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MEETING MINUTES FOR THE
LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
HELD AT
IBERVILLE BUILDING, 9TH FLOOR
627 NORTH 4TH STREET
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
ON THE 26TH DAY OF APRIL, 2018
COMMENCING AT 10:08 A.M.

REPORTED BY: ELICIA H. WOODWORTH, CCR

MEETING MINUTES - LMAC

1 **Appearances:**

2 Willie Banks, Junior
3 Charles Bebe, Mayor of Hornbeck
4 General Robert J. "Bob" Elder
5 Robert H. Gatti, Junior
6 Brian P. Jakes, Senior, Southeast Louisiana AHEC
7 Larry Jones, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
8 Elizabeth A. "Alex" Juan, Communications Director,
9 Department of Veterans Affairs
10 Secretary Donald Pierson, Junior, LED
11 Deborah Randolph, Central LA Chamber of Commerce
12 Michael D. Reese, President of Fort Polk Progress
13 Major General Ronald G. Richard, Major General (USMC)
14 Sec. Lt. Col. Joey Strickland, Secretary, Department of
15 Veterans Affairs
16 Murray Viser, Barksdale Forward
17 Lorenz J. "Lo" Walker

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1 SECRETARY PIERSON:

2 I don't think we need to have a quorum
3 because I don't think we have anything to adopt today,
4 but we'd like to have a quorum because we've got a lot
5 of information. But we will call the meeting to order
6 now and proceed.

7 And it's my requirement to inform you we
8 have a hard stop at noon today so we can transition over
9 to the House for the presentation of our Economic Impact
10 Report to the Armed Services Committee at the House of
11 Representatives.

12 So we'll follow our agenda and ask you
13 now to join us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 (Whereupon the Pledge of Allegiance was
15 conducted.)

16 SECRETARY PIERSON:

17 A special thank you to the folks that
18 helped make the flags happen in here today.

19 MS. MCCONNELL:

20 That would be Ms. Dana.

21 SECRETARY PIERSON:

22 You might think that that's an
23 automatic, but we've found out in the past, it hasn't
24 been.

25 MS. COUVILLION:



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We're going to fix that, though.

SECRETARY PIERSON:

All right. Let's move to our Executive Director for the rollcall, please.

MS. MCCONNELL:

Good morning, everybody.

Mr. Willie Banks.

MR. BANKS:

Here.

MS. MCCONNELL:

Mr. Bebe.

MR. BEBE:

Here.

MS. MCCONNELL:

Mr. Crews.

(No response.)

MS. MCCONNELL:

Mr. Curtis.

(No response.)

MS. MCCONNELL:

Mr. Davis.

(No response.)

MS. MCCONNELL:

Mr. Elder.

MR. ELDER:



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1 Here.
2 MS. MCCONNELL:
3 Mr. Gatti.
4 MR. GATTI:
5 Here.
6 MS. MCCONNELL:
7 Mr. Jakes.
8 MR. JAKES:
9 Here.
10 MS. MCCONNELL:
11 Mr. Landreneau.
12 (No response.)
13 MS. MCCONNELL:
14 Mr. Mathis.
15 (No response.)
16 MS. MCCONNELL:
17 Mr. Pierson.
18 SECRETARY PIERSON:
19 Present.
20 MS. MCCONNELL:
21 Mr. Russo.
22 (No response.)
23 MS. MCCONNELL:
24 Mr. Smith.
25 (No response.)



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1 MS. MCCONNELL:
2 Mr. Strickland.
3 MR. STRICKLAND:
4 Here.
5 MS. MCCONNELL:
6 Mr. Tete.
7 (No response.)
8 MS. MCCONNELL:
9 Mr. Thomson.
10 (No response.)
11 MS. MCCONNELL:
12 Mr. Vinci.
13 (No response.)
14 MS. MCCONNELL:
15 Mr. Viser.
16 MR. VISER:
17 Here,
18 MS. MCCONNELL:
19 Mr. Walker.
20 MR. WALKER:
21 Here.
22 MS. MCCONNELL:
23 And Mr. Whitehead.
24 (No response.)
25 MS. MCCONNELL:



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1 Where are you, Deborah?

2 MS. RANDOLPH:

3 I should have been before Russo.

4 MS. MCCONNELL:

5 Ms. Randolph.

6 MS. RANDOLPH:

7 Here.

8 MS. MCCONNELL:

9 I'm sorry. I got --

10 Mr. Pugh.

11 (No response.)

12 MS. MCCONNELL:

13 I skipped a page. I'm sorry.

14 And Mr. Reese.

15 MR. REESE:

16 Here.

17 MS. MCCONNELL:

18 I left all of the "R"s out.

19 Mr. Pugh, no, but Larry is here as his
20 proxy.

21 Thank you for joining us, and we'll
22 probably be nominating you to the Board as a
23 representative of the Louisiana Employer Support of the
24 Guard and Reserve.

25 And Mr. Richard.



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1 MR. RICHARD:

2 Here.

3 Great. All right. Unfortunately we do
4 not have a quorum, but we're close.

5 SECRETARY PIERSON:

6 All right. That doesn't prohibit us
7 from proceeding. Simply if we were to seek to adopt
8 motions today, that would preclude that, but with that,
9 we will not have an official approval of our meeting
10 minutes from the November meeting. But in order to
11 maybe do that later, were there any notes that anyone
12 wishes to surface at this time that will be element --
13 we do have a quorum?

14 MS. MCCONNELL:

15 Yeah, I think so.

16 SECRETARY PIERSON:

17 So any notes from the previous minutes?
18 If not, I will entertain a motion to adopt.

19 MR. JAKES:

20 So moved.

21 MS. MCCONNELL:

22 Can you state your name?

23 MR. JAKES:

24 Yes. Brian Jakes.

25 MS. MCCONNELL:



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1 First motion to move.

2 And seconded by?

3 MR. REESE:

4 Michael Reese.

5 MS. MCCONNELL:

6 Thank you.

7 SECRETARY PIERSON:

8 That helps our court reporter. She's
9 not on a first-name basis with most of you.

10 So thank you for that. We've got a
11 motion and a second.

12 Again, any comments or questions for the
13 minutes?

14 (No response.)

15 SECRETARY PIERSON:

16 Hearing none, all in favor of the
17 adoption, please signify and say "aye."

18 (Several members respond "aye.")

19 SECRETARY PIERSON:

20 Excellent. Again, in the interest of
21 time, now I turn to our team, and noting we have a
22 number of members still trying to get here, but I think
23 there's a wreck on the Mississippi River Bridge, and
24 then there's some wide load that's come off a trailer
25 coming from the east to the westbound and kind of



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1 blocking both sides. So I know Mr. Silbert, we'll move
2 him to a lower portion of the agenda. So we'll proceed
3 at this point with Secretary Strickland.

4 MR. STRICKLAND:

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the
6 opportunity to brief from the Department of Veterans
7 Affairs. It's an honor to be here.

8 MS. MCCONNELL:

9 We do have your data. Do you want me to
10 pull that up?

11 MR. STRICKLAND:

12 I'm going to brief from my slides, so
13 you'll see my slides on the screen.

14 Technology is beautiful. The Navy just
15 received a new drone warship. I hope they can operate
16 it.

17 SECRETARY PIERSON:

18 There's a hard copy that's been provided
19 to the members. I think there's one from --

20 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

21 There are hard copies in your file, so
22 please just use those.

23 The good news for the Louisiana
24 Department of Veterans Affairs is that our total budget
25 now is about \$70-million, but we only received less than



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1 \$6-million from the state general funds, which, for me,
2 as Secretary, it's a blessing because I don't have to go
3 up there and beg for money.

4 Today I want to let everybody know that
5 I'm accompanied by my Deputy, Homer Rodgers, a great
6 Army veteran, and my Communications Director, Ms. Juan,
7 who is an outstanding Air Force veteran.

8 Our mission is clear. It's consistent
9 with the mission -- we got it going? Okay. I think
10 we're ready to rock and roll.

