about
7 the price tag right now. So I hope they know
8 what they're doing and that continues to be
9 the case.

10 Continuing funding for our Pathfinder
11 Lab. And this is piecemeal. I would love to
12 be able to make the Pathfinder Lab a program
13 of record for the Army. I think that now is
14 probably the strongest case to make for that
15 because of what the Army is doing, and there
16 are 17 of those labs around the United States.
17 There are -- were two new this year. We were
18 particular beneficiaries of technologies being
19 test at the Eagleworks Lab at Fort Campbell
20 and then -- as well as coming from the 82nd
21 out of Fort Bragg. They were able to bring
22 that technology in, got a place to house it,
23 and they didn't even know that was the
24 building where our Pathfinder Lab was going,
25 but it was, and it worked.

1 So the Fort Polk Modernization Report
2 language has been thoroughly worked over by
3 our good friends at The Roosevelt Group and
4 their staff, and several of our retired
5 general officers that they consulted for us
6 there know exactly why Fort Polk is the
7 forgotten solution for the Army. As we moved
8 away from large-scale combat operations, it
9 was a question as to what JRTC's future looked
10 like, not that it was going anywhere, but what
11 its mission was. And then Ukraine and China
12 and Russia happened, and we're back in
13 large-scale combat operations.

14 So the catch-up here is that between
15 2005 and 2015 and in moving away from some of
16 that stuff, we kind of forgot what Fort Polk
17 could do and what JRTC would mean for the
18 Army, and this modernization -- modernization
19 language gets us back to that. As a matter of
20 fact, on the House side this year -- and I'm
21 very curious to see how Secretary Driscoll
22 does it -- but it directs the Army to
23 optimally modernize Fort Polk, whatever
24 that -- whatever that needs to look like.

25 The Fort Polk Hospital Support Report

1 language. As a Combat Training Center, we're
2 required to maintain an emergency room, a
3 trauma center, if you will. Now, we divert
4 most traumas that happen or casualty events
5 that occur in the box. That being said, there
6 has been a consistent and deliberate attempt
7 over the last 15 years to descope our Army
8 Community Hospital into a super play. Based
9 on our congressional support and the work of
10 The Roosevelt Group, we continue to fend that
11 off and ward that off. And we've now got some
12 very sharp language in there that continues to
13 direct that to maintain support for the
14 hospital there.

15 Fort Polk Airspace Modernization, I
16 won't go over that again. And then Fort Polk
17 Progress Engagement in D.C.

18 So moving along, I covered slide 6 and
19 7. So let's go on to -- actually slide 9.
20 Under the Fort Polk Hospital Report language,
21 specifically, I want to draw attention to the
22 fact that one of the challenge we have is that
23 Fort Polk is now about 7,000 troops lower than
24 it was 15 years ago, and because of those --
25 that troop strength reduction, you also lose a

1 number of Army specialists, the brain
2 surgeons, doctors that are required to support
3 the installation's population.

4 That's particularly troubling when you
5 have 400 service members who were diverted,
6 who chose to come to the JRTC and work there
7 and were diverted because we did not have the
8 capabilities to take care of them from a
9 medical standpoint and particularly, on the
10 spouse and dependant side. So under the
11 Exceptional Family Member Program, we actually
12 had 280 soldiers that did not move there
13 because one of their family members needed a
14 behavioral analysis.

15 And I'm proud to report -- not part of
16 my slides -- because of Governor Landry's
17 support through the Office of Rural
18 Development, was able to convince the
19 St. Mary's organization of Alexandria to open
20 an ABA clinic on Fort Polk. They opened about
21 30 days ago. I'm currently helping them
22 navigate the DHA side for credentialing for
23 reimbursement TriWest, but that will improve
24 the ability to see another 50 military
25 dependants who rely on behavioral analysis on

1 the installation.

2 The second win similar to that that
3 Mr. Kyle [phonetic] support is the opening of
4 a full-service Office of Motor Vehicles on
5 Fort Polk. It is the first of its kind in the
6 nation. There was a -- there was a claim that
7 Fort Carson beat us to it several years ago,
8 but you no longer have to simply have an
9 existing license transfer. We will actually
10 issue new licenses to people who have never
11 had a license before at this location. So it
12 should cut down on wait times for units who
13 are trying to get a driver's license and
14 spouses by four and a half hours, so we're
15 excited about that.

16 Moving along to page 10, or slide 10,
17 the Fort Polk Airspace Modernization. First
18 and foremost, Major did agree to move the
19 airfield back into slot number 3 for priority
20 on the facility investment plan for the Army.
21 We're hoping -- we're pushing that forward
22 now, so we're hoping to expand that.

23 In addition to that, one of the things
24 that we're seeing and that General Elder is
25 mentioned what was going on there. The

1 opposing force -- never loses. We're the best
2 bad guys they are. And so we want to train
3 our units here as best we can. One of the
4 things that we need is 24-hour jamming
5 capabilities. So this request has gone to the
6 FAA through STRATCOM a number of times. It's
7 been blanketly denied. Through a couple of
8 our -- our heavy hitters with The Roosevelt
9 Group, we identified some possibilities to
10 reask that question and get a second bite at
11 the apple.