11 Mission Statement. Our Mission Statement is
12 clear, consistent with the mission of the Federal VA.
13 Over 150 years ago, Abraham Lincoln gave the Federal VA
14 the mission "To care for him, who shall borne the battle
15 and for his widow and his orphan." And today we add
16 "her," because of the large number of women who make up
17 our armed forces. So our mission is clear, it's
18 consistent with the Federal VA, and in spite of the
19 turmoil in Washington, our direction at the state level
20 is clear, to take care of our 387,000 veterans.

21 By the way, for those of you that have
22 been tracking, Admiral Jackson withdrew his nomination
23 this morning as the Secretary of Federal VA.

24 Sow how do we serve. One of the largest
25 divisions that we have in our department is our Contact



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1 Assistance Program. It was established during World War
2 I, which makes us one of the oldest departments in the
3 state government. We have 64 veteran service officers
4 around the state highly trained. We have about 25 to 30
5 women out there serving our parishes representing all
6 veterans, but especially women veterans. And we also
7 have six highly-trained paralegals who are co-located
8 with the Federal VA in New Orleans, and these folks make
9 sure that all claims coming out of the parishes are well
10 put together because once we go into the pipeline, we
11 don't want these claims bouncing back and having to
12 redo. And that's the purpose of -- they handle
13 thousands of claims every day. We assist a veterans
14 population of almost 300,000, 287,000 and some change,
15 but we're honored to do it.

16 In 2016, which is the latest Federal
17 figures that we have, our department brought in over
18 \$1.3-billion and in comp and pen, compensation and
19 pension benefits, to over 66,000 veterans and their
20 families. So that's money that goes directly into the
21 veteran's pocket and is spent in the parishes.

22 The exact amount is shown here. This is
23 the impact. \$1,325,975,000 in Federal comp and pen
24 dollars that came into the state in FY16. We don't have
25 the figures yet for 2017. So that's puts us 11th in the



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1 nation in terms of all of the states, which when you
2 compare us to big states like Florida, Texas,
3 California, we're not in bad shape at all.

4 Okay. What I did to show you the amount
5 of money that comes into the parishes is I've selected
6 four parish to give you an idea of just how much money
7 comes into those parishes, and it's based on what we
8 call "vet pop," veterans population. For East Baton
9 Rouge, there's about 23,000, almost 24,000 veterans that
10 we served. This is the amount of money in comp and pen
11 that came in during FY 2016. Huge amount of money.

12 For Caddo Parish, this is the total
13 amount of dollars that came in for that particular
14 parish. Of course there's a large number of Air Force
15 retirees up there, and Mayor Walker in Caddo Parish.

16 MR. GATTI:

17 Is that mixed in with Bossier?

18 MR. STRICKLAND:

19 Yes. That's really Bossier and --

20 MR. GATTI:

21 Bossier and Caddo.

22 SECRETARY PIERSON:

23 We're very sensitive about that.

24 MR. STRICKLAND:

25 I've known Lo Walker 20-something years.



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1 I knew you'd ask about that, but that's part of your
2 parish.

3 St. Tammany, this is the amount of money
4 that comes into the North Shore, about 18, 19,000
5 veterans in that parish. And the last parish that I
6 wanted to highlight for you is Rapides in Central
7 Louisiana. Central Louisiana has a lot of retirees from
8 Fort Polk and also from the old England Air Force Base,
9 so it's a smaller number of veterans that we serve, but
10 they're older and their pensions are larger because of
11 the disabilities and things like that. So it totaled
12 almost \$71-billion. These are all dollars, again, that
13 goes directly into the veteran's pocket spent in the
14 community. So I really make sure that when I go before
15 the legislature, I let those legislators know that.

16 We're also honored to serve our veterans
17 in our veterans homes. Our veterans homes are totally
18 self sustained. We don't receive any state general
19 funds at all. Total dollars that come in for our homes
20 almost every year tops \$40-million, and we're able to
21 use that. We have major renovation projects going on at
22 every one of our homes because a couple of them are
23 getting on up in age and we are having to do some
24 repairing, but, also, we have an interest in continuing
25 a quality, state-of-the-art at each of the homes that no



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1 civilian nursing homes can match.

2 Then the maps shows you where the homes
3 are located. In Bossier, and that's a beautiful home.
4 One of the most beautiful homes in the Country. Monroe,
5 Jennings. Jennings is -- by the way, all of our homes
6 have undergone extensive CMS and Federal healthcare
7 surveys, and all of them have passed with flying colors,
8 no deficiencies, and that really makes me proud of my
9 people.

10 There's about 1,900 employees in the
11 department, over 800 who work in our homes caring for
12 our veterans, but there's a thought that it's just older
13 veterans that lives in the homes. That's not true
14 anymore. There's a lot of younger veterans, combat
15 veterans that were severely injured in IET explosions
16 from Iraq and Afghanistan that are partially paralyzed.
17 We offer skilled nursing care, we offer intermediate
18 care, we offer physical therapy, and we have a lot of
19 those veterans that come and stay for a while until they
20 get back to being independent and then they move back
21 home.

22 So we're very honored to do that. Huge
23 amount of money that comes into those homes.

24 Our cemeteries, Louisiana Department of
25 Veterans Affairs operates four, I call them world class



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1 because they compare, in my opinion, to Arlington. They
2 have to meet all Federal guidelines when they incur our
3 veterans. We are building our fifth state veterans home
4 in Jennings. We're also expanding our big cemetery in
5 Slidell. It's only been open for three years, and we've
6 already had 1,100 interments in that cemetery. And
7 we're -- because state veterans cemeteries are fairly
8 new, the oldest one in Keithville is about 10 years old,
9 we haven't been able to build up that pot of money for
10 them to be self sufficient, but we're moving in that
11 direction. We do receive a \$745 burial plot fee for
12 every veteran that's interred, and an equal amount of
13 money for every loved one that's interred with her
14 veteran. And so we expect in the next few years that
15 our cemeteries will be self sufficient, and that's the
16 direction that we're moving in. We don't want to have
17 to go through the state general fund and say, "Look,
18 give us some money. We want to take care of our own."
19 And I think we'll get there, but it's going to be a
20 little while yet.

21 The next program that we have that
22 brings in huge amounts of dollars is the State Approval
23 Agency. The State Approval Agency is the organization
24 that certifies every college and university in the
25 state, including the newest beauty colleges. Anybody



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1 that receives GI Bill has to be certified by the State
2 Approval Agency. And last year, or FY 2016, over
3 \$150-billion -- or \$150-million came into the State of
4 Louisiana in GI Bill payments. Huge amount of money.
5 And right now, for your information, the GI Bill is the
6 best GI Bill in history because it can be transferred
7 not only to your spouse, but it can also be transferred
8 to your children and there's no time limit like when
9 some of us were on active duty or if you didn't use it,
10 you would lose it. That is a wonderful, wonderful
11 program, and so we're very proud of State Approval
12 Agency.

13 I want to turn it now over to my
14 assistant here, Alex, and she's going to brief the
15 Military Family Assistance Fund and women veterans
16 issues.

17 MS. JUAN:

18 Okay. So you can just disregard the one
19 about the medals. It was just talking about the 60,000
20 honor medals that we've given out.

21 The Military Family Assistance Fund, as
22 you can see, is basically made up of donations. When
23 the flood happened, we were able to give out over about
24 \$350,000 to the 1,100 veterans that were directly
25 impacted by the flood.



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1 And as you see on the bottom, since this
2 was created, which originally was set up to help the
3 Guard and Reserves that were deploying and losing income
4 from those deployments, now we, in August of 2016, right
5 before the flood hit, the law went into effect, so it is
6 now open the all veterans that are facing a financial
7 hardship. And as you can see, that's how many
8 individuals have been given that amount, and every year,
9 I believe we can give out about \$150,000 of that fund,
10 but all of that money comes in from donations and tax
11 credits.