12 It's an 1-watt emitter on the low side,
13 15 watts when they can use the green air times
14 and -- but one -- one watts is all that will
15 be used in the red air times. So we're hoping
16 to get that deconflicted here in the short
17 term. This -- this gives them the capability
18 to really be the worst bad guy they can be in
19 terms of testing and training people coming to
20 Fort Polk.

21 We do know that on the last couple of
22 rotations, that when the 82nd and 101st were
23 here, that the people who are supposed to be
24 doing the watching were being watched, and
25 that can't happen. So the -- the better job

1 we do at deconflicting these types of
2 technologies from being used or being tested
3 while they're here, the better opportunity we
4 have at making sure the JRTC remains the
5 premier training center for the Army.

6 FY27 engagements in D.C. So in January,
7 we did attend and participate in the D.C.
8 Mardi Gras. We saw may of you there. A good
9 time was had by all as usual. The means were
10 substantive because we made our request, but
11 we also were able to further underscore the
12 importance of the continued support of
13 Fort Polk. And we work well with Barksdale.
14 We work with Chennault. We work well with
15 GNO. We're proud of those -- those
16 partnerships and what we can do there as a
17 Swiss army knife for the Army as well as
18 supporting the -- the larger defense complex
19 within Louisiana.

20 During the visit, we did have the chance
21 to visit with the speaker staff and with the
22 assistant secretary of the army, Mr. Jordan
23 Gillis. We continually tell them what
24 Fort Polk provides and what the capabilities
25 we have there and in case they've forgotten

1 what we provide. And Mr. Gillis was actually
2 supposed to be there the week before, but
3 because of the unusual winter weather we had,
4 he did not make it. Now, he has since made
5 his trip down and had a great visit there, and
6 we kind of doubled-down on the -- the
7 capabilities that we're talking about. And
8 Mr. Gillis is actually the one that -- that
9 really championed for us moving forward with
10 roof project the way we want to do it and that
11 we needed to pursue our airspace innovations
12 and renovations there so -- to the airfield.

13 In May, Fort Polk Progress was proud to
14 sponsor ADC50, and we were extremely pleased
15 to join our -- our counterparts from Barksdale
16 Forward there. We congratulate you again on
17 your selection. We had a great engagement
18 with Speaker Johnson's staff. We hosted them
19 at the gala, so it was a nice -- a very, very
20 nice event.

21 We also met with the director of Army
22 Partnerships, Dave Leinberger, to discuss FY26
23 Defense Community Infrastructure Program, and
24 we've identified a number of projects at
25 Fort Polk. We've run into a stalemate with

1 one of the utility projects in Louisiana
2 that's going to be partnering with us on that,
3 and we may be reaching out to LED for the next
4 round. There's simply not enough time to get
5 that done.

6 But those are good partnerships. We've
7 had some wins at Fort Polk in the past for
8 those, probably in excess of \$20 million total
9 that's come from investment from the Army for
10 local infrastructure programs.

11 We also met with Brigadier General Zinn
12 of the Army G-3/5/7 to advocate for increased
13 force structure at Fort Polk, primarily at
14 the -- at the suggestion that 509 would be
15 opposing force at Fort Polk, should be
16 brigade-sized. Sustainment is always a
17 problem -- at Fort Polk. We don't think
18 they're going anywhere, but as the
19 most-employed brigade in the Army and one of
20 the three transformation contact brigades, the
21 last two deployments they had were absolute
22 nightmares, and they weren't able to sustain
23 the size. So we're hopeful that by bolstering
24 509th and -- and really insisting that it
25 become brigade size, that they will then have

1 the additional sustaining resources there to
2 support -- installation.

3 Next slide, please.

4 Our annual membership dinner is
5 scheduled for late September. We'll get that
6 date to you. Our anticipation is that we're
7 going to invite Congresswoman Letlow to be the
8 guest speaker at that event, pending her
9 availability. We would love to have her come
10 visit us at Fort Polk and make a visit there
11 as well. We have yet to see Secretary
12 Driscoll there at Fort Polk, and so he'll
13 receive an invitation as well. General
14 LaNeve, who is the acting chief of staff of
15 the Army, was here last week reviewing the
16 116th and the guard and -- and the stand-up of
17 that brigade combat team that they're standing
18 up there. It's gone very, very well. We have
19 31 active general there for DD Day the
20 Saturday before last, very well received.
21 Fort Polk provides opportunities for all of
22 our guard units, pending funding, to augment
23 other rotation units who were there, so
24 that -- that show-and-tell provides that
25 opportunity.

1 But the annual membership dinner will
2 culminate in covering all of these wins and
3 what we are to use and done there and what
4 Fort Polk will continue to do.

5 One that was a late in the game -- and I
6 get information on it just as we walked in --
7 the division administration is currently
8 working through a problem, if you will. We
9 have a company called Sourcewell that is a
10 public procurement source out of Minnesota.
11 They save Fort Polk probably 6 to \$8 million
12 on traditional things that are a million
13 dollars or less. So it's been very good.

14 What we've discovered, though, is that
15 Sourcewell is not listed in the State's Office
16 of Procurement as a -- as a permitted provider
17 or an allowed provider, and so it requires
18 Sourcewell to find a general contractor in
19 Texas who then uses four subcontractors in
20 Louisiana to meet the procurement requirement.
21 I believe it's a Title 38 issue. We think we
22 have identified the problem there, and
23 Mr. McClinton is -- has actually helped us
24 greatly in getting that -- getting that
25 resolved.

1 There's an existing attorney general
2 opinion from 2015 that -- that was determined
3 to be in favor of or allowed institutional
4 higher indication in Louisiana to benefit
5 under those collective purchasing agreements,
6 and we think we can extend that to Fort Polk,
7 GNO, and our joint base station in -- in
8 New Orleans and to Barksdale. So we're going
9 to make the ask for all three, get that
10 opinion done just to clear that up.

11 Right now, the estimate is over the next
12 ten years, it's probably another \$45 million
13 that would go to a Louisiana-based corporation
14 or general contractor versus having to spend
15 outside the state.

16 So very happy to answer any questions.

17 Chris, anything that I missed that you
18 want to double-down on?

19 MR. GOODE: No. I thought the
20 Pathfinder Lab, which -- again, 11 million
21 last year, probably doing get close 20 million
22 this year. And that was something that was
23 entirety brought to us by Logan based on him,
24 you know, being out in the field, looking
25 around what communities are doing.

1 I had never heard of that. Why is
2 Ford -- when we're doing all this innovation?
3 We said, good question. And, you know, over
4 the last two years, we're -- dollars to
5 Louisiana and get to -- same with Bob, you
6 know these provisions are great, but it's Bob
7 who engineers 90 percent, 99 percent of these
8 provisions over the year -- over the last year
9 working with Ben Schultz in our team.

10 So we don't have the local connectivity
11 to see the real problems. We're not at
12 Fort Polk, and we're not at Barksdale. So the
13 teamwork piece is -- is really important.
14 Putting the requests together, you know;
15 making the requests perfect; talking to the
16 members; being politically active, that all is
17 essential, but having -- having the actual
18 organizations is -- you got to have it, Eric
19 included. It's just -- you got to have it.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There is one that
21 I forgot. It's -- it's not -- certainly, no
22 decision is made yet, but it's very, very
23 important. So Fort Polk received an RFI for
24 the Golden Dome project, the next generation
25 of the missile defense system, and we -- we

1 deconflicted the area they wanted, and then
2 they sent us another area they wanted
3 deconflicted. We did that too. They came
4 back, and now there's a third, and it's
5 currently at the top of the list.

6 It's the old field at Fort Polk. It is
7 the most shovel-ready site they have, requires
8 no -- et cetera. So out of the seven
9 locations, five to be selected, they took the
10 top of the five, and their team has made a
11 third visit there last week to review that.
12 So that would come with another approximately
13 380 personnel permanent to Fort Polk, and they
14 would be permanent party, permanent structure,
15 nondeployable. And so I'm excited about that.
16 That's typically where we -- where the ebb and
17 flow happens in the local economy, is with the
18 deployment. So excited about that
19 opportunity.

20 MR. ELDER: (Inaudible) was talking
21 about the Louisiana museum World War II. I'm
22 surprised that -- Louisiana Maneuvers next or
23 Louisiana Maneuvers twenty-first century,
24 something like that because the State of
25 Louisiana -- and not just Fort Polk, but I

1 mean whole state, particularly if you take a
2 look in the southwest part of the state, if
3 you turn it sideways and you lay it on a map
4 with China and Taiwan, it's very similar.

5 So in terms of a place where you -- the
6 terrain is similar. I'm surprised people
7 don't take more advantage of that. So it
8 could potentially be a place that the Army,
9 Navy, Air Force would all look to as where
10 they could experiment with their -- with the
11 counterinvasion-type capability and anchor it
12 (inaudible).

13 MR. REESE: I think that's a great
14 segue, General. You're talking about earlier
15 is LED wanting to innovate. The issue is that
16 the legislature isn't providing.

17 There's one thing we have there, is
18 space. It was ten years ago that the Army
19 borrow 50 more thousand acres of our land, so
20 it was -- 211,000 are used and are available.
21 There's lots of places to innovate. That's
22 great news to hear about the Golden Dome.
23 That is -- that would be a big win.

24 MR. MORRIS: Fort Polk's garrison and
25 command team went through the civilian labor

1 of fleshing out under Title 10 the development
2 of enhanced use lease agreements, which allow
3 public -- public partnerships and -- public
4 and private partnerships through other public
5 entities. So we can provide, and we have.
6 St. Mary's is a prime example of a provision
7 providing space for something in the Army
8 needed, a "this for that," if you will.
9 That -- that does work very, very well, and
10 it's easily replicated.