12 These are some of our partnerships and
13 my projects. As we all know, we are -- the entirety of
14 my son's life we have been at war, and it's a completely
15 different one, and we have a lot of veterans coming home
16 with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries. Since my phone
17 number is the only one on the website, a lot of times I
18 get crisis calls, and it's very interesting because even
19 with as patriotic as our state is, all of the different
20 programs that exist, a lot of military families still
21 don't understand the services that are available to
22 them. So it's a lot of referrals. We've been
23 partnering a lot with different agencies and explaining
24 to people, even if you're not service connected, you can
25 go to a vet center and get free counseling services for



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1 yourself and your family if you need them.

2 And since we know that we all talk about
3 the suicide crisis, the Secretary wanted to make it a
4 priority this year, and we have partnered with all of
5 the Federal VA healthcare centers and we are going to be
6 hoisting a Suicide Prevention Summit in Alexandria on
7 September 14th and this is going to be a fantastic
8 opportunity to open the conversation so that private
9 healthcare providers can understand and help identify
10 veterans that may be in crisis and in need of support to
11 go to the VA and obtain these free services that they
12 earned.

13 We met with Overton Brooks not too long
14 ago with the Secretary, and they actually told us that
15 looking at their data, female veteran suicide is on rise
16 and female veterans that are not actively in VA
17 healthcare actually end up committing suicide at a 98
18 percent higher rate than their counterparts. That
19 number is not okay, and we need do something about it
20 and this is one way that we are committed to doing that
21 by starting this Suicide Prevention Summit.

22 Another thing that they did mention is
23 that before -- now that female veterans are coming out,
24 we're trained. I'm a sharpshooter, most of y'all are,
25 we're very familiar with weapons, and so we're also



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1 seeing female veterans commit suicide via weapons where
2 we didn't see that before. So there's a lot of
3 different conversations that need to happen, and this is
4 going to be the first step and I hope and encourage all
5 of you to be able to attend. We'll make sure that all
6 of you get an invitation to that.

7 Then we have Jobs for Veterans. This is
8 really the Secretary's most important charges that he's
9 given us is to find a way to connect veterans that are
10 coming home to positions here in Louisiana. We want
11 then them to be able to drive and provide for their
12 families. And a lot of times, there are programs that
13 exist, but they're not getting the answers that they
14 need or they just call the Department of Veterans
15 Affairs and say, "Hey, do you know any vet-friendly
16 organizations?" So we've done a lot of work, talked to
17 a lot of different organizations that are vet-friendly
18 and we keep a list of them now as well in our
19 department. We're tracking those organizations so that
20 we could at least give veterans some guidance on it, but
21 we're also referring them out to organizations like
22 NextOp that just moved into New Orleans. They have been
23 really good. Everyone we've sent them over, they've
24 been able to find employment there. And now we're
25 hoping to test the new Louisiana Job Connection site,



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1 sexual trauma and suicide prevention, gatekeeper
2 training, so that they were aware if there were any
3 critical signs that need to be alerted to the VA
4 counterparts or to the veterans hotline and so that we
5 can properly refer them to places like the vet centers.

6 We've also hosted several Women Veteran
7 Lunch & Learns and Coffee Conversations across the state
8 just to help them build partnerships and let them know
9 that there are different organizations out there that
10 can help them. It's been a very success program.

11 There you go.

12 MR. STRICKLAND:

13 One slide that we skimmed over in the
14 transition from myself to Alex was the medal slide.
15 We've awarded over 60,000 Louisiana honor medals to
16 Louisiana veterans, and we continue to send out honor
17 medals every day.

18 So, Mr. Secretary, this concludes the
19 Department of Veterans Affairs briefing. It's not a
20 total-encompassing briefing, but I wanted to give
21 everyone a snapshot of the amount of dollars that come
22 into the State of Louisiana through our department.

23 SECRETARY PIERSON:

24 Thank you for that comprehensive and
25 important briefing, Secretary.



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1 Alex, thank you for your excellent
2 support.

3 Quick question, I noted -- and we get
4 that, you know, honoring our vets is number one or right
5 there with the defense of our nation and the ongoing
6 activities in Department of Defense, but we are also
7 very appreciative of the economic impact information.
8 For too long our state didn't highlight that, and I
9 think along the way lost opportunities, so we're trying
10 to be very, very diligent about servicing that
11 heightened information that you bring to light here
12 today. There might be an additional slide for Orleans
13 Parish. That would be significant.

14 MR. STRICKLAND:

15 That was my fault. I left it out.

16 SECRETARY PIERSON:

17 If you'll add that to us, we want to
18 continue a stream of information across the state that
19 impacts our economic development organizations that
20 built this continued understanding of the importance of
21 this economic impact. Again, we've had that study
22 presented back in our November meeting, and we will
23 share that at the legislature today. I hope it gets
24 picked up and gets some media coverage to that, but
25 we're neck and neck with tourism with just what we're



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1 receiving through DOT and military activities.

2 The other important social comments,
3 Alex, that you brought are also very important, and we'd
4 like to help not just on the job front, and we'll talk a
5 little bit more about that later, but on those social
6 issues. And we're also happy to communicate those, the
7 messages out. And I might point out that our own
8 Deborah Randolph right here is President of Louisiana
9 Chamber of Commerce Executive Association, and I think
10 that we can ask her to also be a part of the messaging.

11 MS. RANDOLPH:

12 Absolutely.

13 SECRETARY PIERSON:

14 She's a powerful link, again, across the
15 state to get that information out because it's a
16 powerful infrastructure you have available, but if it
17 doesn't reach that audience, we don't get the kind of
18 results that we must have. So thank you for building
19 that infrastructure, and you can count on a partnership
20 with Deborah and with LED and some other organizations
21 to help communicate this resource capacity out there.
22 And, again, we will take the messaging that you provided
23 around the economic impact.

24 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

25 Mr. Secretary?



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1 SECRETARY PIERSON:

2 Yes, sir.

3 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

4 Can I mention just very quickly, on the
5 30th of September, this year, at the Louisiana Veterans
6 Memorial Park next to the Capitol, we will get dedicate
7 the first memorial to Governor Will in honor of Gold
8 Star families. And Boysie Bollinger put up the \$100,000
9 fund that memorial, so we have the money. We're going
10 to get started on construction here soon.

11 SECRETARY PIERSON:

12 Thank you for the great work, Secretary,
13 and the strong partnership that you have with LED.

14 MR. STRICKLAND:

15 Yes, sir.

16 MS. MCCONNELL:

17 And the Secretary will be providing some
18 information to the committee members at the House
19 Session.

20 MR. RICHARD:

21 I have a question for Colonel Strickland
22 and Alex. I know we are going to talk about jobs later
23 on, I believe you mentioned. I just had a quick
24 question on the slide you presented. Was that in
25 conjunction with Louisiana Workforce Commission or was



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1 that a separate -- separate -- there's some confusion
2 there about who they call and what agencies they
3 address.

4 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

5 That's a good question, General.

6 That data is a program that we've
7 developed on our own. We used to -- first we found out
8 that the veterans coming through the transition point
9 really don't know who the workforce commission is. They
10 don't even know who they are. And in the past, we would
11 send veterans to workforce commission and they were not
12 always successful and a lot of jobs were medial-type
13 jobs. And so out of frustration, we started meeting
14 with company CEOs, like Cisco and others, and we've
15 developed our own company data within the department so
16 when the veterans calls and we say, "What do you want to
17 do?" "Well, I like pipefitting." "Okay. Check these
18 companies out," and we can at least give them some
19 direction.

20 MR. RICHARD:

21 Thank you. And that's going to be
22 beneficial. And I get with you separately and get with
23 Alex to find out the contact points because several
24 people have asked, and obviously I sent them to the
25 wrong place.