11 We're -- we own, I think, the first four
12 and now a total of seven intergovernmental
13 support agreements that allow us to do those
14 types of business arrangements. I know most
15 of those started toward the end of Senator
16 Reese's chairmanship of Fort Polk Progress and
17 then continued on under Chairman Mayor Rick
18 Allen. And so those opportunities are there.
19 I would love to see us focus on -- on
20 supporting the build-out not only on the
21 additional troupe strength, but the industrial
22 military defense complex around that.

23 And for example, I fielded two requests
24 from two rare earth mineral refineries whose
25 direction is under the RFI were to be

1 colocated to the installation for defense
2 purposes. I'm currently working with Jake
3 from LED on another opportunity through the
4 southwest alliance that is a hot lead, that
5 fits very, very well there. We deconflicted
6 everything with the garrison for that -- that
7 purpose, so I'm excited that about that.

8 MS. SMITH: So also, going into the
9 infrastructure and site development, you had
10 spoken about rural health needs. So just
11 wanted to mention that State of Louisiana,
12 within the last 60 days, has announced the
13 launch of the -- I always have to get it
14 correct -- the Rural Tech Catalyst Fund, and
15 it's just a new whole of government approach.
16 It's between Louisiana Economic Development
17 and LDH, or the Department of Health. And
18 it's designed to strengthen the rural
19 healthcare systems, expand access to quality
20 care, and of course accelerate healthcare
21 technology development across our rural
22 communities.

23 So this is -- it's a transformative
24 program. They are looking at investing more
25 than 1 billion federal dollars of investment

1 over five years to connect healthcare
2 providers, which we talked about
3 entrepreneurs, investors, and universities and
4 technology companies to help address
5 challenges facing our more than 1.1 million
6 rural residents here in Louisiana.

7 So I just wanted to segue that, as well,
8 that we're also working to help with those
9 site development areas that may be in rural
10 areas. So this is just another -- another way
11 that we can help assist.

12 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, their metric for
13 those decisions and denying people the ability
14 to be stationed at Fort Polk is -- is pretty
15 rigid, and it's very finite. So if -- if I'm
16 a child -- a parent, a military service member
17 whose child needs pediatric services and it's
18 more than an hour away by car, they can --
19 they can absolutely deny that serviceman from
20 coming there. And that could be the -- the
21 major who is the lead on CUAS for the 509th
22 who now doesn't come to work at JRTC. And so
23 if tower retention and tower recruitment is
24 extremely important and if we meet those
25 needs, you have a hard time getting providers

1 to the rural areas.

2 And so I'll actually give accolades to
3 Ms. Randolph and our team in Alexandria, as
4 well, at Louisiana Central, that they've done
5 a good job of trying to resource those and
6 making sure that we have access to and can
7 deconflict those things before they get there.
8 Sometimes it doesn't matter if the community
9 navigator -- not knowing what resources are
10 available just in their backyard. So I think
11 this initial goal is a way of just bridging
12 that gap.

13 Thank you all. I appreciate it.

14 MR. BURTON: Thanks.

15 On to our last report. Chris, take it
16 over.

17 MR. GOODE: Thank you, Eric, Albert, and
18 Christina. I'll go through these as quick as
19 I can.

20 I want to give you kind of our
21 perspective in terms of what we're seeing from
22 the Administration and Congress timelines on
23 the -- the big defense builds.

24 So again, you know, our -- you know, we
25 are in D.C. That's a photo of our office. We

1 don't have the whole building, but we're in
2 that building. If you're ever in D.C.,
3 obviously, feel free to come by and see us.
4 Our focus is defense, space, intel, homeland
5 security, so our target audience is -- it's
6 the Pentagon, Congress, White House -- the
7 White House has actually been a lot of more
8 open to meeting than I've experienced in my
9 career -- and also the State Department for
10 political and military issues.

11 You know, we were founded in 2012, and
12 we've continued on a growth trajectory. We
13 have about 75 clients. You know, we're the
14 largest defense community practice in D.C.,
15 which we're proud of.

16 Next slide.

17 The type of clients, you know, we have,
18 they're the typical, you know, defense and
19 some big high-tech commercial clients as well
20 as the defense community as you see a sample
21 of those on the bottom. You know, why does
22 AT&T and IBM want to do the defense stuff?
23 Well, they're -- they're very interested.

24 The big tech and communications
25 companies, when you look at things like Golden

1 Dome, that requires a big network and
2 long-haul communications. They want a piece
3 of that.

4 Same thing with Google Cloud, you know
5 Google is a household name, but, you know,
6 they have the biggest, largest underwater
7 cable system in the world. They have the
8 largest network in the world. We are not
9 going to be able to fight a war without
10 Google. It's impossible. It's not going to
11 happen. And they don't do business in China.
12 So it's a solid company.

13 And, again, you know, working with the
14 defense communities, whether Massachusetts or
15 the City of Vallejo in California that's
16 interested in reopening their island shipyard
17 or Louisiana or Utah or whatever, it's good
18 work. We like it. I stay personally involved
19 in these clients because I believe in it.

20 And, you know, it does pay dividends for
21 us. It shows goodwill on Capital Hill. We
22 build really good relationships up here.
23 Delegations care a lot about their defense.

24 Next slide.

25 Part of the thing I think that, you

1 know, is the difference for us, we really try
2 to recruit an active group of experts. We
3 don't just do it on our own. We pay for these
4 people. They come out of the retainer, but it
5 keeps the clients a lot of more happier if you
6 should get really good expert opinions, guys
7 like Gary Brito, who used to command Fort Polk
8 and came out as a four star leading Train and
9 Doc, which now Fort Polk falls under. I talk
10 to Mike Recenter [phonetic] and Craig
11 Clapperton, a former U.S. cyber command, 10th
12 fleet commander who is fantastic things.

13 As things are moving to space, cyber,
14 AI, those are the type of people we're trying
15 to pick up. John Huth, I mean, this guy is
16 crazy smart. He ran the Counterspace group
17 inside the Defense Intelligence Agency. And
18 Steve Cade, when you look at where we're going
19 with the Maritime Industrial Base that LED is
20 tracking very closely, you know, Cade -- Cade
21 ran the Military Sealift Command and is
22 already (inaudible).

23 Next slide.

24 And, again, you know, we got a great
25 group. OMB, you know, having -- having

1 somebody that really understands the office,
2 managing budget is incredibly important,
3 especially now in terms of these
4 reconciliation bills. So Mark is going to be
5 a big help. We'll move on.

6 Next slide.

7 So the -- so where we're at today, I
8 mean, the FY27 defense budget, just so you
9 know, we're looking at \$1.4 trillion. That's
10 a \$441 billion increase from the enacted level
11 last year. So it's a huge increase and our
12 biggest in history, but it's important to
13 realize that of that, there's this
14 \$350 billion piece that's considered mandatory
15 funding. That's the reconciliation.

16 You remember the One, Big, Beautiful
17 Bill? That was Reconciliation 1.0, mandatory
18 funding. Reconciliation 2.0 was the border
19 funding, and Reconciliation 3.0 is this next
20 tranche. And it's just -- it's not just the
21 Department of Defense spending; there's other
22 things in there.

23 But, you know, the problem with it is,
24 you know, that \$350 billion brings with it a
25 lot of beef. There's not a lot of, you know,

1 fat in there. It is hardcore. It is your
2 F-15s. It is most of the Golden Dome funding.
3 It is most of the ammunition restock. So it's
4 sort of important that that happens. And the
5 speaker has a meeting with House Republicans
6 today on this strategy, and it's -- it's going
7 to be a tough one to get through, so we'll
8 see.

9 And the big winner is obviously
10 shipbuilding. That's important for Louisiana
11 we've had -- you know, Paige and I have been
12 doing some things together that -- I think
13 it's great, and I think Louisiana is tracking
14 this Maritime Action Plan quite well. We'll
15 talk a little bit about that.

16 If you have a kid in the service, a
17 7 percent pay raise. And then you can see
18 some other significant things on the
19 right-hand side.

20 And just next slide.

21 This next slide shows you how this
22 mandatory funding is being used, and it really
23 hadn't -- hasn't been a big part of Department
24 of Defense spending -- Department of War
25 spending in the past. But, again, it's --

1 it's a very important piece to replenish
2 weapons and build ships and so forth.

3 Next slide.

4 So on the appropriations piece, you
5 know, the bottom line is we're not out of
6 woods on a couple of these things, like the
7 DFAC funding and the NGRE funding because
8 the -- the Senate has done zero. They -- they
9 have not gotten any individual appropriations
10 bill passed yet. That's just the way it
11 works. The House has had their way in passing
12 their individual appropriations bills, but
13 we're not there yet.

14 In fact, we're supposed to mark the real
15 big ones on Thursday. That didn't happen.
16 Mitch McConnell is out, so it's not going to
17 happen until probably after July 4th. So
18 still we're kind of TBD on some of the things
19 we're tracking.

20 Next slide.

21 Same on the policy piece, the National
22 Defense Authorization Act, that's the big
23 policy items like pay raises and the things
24 that Bob has called for at Barksdale, and we
25 have some policy pieces on Belle Chasse. That

1 will -- that considering a churn along, we
2 should have that wrapped up by the end of the
3 year. And they typically get that bill --
4 it's considered kind of a must-pass bill, I
5 think.

6 Next slide.

7 So I think we covered these. So on the
8 policy -- not money, but policy side, we
9 pretty much got everything, I think, we've
10 asked for with Barksdale, Greater New Orleans,
11 and Fort Polk. And it's not like they just
12 accept anything. They don't. If your
13 language isn't very good, it didn't make
14 sense, they're not going to put it in the
15 bill.