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1 SECRETARY PIERSON:

2 There's no wrong place to send them, but
3 there are multiple ways, just as Colonel Strickland
4 mentioned, that's based on skill sets. We are also
5 aware that the Workforce Commission has a user focus.
6 I'm out of work, I go to them and they help me find a
7 jobs. At LED, with our programs, we have more of a
8 corporate focus. "I'm looking for people with these
9 kinds of skill sets." And so we're doing a big amount
10 of matching, so what we really want to do is get as many
11 people as we can service in that middle sector and also
12 the ability to get resumés put together, our small
13 business development centers, those kind of things. So
14 a lot of resources out there. I think more is better,
15 but there's no one-stop shot, silver bullet approach,
16 but that's okay. They'll always be treated well, I
17 think, at the Workforce Commission because that's their
18 primary mission. But with what Colonel Strickland and
19 LED are doing is augmenting Larry in and using every
20 tool at our disposal to help others get their job.

21 MR. RICHARD:

22 Thank you.

23 SECRETARY PIERSON:

24 And we're going to -- I'm walking all
25 over the Executive Director's report probably.



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1 MS. MCCONNELL:

2 Not at all. That works.

3 MR. ELDER:

4 Colonel Strickland, one question, with
5 the database that you have access to, is it possible for
6 you to get information on the service members we're
7 separating, like whether it's the DD214 database or
8 something, and then choosing to reside in Louisiana, is
9 there any way to pull that from the national database?
10 Is that something you can get access to?

11 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

12 I don't know. I don't have an answer to
13 your question, General, but we can look. That's
14 something we can take a look at.

15 MR. ELDER:

16 Thank you. If you could, it could be
17 useful because we talk to people that we're trying to, I
18 guess, incentivize to relocate in Louisiana, and that's
19 one of the first questions, they say, "So how many
20 people do you have that are separating, you know,
21 because they want these kind of people?" And we've
22 thrown out some numbers, but they were WAGs, and so I
23 thought there was a chance that there might be some
24 database that you could access. We probably wouldn't be
25 get at it.



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1 MR. STRICKLAND:

2 A lot of this, in terms of workforce
3 data that we're working ist it's new. It's borne out of
4 frustration in trying to, you know, support our
5 veterans, including I have three sons that are combat
6 veterans. One of them just retired, and he struggled
7 even with my position looking for a job. But we're
8 working with companies like NextOp. NextOp just moved
9 into Houston. They're co-located in New Orleans. They
10 specialize on putting veterans in industrial jobs, like
11 pipefitting and things like that. And like Alex
12 mentioned, for every veteran they referred them to, that
13 veteran has gotten a job.

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 There's a lot of thought and effort
16 going into all of this. I don't want to stake too far
17 off the agenda, but we want to balance between
18 advertising the stars and stripes in Europe that we've
19 got great jobs available in Louisiana and drive the
20 reenlistment rates down and those kinds of things
21 because there really are some, particularly in the IBM
22 skill sets, cyber being one of them, so it's a
23 challenge.

24 But please know that we are -- and
25 Sherri will have some information when we sidebar on



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1 this.

2 Murray Viser, please proceed with your
3 Barksdale report.

4 MR. VISER:

5 Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate
6 the opportunity to be here and talk a little bit about
7 Barksdale Air Force Base and some of the things we have
8 going on up there.

9 Economic impact, latest numbers are a
10 little over \$821-million. Personnel, active duty
11 civilian and dependents looking a little over 14,000
12 folks that are in Northwest Louisiana because of
13 Barksdale. So a lot of stuff going on, a lot of good
14 things, a lot of good, so happy to have an opportunity
15 to share that with you.

16 The biggest rock we're working on right
17 now is this Interstate 220 Extension into Barksdale to
18 connect up with the new gate. The existing east gate,
19 and this would take the place of the east gate, is the
20 at grade railroad crossing. It's for all of the
21 commercial vehicles coming in. Probably being generous
22 in my estimate, but the gate is probably 100 yards from
23 the at grade railroad crossing, and that is the first
24 gate that the families, the 700 or so families living on
25 the east side of the base can get to. Takes them about



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1 20 minutes to get there, and being a high-speed rail
2 line, as you might guess, most of time when they show
3 up, there's a train there. So really not a -- not good.
4 Not good.

5 This also will connect up with the new
6 weapons storage facility at Barksdale. This will be for
7 special weapons storage, and we'll talk a little bit
8 more about that in the next slide.

9 Estimated completion, looking at the 220
10 extension, is no later than 2021. Keep that number in
11 mind because that's a critical time period. The weapons
12 storage facility that I just mentioned is going to be --
13 is currently funded in 2020 military construction
14 dollars. This extension of 220 and the new gate is
15 critical to being able to construct this weapons storage
16 facility.

17 Again, to provide storage for special
18 weapons, we haven't had a storage for special weapons in
19 a number of years. We lost that capacity due to
20 personnel issues, but there's the facility, it's an
21 older facility, and it took upwards of 600 security
22 forces folks to be able to provide security for these
23 special weapons that were stored out of Barksdale. So
24 we're looking forward to that. It's critical, that
25 process, the program is critical to long--term



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1 preservation of Barksdale and it's mission there. It's
2 a big project, in excess of 500-million, and that number
3 is probably going to grow over time. It will increase
4 the number of personnel at Barksdale between three and
5 400 families or 300 and 400 people, which will require
6 another following military construction project of a new
7 dorm.

8 The reason it's so important to have
9 this new 220 gate infrastructure for the weapons storage
10 facility is the civil engineering folks on base are
11 estimating upwards of 50 concrete trucks, material
12 trucks, you name it, an hour coming into Barksdale for
13 construction of this project. It will be a traffic
14 nightmare to not have this gage and 220 into Barksdale
15 because it will totally back up traffic at the
16 industrial gate, which is an industrial drive gate,
17 which is the East gate. Imagine having 50 concrete
18 trucks and ancillary things loading up waiting to try to
19 get into the base.

20 This will be, the 220 extension will be
21 a direct ingress into Barksdale, and that will be where
22 the new commercial gate will move as well. So
23 incredibly important we have this project marry up with
24 the new gate.

25 We have -- I attended the Bond



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1 Commission, State Bond Commission hearing this morning.
2 This program will be, along with three others, will be
3 financed by the by GARVEE fund, Grant Anticipation
4 Revenue Expectation Bonds -- I forgot what the acronym
5 stands for, but at any rate -- and if you really want to
6 know what those are, ask me after the session and I can
7 explain it you. I've gotten a wonderful education on
8 how these deals work, so...

9 So that has moved on from the next
10 level, so we are cautiously optimistic that we're going
11 to be on track and we're going to be able to marry up
12 these projects together.

13 Future projects for Barksdale, due to
14 new security forces, measures will be taken not just at
15 Barksdale, but many Air Force bases around the country,
16 the main gate, well, what's referred to as the main
17 gate, the West gate or the Shreveport gate, there's an
18 expansion on the books for that, to provide a larger
19 visitor center and parking area, again, driven by
20 security requirements. And right now traffic on
21 Barksdale Boulevard trying to get into Barksdale at peak
22 times is terrible, and so that will help cut down and
23 provide better traffic flow.

24 Mission modernization and the budget and
25 how those things play out, that first bullet,



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1 "Continuing Resolutions, like living paycheck to
2 paycheck and trying to plan for retirement," I mean,
3 it's not a way to do business. I don't think any
4 businessman in the country would do -- would run their
5 business under a continuing resolution. So it's
6 critically important for not just Barksdale, but all of
7 the military, to come up with a solution to continuing
8 resolutions.

9 Barksdale B52s and the lineout B52s in
10 North Dakota are projected to be flying until 2020.
11 Now, these airplanes rolled off the assembly -- 2050,
12 pardon me -- rolled off the assembly line in 1962.
13 That's not like having a 1962 Chevy because they've been
14 upgraded and they were designed with slide rules in the
15 base before computers, so they're a very robust airframe
16 and they have fairly low hours on them. But to make
17 that happen, we are going to need to reengine those
18 airplanes, a new radar and other upgrades are planned.
19 Funding for the reengining is in the 2019 budget.
20 Hopefully that will be passed and we'll be able to get
21 on with replacing those engines that are 62 years old
22 or -- I'm not going to do math in public, but came out
23 in 1962.