16 You know, we -- we put a lot of time
17 into -- into getting this -- the bill language
18 correct and understandable, and the efficacy
19 is high, and we spend a lot of time convincing
20 the staff and the members to put it in. And
21 yes, it's helpful we have the speaker, so it's
22 not like we're not using the speaker very
23 well. Again, we leverage him quite well. So
24 we have good, I think, track record on the
25 NDAA.

1 And then on the props side -- next
2 slide -- I think we're also in good shape. I
3 mean, the RUBA was funded. We put -- we
4 actually put some language on Fort Polk that
5 got included. You can put language in the
6 appropriations, but it's not always just NDAA.

7 And Pathfinder, I'm just thrilled at 20
8 million. It happened in the House side. So
9 we're going to get money in all of these
10 places.

11 And I added LSU Health because we do --
12 everything we do for LSU Health Shreveport is
13 military related, and, I mean, there's some
14 exceptions. We do some HHS stuff, but a lot
15 of it is DOD related, like -- you know, even
16 like high computing, they are now part of, as
17 Eric knows, the National Disaster Medical
18 System. So it's a good example. You have
19 \$775,000 for high-performance computing. It
20 doesn't sound like a lot, but that's what our
21 Democrat member -- that's the only amount he
22 could get, you know, just based on
23 allocations. The senate hasn't marched yet,
24 but we're confident we'll get that up to
25 5 million. So those are the big ones.

1 Next slide.

2 Something just to be aware of, you know,
3 with money because it's like, oh, we got all
4 this money, but, you know, we -- Iran has --
5 Iran has cost a lot, a lot of money, right,
6 and the Administration still hasn't requested
7 the supplemental. You know, that may happen
8 this week. It could happen tomorrow.

9 But when you're reporting carriers out
10 to sea and, you know, flying B-52s and feeding
11 thousands of people, the -- the bill adds up
12 really fast for fuel and food and everything
13 else. So the point that FSRM -- which a lot
14 of that money is going to Barksdale to do, you
15 know, all these discrete projects.

16 The services right now -- the Air Force
17 is \$5 billion in the hole on FSRM. The Navy,
18 I don't really know the figure, but it's
19 probably double that. So the -- the services
20 have basically said, no more FSRM for the rest
21 of the year. Okay. So if your HVAC goes out,
22 sorry. If the roof is leaking, too bad. It's
23 gotten so bad that -- that we've been told via
24 our -- our Virginia folks that the bases are
25 basically getting 200,000 to 400,000 for the

1 rest of the year. I mean, that's it.

2 So, you know, when you hear Eric and
3 Logan, you know, you're going to start hearing
4 some pain points on this because the money
5 just doesn't exist. They've got to pay the
6 bills, and FSRM is the first place they go to.
7 So that's going to be a problem. There is no
8 solution on the supplemental yet.

9 The -- the department is basically
10 saying we may need 5 billion or whatever it's
11 going to be. That probably, to me, is going
12 to go into Reconciliation 3.0. Doing a
13 supplemental bill on its own right now I don't
14 think has a chance.

15 So next slide.

16 So -- and then, you know, bigger picture
17 stuff, you know, with LED especially, you
18 know, it's shipbuilding, obviously, right?
19 But, you know, where the money is going, you
20 know, if we want to look long term at
21 Louisiana, which merits, you know, a constant
22 review, the department is critical that --
23 where they're putting money is in black and
24 white, right. It's these six critical areas:
25 artificial intelligence, bio-manufacturing,

1 contested logistics, quantum and info
2 dominance, scaled directed energy, and scaled
3 hypersonics. That's where the money is going.

4 In fact, that's why we include LSU
5 Health. We're working, you know, on things
6 like bio-manufacturing. They -- they are --
7 some of these places.

8 Next slide.

9 And this further breaks it down. Life
10 sciences and bioengineering, you know, this
11 is -- this is where the real -- following the
12 money, this is where the big picture money is
13 going beyond buying F-15s and troop strength
14 and so forth.

15 Next slide.

16 And, you know, when you look, just a
17 couple additional current Administration
18 priorities, so I think you can track that in
19 Louisiana.

20 Next slide.

21 You know, the Maritime Industrial Base,
22 this is a big deal. Paige and you-guys are
23 tracking this really closely, and you should.
24 There's a lot behind it, you know, executive
25 orders, the SHIPS Act, Maritime Action Plan,

1 and the funding.

2 Next slide.

3 But, you know, here's the problem,
4 right. 55 percent of commercial ships are
5 built in China. Their commercial fleet is
6 5,500 ships. We have 80 ships, and we
7 produce .1 percent.

8 Next slide.

9 You know, in 2025, China's -- PLAN
10 commissioned 18 ships. We commissioned two.
11 Now, that's changed with this Administration,
12 but, you know, the Chinese commissioned an
13 aircraft carrier with an electromagnetic
14 catapult, two amphibs, two nuclear fast attack
15 subs, eight destroyers, and six frigates, and
16 theirs are created with vertical launch
17 systems, by the way. Ours don't. And we
18 commissioned one sub and an LCS ship that we
19 don't even want anymore. So that's part of
20 the problem, and that's why we have this --
21 next slide -- this Maritime Action Plan.