24 Again, though, these projects become
25 somewhat problematic with the unstable budget



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1 environment we're in, whether it's sequestration,
2 whether it's continuing resolutions. Particularly
3 sequestration, though. We've got to get rid of
4 sequestration, quite frankly. That's the only good
5 thing that can come out of the budget processing we're
6 going through right now.

7 And, incidentally, sequestration, while
8 we're talking about that, we've had several two-year
9 budget deals to raise the sequestration budget gaps.
10 That doesn't mean that out of the three we've had, the
11 six years has cut off the sequestration. It extends the
12 sequestration for another six years. So every time we
13 have an agreement to not operate under the sequestration
14 budget gaps and Budget Control Act, it just extends the
15 pain a little bit longer. So when you hear somebody
16 say, "Oh, we've got a great deal going on," we really
17 don't.

18 New Bomber Vector, B52s are going to
19 continue in the same numbers as it stands right now
20 adding 100 B21s. Hopefully that number will be at least
21 100 B21s, and so we'll maintain the current core
22 structure bomber numbers as they stand right now.

23 Spousal licenses certification
24 employment, this is something Mike and I have been
25 talking about for a long time. It remains an issue.



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1 There was a meeting yesterday with Senator Peacock's
2 legislation proposing Louisiana join a compact across
3 the country. I believe 30 states are a part of that
4 compact right now that would allow transportation of
5 licensing for spouses, particularly medical licensing.
6 And to give you an idea of how important it is, we had
7 an individual that transferred into Barksdale, and his
8 spouse is a dentist. She has \$50,000 in student loans
9 that she has to pay on. It looked like she wasn't going
10 to be able to transfer in with her husband, with her
11 family, because she could stay in Texas and operate
12 under her dental license in Texas. They were able to
13 work something out so that she could come and live with
14 her family. Those are the kind of personnel impacts
15 that this spousal licensing portability will hopefully
16 solve.

17 So those are the big rocks that we've
18 got at Barksdale Air Force Base, and if you have any
19 questions, I'll be happy to try to answer them.

20 MR. JAKES:

21 Brian Jakes.

22 Where did that licensing discussion land
23 yesterday? Was it a vote?

24 MR. VISER:

25 Yes, sir, it was a vote, and it was



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1 voted to send the legislation, I believe, to the Floor
2 or the Senate. So it came out of committee. There were
3 actually three bills that Senator Peacock had, the
4 medical part, the nursing part was one, the physical
5 therapist was the other, and then licensing for EMS
6 folks.

7 MR. JAKES:

8 What about teachers, were they included?

9 MR. VISER:

10 Teachers.

11 MR. STRICKLAND:

12 Teachers is a different deal.

13 MR. VISER:

14 Yeah. It's a different deal, but yes.

15 SECRETARY STRICKLAND:

16 I think we resolved, Brian, the teachers
17 situation. We've now established alternative
18 certification programs, and that's not an issue.

19 We've also addressed those veterans who
20 want to do cross-country truck driving. All they have
21 to do now is take the test, but we're still slugging it
22 out with legislature on physical therapy and nursing,
23 like Murray just said.

24 MR. MIZE:

25 Can I make a comment as an interested



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1 party here?

2 MS. MCCONNELL:

3 Sure.

4 MR. MIZE:

5 Dave Mize, and I'm Chairman of the
6 Mayor's Military Advisory Committee in New Orleans.

7 We endorse Murray's concerns, and
8 whether or not our commands all have strongly gave us
9 the feedback because this is a big issue for them. We
10 appreciate all of the progress that has been made, the
11 Governor's letters here, et cetera. Joel Whitehead was
12 going to talk about this some, and he has to be -- Larry
13 Jones and all of us have talked about it with our
14 commands, but there's still come concerns about the
15 implementation. You know, it says, in some cases, you
16 just have to show your certification from the past.
17 Well, sometimes it's our feedback is it's not just the
18 immediate past where you were, but they may have had
19 jobs four places and they've moved around and they've
20 been asked to get the certifications or background
21 credentials and clearance from all four of those places,
22 and both the cost and time and whatnot. So one of the
23 things that we were interested in maybe is having a
24 point of contact that might be established so if
25 somebody was having some difficulties, either the



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1 command or the individual could go to the point of
2 command or the point of contact and have somebody maybe
3 advocating the system or clear up whatever the
4 discrepancy might be or facilitate if there are
5 problems. Or even on some of the key ones here, whether
6 it be nurses or teachers or whatnot, if they could have
7 some tracking mechanism for a period of time to make
8 sure that in fact is moving on smoothly, that would give
9 a lot of confidence to our military folks coming in.
10 We're very appreciative of what's going on here, there's
11 still some concerns about the implementation of how that
12 actually is going to work to really get the spouses
13 working in short-term without a whole lot of money and
14 time and effort to get it done.

15 MR. VISER:

16 There was a lot of discussion about that
17 yesterday in the hearing. How does the nursing board
18 know when somebody comes in and goes to work for a
19 hospital or whatever in whatever capacity, how do they
20 know that the licensing is correct, and apparently
21 there's a law that says that if I'm a hospital and I'm
22 going to hire Bob Elder to come to work for me, I have
23 to forward the licensing to the state board. Now, how
24 that works out, does it work, who checks on it, I don't
25 know. So I think a point of contact like that would be



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1 great.

2 SECRETARY PIERSON:

3 Secretary Strickland's willing to get
4 involved. Certainly we'll play a role and we'll
5 continue to capture this. It does have our focus as an
6 issue and topic. There's a lot of lanes here. Those
7 professions which are nationally accredited are
8 different than nail salons and those kind of things. So
9 there's a broad base of effort. We've got some existing
10 legislation that had fallen off the radar screen and we
11 are now highlighting, but we'll continue keep this an
12 active issue and effort.

13 Murray made that sound really somewhat
14 simple to get the I-220 extension built and the East
15 gate to get to the 500-million in MILCON. We're pushing
16 both sides very diligently with a lot of help from the
17 Roosevelt Group. It's extraordinary effort. The
18 Governor and my colleague, Secretary Shawn Wilson, are
19 very focused making this one of the state's highest
20 priorities to get it accomplished, and the Governor's
21 stepped way out there for us, even shaking the tree so
22 hard that we have figured out how to make and implement
23 GARVEE bonds, which have been popular in most states,
24 but not executed in Louisiana. So this is a
25 pioneer-type project in terms of finance, but we're all



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1 committed to getting there and we just have to get there
2 and we will.

3 So please know that you've got the full
4 support on the state's side of this obligation and that
5 there's a lot of muscle being put against making sure
6 that the military side can meet its financial
7 obligations in a timely manner as well.

8 MR. VISER:

9 Thank you, sir.

10 SECRETARY PIERSON:

11 I'm going to yield to the next report,
12 Fort Polk Progress, Michael Reese.

13 MR. REESE:

14 All right. It's a fairly brief report.
15 We tried to coordinate a little bit on those things
16 because so many of the topics that we work on are the
17 same things that Murray works on and really appreciate
18 the work he's done there, in particularly as it relates
19 to spousal licensure. And I know we've already kind of
20 went down this path, but, you know, I recently got
21 personally involved with a military spouse who's trying
22 to get her counseling license recognized in Louisiana.
23 She had a job lined up that she could have gone to work
24 at on Fort Polk at one of the family centers there, and
25 she ran into such a problem with the state licensing



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1 board that she ultimately was denied and had to hire an
2 attorney to come to Baton Rouge to appeal the denial.
3 It was a very costly process for her. When it's all
4 said and done and she finally gets approved, they'll
5 have another six months they're stationed at Fort Polk
6 that she can actually work, you know. So that's really
7 a shame and something we've got to address, because
8 although we had legislation directing the boards to
9 address it, each board and commission in Louisiana
10 operates with a great deal of independence. And so I
11 think your concept of a spokesman of some kind, you
12 know, where do they go when they finally reach a point
13 where they can't advance forward, who is that person at
14 the state level that can help them understand where to
15 go and what the process is, so we certainly support that
16 effort.