22 That really is going at it across the
23 board from actual -- do we have capacity and
24 capabilities to build more ships? What's the
25 workforce look like? You know, how do we grow

1 an industrial base? That's castings,
2 forgings, you name it.

3 And, you know, this whole piece around,
4 okay, why? Because of national security,
5 economic security, and we want the industry to
6 rebound.

7 So final slide.

8 So that's where you get into these
9 Maritime Prosperity Zones. Louisiana is going
10 to play in this. There will be 100. This is
11 a ten-year process. The secretary of commerce
12 is involved. There'll be two probably per
13 state. They'll probably use the Opportunity
14 Zone model. We'll see.

15 But, you know, this is going to kick off
16 in July. It doesn't mean you have a day to do
17 this. This is a long-term process, and LED is
18 tracking this. But this -- this is just a
19 place that Louisiana has to be -- has to be
20 working, and, you know, we have a good team to
21 help them there.

22 Next slide.

23 When it comes to the energy resilience
24 piece, again, Louisiana, LED, they're all over
25 this, you know, from power grids -- next

1 slide -- to the real big ones, the nuclear
2 pilot program where, you know, the Department
3 of Energy, among others, is putting a lot of
4 money into.

5 And this whole thing around data centers
6 on installations, as Logan mentioned. It's
7 not happening as fast as people may think it
8 is. The Army has put out an RFP. They're
9 looking at responses. They have designated
10 certain bases they want to focus on, doesn't
11 mean that Fort Polk is not going to be part of
12 it. And the Air Force is doing the same
13 thing. They're using this Requests for Lease
14 Proposals process.

15 And, again, it's kind of a mixed bag.
16 They put an RFP out, not -- you know, not one
17 hyperscaler really responded because they
18 don't -- they're not quite there in terms of
19 aligning how hyperscale -- hyperscale really
20 works versus how the Air Force works. So
21 it's -- it's sort of a work in progress.

22 We were thrilled to decide -- we were
23 happy to sponsor and participate in the LED
24 Nuclear Strategy and Supply Chain Summit in
25 New Orleans. We had Teran, our senior

1 advisor, and Rachel, who used to be a form
2 assistant secretary of installations, energy,
3 and environment. And, again, that -- that
4 sent a really good signal.

5 And last one is critical minerals. I'll
6 pause here for any questions. But, you know,
7 critical minerals, the Administration is all
8 in, seven executive orders, six presidential
9 determinations. It's 48.7 billion.

10 48.7 billion is not a small number for the
11 total spend, including 18 billion for the
12 Defense Logistics Agency.

13 The Office of Strategic Capital is
14 involved in this. The Economic Development
15 Unit is involved in it. We know these players
16 very well. Two years ago, we had zero
17 critical mineral clients. We have five today,
18 five. So that tells you that this is a big
19 piece. There's a lot of money going there.
20 And, you know, we have a really good team that
21 knows the -- gym mishmashes, the whole gang
22 over there. And it's a -- it's good place to
23 do business.

24 So anyway, I'll pause there.

25 MR. BURTON: Any questions?

1 Chris, wonderful as usual.

2 So going to item number 6, try to get us
3 out of here on time. I will be brief. A few
4 things, one we kind of discussed already, but
5 during this past legislation, Senator Reese
6 helped pass Senate Bill 317, which modifies
7 the members of LMAC to include two different
8 chairs -- two additional chairs, one of the
9 House and Senate Military and Veteran Affairs
10 Committee. So we'll be welcoming -- one was
11 not able to join us because it was pretty
12 quick from -- turnaround to session today, but
13 it will be Representative Owen and Senator
14 Bas, so we're going to have them both here.

15 MR. BAS: I'm the one that's snoring
16 over here. Thank you.

17 MR. BURTON: So yeah, welcome in.

18 One more -- maybe two more. I want to
19 take this time to congratulate fellow board
20 member Senator Mike Reese for recently being
21 named the ninth president of McNeese State
22 University.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. BURTON: He will still be on this
25 backyard, so don't -- that's happy for me. So

1 that's great. That's all the information
2 here, but definitely just want to give you a
3 little bit of a moment here. I know that
4 they'll definitely love your experience in
5 public service, business, and economic
6 development, will definitely be invaluable for
7 McNeese. So it's a great, great move for them
8 and can't say anything more than that. That's
9 awesome.

10 MR. REESE: Thank you very much.

11 MR. BURTON: One more thing. We got a
12 couple, but I know Ms. Yarva Cobbs has been
13 working really hard for us to get everything
14 ready for the meeting today. We have sent out
15 previously some bios and information to
16 you-guys. If you have not responded, please
17 just try to do that over the next week or two.
18 We're trying to put a binder together of
19 everybody, all of our board members, all the
20 bios, all the correct titles just in case,
21 anything -- anything that we need to know in
22 the future.