17 So we have a new leader at Fort Polk,
18 General Patrick Frank that came in back in February.
19 That's one of the things that makes this job change
20 challenging sometimes is that every two years, we get a
21 new leader and you have a small window of opportunity
22 when they first get here to reintroduce yourself and
23 explain the role that you play and what you've worked on
24 for the last 15 or so years and why that's important and
25 hope that he will embrace the strategy things that we've



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1 been pursuing. So he is very much somebody focused
2 outside the gates of Fort Polk. Within his first couple
3 of weeks, he began reaching out to our professional
4 staff. He'll be down here on Monday meeting with the
5 Governor being presented to the legislature. He's very
6 interested in engaging with the community and he's
7 embraced fully all of our lines of effort and we're very
8 appreciative of that.

9 Right now he has a big mission, so, you
10 know, so there's obviously been a lot of talk about the
11 two-year budget deal and the additional money that came
12 in to all branches of service to include the Army.
13 There is some money in there that's going to go
14 active-duty military end strength, Army end strength,
15 but quit frankly there's going to be very few new
16 missions on the Army side of the house. So a lot of
17 that's going to go to fully fill out brigade combat
18 teams across the force that have been operating at 80,
19 90 percent capacity. So a lot of that military growth
20 won't impact Fort Polk because our brigade combat teams
21 there, 310 was already at full capacity as is currently
22 half of them are deployed in Iraq and will be coming
23 home in May and June and then transition several
24 thousand soldiers to the BCS process there and replace
25 them, but what Fort Polk is benefitting from is a more



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1 robust training schedule at the JRTC. So the Chief of
2 Staff of the Army has indicated that we have a
3 deficiency in readiness that he thinks they won't gain
4 back until about 2022 with a robust training schedule at
5 JRTC and the National Training Center in California
6 both.

7 So we've seen the size of our rotations
8 grow, so we've transitioned from war mission to
9 rehearsal exercises as we've went to Afghanistan and
10 Iraq, and now we're doing more decisive action exercises
11 that gives near-peer threats, assuming that you're
12 battling armor, assuming that you don't have air
13 superiority, assuming that you have radar and other
14 cyber constraints. So those rotations are growing
15 larger in terms of number of soldiers that are
16 participating in them, and we will see some growth from
17 our role players, those employees at Fort Polk. We will
18 see some growth from the operations group at Fort Polk.
19 Those are the people that challenge and train the
20 brigade combat teams that come in during the training
21 rotations. So we will have some growth, but it will be
22 somewhat minimal.

23 And then we'll have some growth in terms
24 of dollars spent on facilities. So Fort Polk's Economic
25 Impact in 2016 was about 1.5-billion, and that dropped



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1 from about 1.9-billion just a few years earlier, but the
2 biggest drop we had was the slowdown in
3 construction-related expenses on the base.

4 And so we're into the schedule for 209
5 to get a new joint operations command center at Fort
6 Polk. It's about a \$50-million facility. We have a new
7 network cyber center being built in 2022 I believe is
8 when that's scheduled for. It's about \$30-million. And
9 we continue to rehab barracks in other facilities. So
10 that's where a lot of those dollars will be spent on
11 Fort Polk, but a big uptick in training. Again, the
12 size of those rotations are growing larger.

13 And they're currently using, you know,
14 in our part of the country, every means of
15 transportation every month. So it's really kind of
16 interesting that you recently used the Port of
17 Alexandria to bring in 101st Fort Campbell. They've
18 been using the Port of Beaumont for Texas, and, of
19 course, they come in by rail and they're occupying
20 England Airpark as their intermediate station. So
21 that's where a lot of those new dollars will be spent.

22 So for Fort Polk, you know, we just
23 continue to stay engaged with our military leaders. You
24 know, Fort Polk is at an interesting position now
25 because we've got about 8,300 soldiers, and the core



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1 focus of Fort Polk JRTC is being operated with about
2 2,500 active-duty soldiers stationed at Fort Polk. So
3 the bulk of our end strength there is related to the 3rd
4 Brigade, which is now the only forfeit brigade in the
5 Army when you lay it out on a map. We are the only
6 brigade combat team not co-located with its division
7 headquarters. And my concern is another two-year budget
8 deal. And there's already been indications and
9 notations sent back out to branches of service saying,
10 you know, don't get comfortable with this new money.
11 You should anticipate, you know, further budget
12 reductions after this two-year cycle is over. And so
13 the Army has changing mission requirements, and they
14 have the desire to change some of the brigade combat
15 teams. And most recently, they needed to grow another
16 armor brigade combat team. And so the Army looks
17 around, we don't have enough money to necessarily grow
18 the total number of soldiers, and so they look for a
19 bill payer in some place. So they will convert an
20 infantry brigade combat team now to a brigade combat
21 team, and they're now selecting where they're going to
22 pull that brigade combat team from. And so even though
23 you don't have a downsizing necessarily that threatens
24 the soldiers stationed at Fort Pork, you constantly have
25 engages like this where they could decide to take the



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1 310 from Fort Polk and move them to Fort Riley Kansas,
2 convert them to armor, and you effectively lose, you
3 know, those 4,300 soldiers.

4 So we were recently in a meeting with
5 the 4-Star General of his command, General Abrams and he
6 just kind of threw it out there casually in conversation
7 that they brought him a course of action to do just
8 that. And he refuted and told them no, come back to the
9 table and find another bill payer someplace else because
10 he felt like he was critical to the JRTC mission to have
11 this brigade co-located at Fort Polk. But the next
12 person may not feel that way. And the base that's going
13 to lose a brigade in this process is going to vigorously
14 fight for the loss of that brigade and they're going to
15 offer us up as well as a solution.

16 So we have to be very, very vigilant for
17 instances like that, and that requires constant
18 engagement in military leadership and our elected
19 officials.

20 We continue to work very vigorously in
21 the area of education. We're very fortunate to have
22 great participation in our education initiative. This
23 last year we held secure about \$1.5-million in STIP
24 related AP grant that went to three high schools in
25 Vernon Parish and one Beauregard Parish. Fort Polk



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1 Progress provided some matching funds for that with LED,
2 and the results are starting to come out now after our
3 first year of operation of that grant program and it's
4 absolutely phenomenal the outcomes that we're having in
5 those advanced placement courses. So this has been big
6 in to Army and we're real appreciative for it.

7 We just funded a \$36,000 grant to Vernon
8 Parish School District as well that's going to
9 completely rehab their web presence because one of the
10 complaints we have from military members is that "We
11 understand that you have great schools, but we have a
12 very difficult time gathering the data as we make a
13 choice for the family about which school we may enroll
14 our children in," because, you know, that option right
15 there. So this will completely rehab their primary
16 website and will rehab all of the school websites so
17 they all compliment one another and feed into one
18 channel. And we are doing that with military families
19 at the table, with the school district at the table and
20 their vendor at the table to make sure that we're
21 developing it in a way that we're providing exactly the
22 data the military families would like to see prior to
23 making that decision about bringing their family with
24 them when they're stationed in Louisiana. So that's
25 been a really, really important area. We feel terrific



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1 about what we've accomplished so far, and primarily it's
2 that vehicle that we've created that allows military
3 family members at the table at the bases working their
4 education initiative providing constant feedback to the
5 school district, and we're having great outcomes because
6 of that. And our military partners feel like they own
7 part of that process now, so that's really been a huge
8 win for us and the militaries appreciate it.

9 One of the few missions growth places
10 that is happening is the Security Force Assistance
11 Brigades. So what's been occurring over the last decade
12 or so is that we take -- we've been doing Security
13 Forces Assistance work going over and helping our
14 partner nations in Afghanistan and Iraq fight their own
15 war, but the way we've been doing it is taking brigade
16 combat teams, stripping out a couple thousand soldiers,
17 leaving the rest of them behind with, in many cases,
18 maybe less leadership and less training going on and
19 stripping them apart, and so the Army's trying to set up
20 about six Security Forces Assistance Brigades. They'll
21 have between 700 to 900 soldiers stationed in them, and
22 they will start deploying as a full brigade to do that
23 mission leaving our brigade combat teams back home
24 stationed and intact, training, ready to go and building
25 their readiness.



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1 We are not currently in the running for
2 that despite the fact that we have sufficient
3 facilities. We've grown by 47,000 acres. We had that
4 mission before, as recently as four years ago with the
5 162nd Trainer Mission that was there, and we have the
6 Army's resident trainers in Ops Group, which is 3rd and
7 353rd. But the roadblock that was recently thrown in
8 front of us is that we have a lack of span of control,
9 which we had to educate ourselves on pretty quickly
10 because it's the first time that's ever been thrown up
11 at us. Basically saying that our one-star commander has
12 his plate full as he focuses on the Joint Readiness
13 Training Center, which, again, is vitally important, but
14 they worry that there's a lack of span of control to
15 oversee an additional 10 brigades that could be
16 co-located at the JRTC. So we've got to get over that
17 hurdle because we have, until the Army downsized over
18 the last few years, we had up to 2,500 more soldiers
19 stationed at Fort Polk without a problem.

20 So right now the Army is primarily
21 looking at bases that have the Vision Command Structure
22 already in place to place these other three Security
23 Forces Assistance Brigade. So we're still battling that
24 constantly. We have our entire congressional delegation
25 in front of General Mendez, who is the Force Management



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1 Officer, just two weeks ago, again, asking for what
2 their decisionmaking process is and trying to chip away
3 at that.

4 So, again, that's some of their areas
5 that we're working in. And the last item I'll finish
6 with here is Intergovernmental Support Agreements,
7 another area that I've got a great deal of pride in our
8 accomplishments. We started on this process several
9 years ago after attending many, many, many, many
10 meetings around the country with Association Defense
11 committees to see how it was done. So our first one was
12 Solid Waste Management, when Vernon Parish Police Jury
13 took over Solid Waste Management on Fort Polk through
14 their current vender. They're saving the Army
15 \$2-million a year in the process and earning about
16 \$200,000 a year for Vernon Parish Police Jury. That's
17 big numbers big numbers for the Garrison at Fort Polk,
18 and as all of you know in our own rural community, a
19 police jury with \$200,000 more in their budget is also a
20 big number, so that's been a great accomplishment.

21 Just last month we signed an agreement
22 with the City of Leesville to take over all grounds
23 maintenance on Fort Polk. In this case, this wasn't as
24 much about cost saving as much as it was about training
25 readiness because Fort Polk, through all of the budget



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1 cuts, shifted to managing grounds maintenance to putting
2 soldiers on lawnmowers and on weed eaters, and that's not
3 what they came to the Army to do and not where the Army
4 needs them to be. So the City of Leesville has taken
5 over that process and we've got soldiers back doing
6 their mission and training and that's been a huge win
7 for the Army.

8 The City of its state Rosepine has just
9 executed a janitorial service contract on Fort Polk.
10 They're taking over. Again, a significant cost savings
11 to the Army and an opportunity for that small community
12 to earn some additional dollars, which gets reinvested
13 right back into that community where soldiers live in
14 things like parks and recreation sites that that city
15 has never had otherwise. So another terrific win.

16 And we have a very large IGSA that's
17 going to ultimately have to be decided on by the
18 Secretary of the Army because of its impact across the
19 service, and that's with the Director of Public Works.
20 So the City of Leesville is working with the Army there.
21 We're hopeful that there's a positive outcome that will
22 both save the Army money and create new opportunities
23 for the City Leesville to create a new revenue stream
24 for them, which, again, gets reinvested into better
25 roads, better parks, better recreation and



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1 beautification projects around the city to benefit our
2 military partners.

3 So that's the areas that we're work on.
4 Appreciate the LMAC and appreciate the support we get
5 from LED as well.

6 SECRETARY PIERSON:

7 Any questions for Mr. Reese?

8 MR. ELDER:

9 How large is the Ops Group there that
10 still supports that training mission? It's a pretty
11 good size, isn't it?

12 MR. REESE:

13 Yeah. Ops Group is about -- it's, at
14 this stage, it's probably nearly 2,000, and we can
15 anticipate a little bit of growth. I think it will be
16 in the hundreds, two or 300 more, because as we
17 transition to that kind of force-on-force, decisive
18 action rotations, when you're bringing in -- obviously
19 they grow in size with the teams they bring in are
20 around 6,000 or so soldiers, they've got to grow,
21 obviously Ops Group's capacity.

22 MR. ELDER:

23 I'll get with you offline, but the
24 interesting point is that that particular mission,
25 there's a link with what you do in cyber that people



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1 forget.

2 MR. REESE:

3 Absolutely.

4 MR. ELDER:

5 The Special Ops guys have been doing it
6 for a long time. They're trying to bring it in to, you
7 know, the main life force, but you have to have the kind
8 of experts that you have resident already, and that's
9 why I think if we can figure out a way to sell that,
10 that would be a big deal.

11 MR. REESE:

12 Absolutely. And on Don's team, Paige
13 Carter and Sherri have been working with the Army Cyber
14 Command, and they're going to be hosting a tour of the
15 Army Cyber Command across our state in the coming
16 months. I'm not sure if there's an actual date set yet.

17 MS. MCCONNELL:

18 Well, they're saying late May, but they
19 haven't been specific.

20 MR. REESE:

21 Okay. So and the idea there is just how
22 do we grow that cyber capacity at Fort Polk instead of
23 exporting it out of Fort Worden every month and sending
24 those people back home, how do we make that grow to our
25 state. So their concerned about our state's ability to



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1 provide education to those soldiers so that they have
2 active duty in terms of training and how sharp they have
3 to stay. So I know they're going to visit with LSU
4 talking about using exporting some of their training to
5 the education center at Fort Polk, and add one of those
6 capacities to that Shreveport market, what's going on in
7 New Orleans, what's some of the other companies that the
8 state has attracted as well and how can we make that a
9 more resident capability in Louisiana.

10 SECRETARY PIERSON:

11 We've got a great story to tell there,
12 and we're working on those orientation visits for both
13 cyber and for Army cybers for partnering with you on
14 that.

15 All right. Being mindful that we have
16 45 minutes remaining, not to compress anybody, but we do
17 have a hard stop at noon.

18 Mr. Gary Silbert, after fighting
19 traffic, you're here. Welcome.

20 MR. SILBERT:

21 Mr. Secretary, Members, good morning.
22 Delighted to be here to provide this brief update on the
23 Southeast Military Alliance and our military missions in
24 Southeast Louisiana.

25 First I'd like to share that we're



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1 pretty relieved these days with getting some really
2 good, positive feedback in conversations with senior
3 officials, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Senior Navy
4 Staff of Air and Warfare, the Deputy Assistant Secretary
5 of Navy Aviation, that in the 2019 timeframe, we're
6 finally going to be getting some replacements for aged
7 aircrafts, the F18 Hornet's replacement C and Ds in that
8 timeframe. So we are very to be getting that feedback.

9 I'd also like to report that we continue
10 to work with Plaquemines Parish and the Navy for
11 commercialization of the runway. We've completed the
12 application with the assistance of the base commander,
13 and it's now moving through the Navy. I believe it's
14 going to Jacksonville and then through several
15 iterations of Washington. This is a particular win/win
16 for us because there is a property owner, a large proper
17 owner, that has land adjacent to the runway, and it
18 could go very badly if he started developing residents.
19 We have him very much interested in the idea of like a
20 smaller industrial park where we would be adjacent to
21 the runway, and Plaquemines Parish is obviously
22 interested in business development, so, again, it would
23 be a true win/win. It's going to take some time, but
24 we're optimistic that that would be approved.

25 Also, Captain Sucato, Base Commander at



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1 Belle Chasse, will be leaving this summer, so we'll be
2 anxious to meet and welcome a new commander at the base.

3 We were happy to learn that we have
4 \$15-million in Fiscal Year '19, MILCON dollars. I think
5 it's on the only allocation in the state for '19
6 approved in President's budget. It's not hundreds of
7 millions that we see in other parts of the country, but
8 we're happy to have something, and it really reinforces
9 the Air National Guard's commitment to the base, so
10 we're happy for that.