23 Also, we will be -- typically, my
24 predecessor did say we would have one meeting
25 in Baton Rouge, and the other one would be a

1 field trip per se. So we have not ironed down
2 the -- the dates yet, but if you're --
3 specifically any of the presenters we had
4 today, if you want to host, please let us
5 know, and let us know what dates may work
6 for -- for, you know, being able to host us
7 there. We'd love to -- to figure that out.
8 I definitely want to move forward on that
9 portion. So just let us know.

10 We're trying to keep it -- well,
11 obviously, we have two -- two meetings a year,
12 and we're in June now. But we'll look and see
13 calendar-wise. It never works good in
14 December and anything along that line, so
15 we'll be -- we'll be kind of flexible, and
16 we'll try to get a little ahead of it better
17 than we did kind of this one.

18 That's all I have. Any other new
19 business or information from the council?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. BURTON: Okay. Any comments from
22 the few individuals that we have public?

23 MR. ARNOLD: I would like to make --
24 just real quick. So I am Jon Arnold. I am
25 with the Department of War. I am with the

1 liaison office. Our office's mandate -- we --
2 we are the Department of War's entity that
3 works in states at the state level to remove
4 barriers for military families. We focus on
5 quality of life issues.

6 The things that -- to your point, like
7 as a military member, if I have a good
8 experience in a community, I may stay. I'm
9 probably going to have a disability
10 compensation, and that's -- that's revenue
11 that we're were providing to your state.
12 These -- they matter. They matter for basing
13 decisions. They matter for retention.

14 Like, quality of life issues are huge
15 not just because I'm in the military
16 community, and we're all military folks. We
17 get that. That is our office's role. We --
18 we have mandates. We have policy priorities
19 from the department that we are tasked to work
20 with state legislators in trying to change the
21 laws in the state.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where is your
23 office?

24 MR. ARNOLD: I -- I'm physically based
25 in San Antonio, so there ten regional

1 liaisons. We break the country up into
2 regions. I'm the south central liaison.
3 I cover Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas,
4 Mississippi, Missouri, and Oklahoma, so
5 that's -- that's my region. I am in my region
6 most of the time unless, for some reason, I
7 have to be in D.C., and then I come back to
8 you as fast as possible.

9 But you will be seeing -- I -- just like
10 most everybody to the council, I am new, as
11 well, so it's good -- good for me to be out
12 here to meet everyone and just kind of
13 introduce myself. I look forward to working
14 with you-all, and I am also a touch point for
15 the DOW.

16 I do not -- appropriations and stuff, I
17 can route it there. I don't have the money.
18 I would love to give you-all as much as I can,
19 but that's a whole different side of the
20 building.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, you can
22 provide site pictures and advocacy for us,
23 right?

24 MR. ARNOLD: Absolutely.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So you -- you do

1 have a mix in this room with people who are
2 new in this and some who are very old to this,
3 and so I do encourage you to get phone numbers
4 before you leave because there are -- there
5 are problems that we've been admiring for
6 decades that we've been talking about forever,
7 and nobody ever helps us fix them. So glad
8 you're here.

9 MR. BURTON: Any other comments?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. BURTON: All right. Hearing
12 nothing, any -- we need a motion to adjourn.

13 MR. BAS: So moved.

14 MR. BURTON: And a second?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

16 MR. BURTON: All right. All in favor
17 say "aye."

18 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

19 (This proceeding was concluded at 3:00 p.m. on
20 June 24, 2026.)
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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, YOLANDA J. PENA, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held at this meeting on the 11th of June, 2026, as set forth in the foregoing 113 pages.

I further certify that said testimony was reported by me in the Stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding.

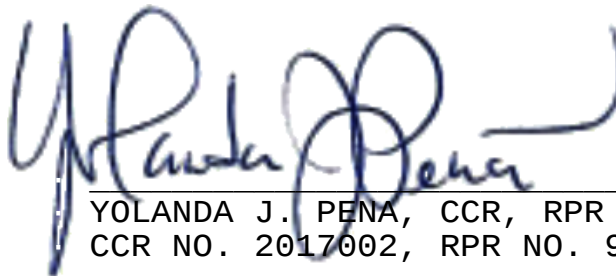
I further certify that the transcript has been prepared in compliance with transcript format guidelines required by statute or by rules of the board and that I have been informed about the complete arrangement, financial or otherwise, with the person or entity making arrangements for deposition services.

I further certify that I have acted in compliance with the prohibition on contractual relationships, as defined by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article 1434, and in rules and advisory opinions of the board.

I further certify that I am not an attorney or counsel for any of the parties, that I am neither related to nor employed by any attorney or counsel connected with this action, and that I have no financial interest in the outcome of this matter.

This certificate is valid only for this transcript accompanied by my original signature and original raised seal on this page.

Prairieville, Louisiana, this 23rd day of July, 2026.



YOLANDA J. PENA, CCR, RPR
CCR NO. 2017002, RPR NO. 907346