11 One of the real liabilities we have
12 moving forward is the SPAWAR Program. We have about 700
13 white collar employees based out of the UNRT Park.
14 There have been some consolidations in the SPAWAR
15 Program. We are concerned that this might be an easy
16 mission to consolidate either in Charleston or on the
17 West Coast. We continue to track it. We've got some
18 good contacts to getting intelligence about what's
19 happening, but what we've done strategically is we've
20 enlisted Congressman Cedric Richmond's office to send a
21 letter to the command of Rear Admiral Becker to invite
22 him to Washington to meet and to allow our deligation to
23 express the importance of this mission to the city and
24 help them understand and to pledge our support to do
25 what we can do help it grow there.



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1 We hope that that letter will go out in
2 the next 30 to 60 days, and that meeting will be
3 happening in the next couple months, so we continue to
4 track that very closely.

5 Moving forward, I had some conversations
6 with Colonel Pyle, MARFORRES, and just some early
7 conversations that there may -- and I say may -- be a
8 future meeting for barracks on site. Right now his
9 staff commutes back and forth from Belle Chasse, which
10 is easily about a 15, 20-minute commute back and forth,
11 so that's something that track is a possibility.

12 And then, additionally, we want to have
13 more discussions and get a sense of the needs and future
14 direction of the 37th and then also the 8th District
15 Coast Guard.

16 So that's it for me.

17 SECRETARY PIERSON:

18 Thank you.

19 MR. SILBERT:

20 Any questions?

21 SECRETARY PIERSON:

22 Any questions for Gary?

23 (No response.)

24 SECRETARY PIERSON:

25 Chris Goode. Thank you for being with



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1 us today.

2 MR. GOODE:

3 Thank you for having me, Mr. Secretary.
4 I know we're short on time and getting toward the end,
5 so I'm going to go through these pretty quickly, but,
6 you know, there's been a lot of news in the press about
7 funding and huge omnibus funding package, and I just
8 have few slides that we'll go through for this
9 presentation.

10 The first slide is the Roosevelt Group
11 one.

12 Bob, you want to go first?

13 MR. ELDER:

14 All right. So thanks for a chance to
15 talk about this a little bit, and where I've largely
16 been focused on Barksdale and Air Force Global Strike
17 Command getting a 4-Star and all of those types of
18 things, I actually see a lot of synergies, but I also
19 keep hearing some of the same misperceptions in
20 Washington about Louisiana, so I thought it would be
21 just worthwhile to do a quick run through a couple of
22 these things. I'll keep it short.

23 One of the things I thought was
24 interesting is I always like to start with the basics,
25 you know, and this is current National Defense Strategy



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1 Objectives, and as you look at these things -- I'm not
2 going to run through each of them individually, but
3 you'll see that except for the very bottom two, our
4 bases are involved in every one of these things across
5 the board in figuring out a way to explain that to
6 people in Washington in particular is going to be
7 important.

8 I partially put this in there because I
9 knew you'd have a hard copy. I thought it would be
10 worthwhile to have as kind of a little reference.

11 I just want to start just real quickly,
12 and when we talk about operational roles of bombers, you
13 know, we tend to think them of sitting alert doing the
14 nuclear-type missions, but what they've been heavily
15 involved with for many years is actually a completely
16 different role, if you will. In this first one is a
17 regional or global stability where you're actually
18 supporting other partners. So just like the Army is
19 sending security assistance teams over to work with the
20 indigenous forces, the Air Force, particularly what they
21 use the bombers for is they use it as a way, without
22 having to do a major force deployment or anything, they
23 can do things to support these indigenous forces. So
24 you can see that. You saw that with the Syria raids
25 most recently where they actually flew out of, you know,



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1 out of Whiteman -- I'm sorry -- flew out of LAD with
2 that Syria attack along with the Navy and the French
3 forces there. But it's been involved with the Qana,
4 it's been involved in Africa, been involved in the
5 Pacific, so it's doing a lot of things. We don't always
6 tell the story real well, but it's important to
7 understand it's not just there to sit alert. In fact,
8 they don't sit alert. They do sit conventional alert,
9 in Guam, for example.

10 The other thing that they get involved
11 with eventually is preparing to fight when the nation's
12 war as part of the joint force, and that's where you see
13 it being used in the traditional joint-type of a
14 mission, and that's what you would think of if we're
15 going to be fighting Russia in Central Europe. But the
16 main thing we try to use these forces for is to achieve
17 the objective without actually going and having to
18 fight, and that's really, when you look at the National
19 Security Strategy that says we're going to have a
20 powerful force of peace, that whole idea of this is that
21 across the board, all of our forces, whether it's Army,
22 Navy, Air Force or Marines is going to be powerful
23 enough that nobody wants to fight us. That's the
24 notion.

25 Murray told you about all of the tings



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1 that are going on at Barksdale. Just to put this in
2 context, so you have an Air Force Global Strike Command,
3 and the mission of that is primarily an organized
4 training equipped for the nuclear enterprise, the
5 long-range global strike, and they now have this new
6 mission which is fairly important in large, which is
7 National Nuclear Command and Control. It's important to
8 point out that it's not just nuclear, it's national
9 because it gets involved with a lot of other agencies
10 because of that, and it's an opportunity really to
11 expand a lot of the things that we look at from a cyber
12 perspective because that's heavily involved there.

13 8th Air Force is the bomber operational
14 command and has been for a long time, but it now it does
15 the bomber planning for every cadet and command around
16 the world. It uses what's called the Global -- this is
17 new -- the Joint Global Strike Ops Center, and
18 underneath that, they have the Air Operations Center and
19 then the thing they called the SMAC, the Stand-off
20 Munitions Applications Center. So they, for example,
21 for the Syria strike, all of the planning for the
22 strikes was done at Barksdale. They don't generally
23 advertise that, but all of the crews or the missiles off
24 of the B1s were done at Barksdale.

25 And then if you have two bombers there,



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1 a reserve and active duty, and they do all of the
2 training there as well as provide forces to go do the
3 deterrence missions or actually deploy over to do
4 regional operations. One of the things I think is worth
5 pointing out, of course the people at Fort Polk know
6 this, but you don't normally think of B52s doing close
7 air support, but they've been doing close air support
8 for years now and they have no qualms about -- they're
9 so precise now, you can have forces go within, you know,
10 100 meters, and if they're forced to protect and they
11 say, "We want the weapon dropped," they will put it
12 down. So it's a different world.

13 So one of things I've been looking at,
14 and today we can talk about some of the these are ways
15 that -- and I apologize. I misspelled "Chasse" a few
16 times in a row. The things that we -- we already do
17 cast training with Fort Polk with the B52s there. Where
18 I see an opportunity is working on the center agency
19 group, because the ops group -- and that's the thing I
20 want to talk to you about. The homeland defense, they
21 actually have done some things with both the Navy and
22 the Air Guard unit there on some homeland defense, and,
23 in fact, the Coast Guard unit there, because they have
24 centers on the airplane and they can sit up there for
25 like 10 hours at a time and put a sensor out. And so we



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1 haven't done any of this border protection, but that's a
2 possibility.

3 I point out this Air Operations Control,
4 back when I was still on active duty, there were 25
5 guardsmen from Belle Chasse, the guard unit there, who
6 run man days working for a year when we stood up the
7 cyber ops mission there, they were working in the ops
8 center and actually got quite a bit of experience doing
9 cyber ops integrated into the military ops, which was a
10 bit usual. Most of the time it's separated out. It's
11 all about cyber security. These folks got experience
12 actually integrated into military operations. Those
13 people were there. I think there some opportunities to
14 do that again, and so that's up to the force to look at.

15 Of course, well, I mentioned the cyber
16 security operations. That, we can always do, and we're
17 all talking about that. And now that I hear what's
18 going on at Fort Polk, the stuff that they're doing at
19 LSU could really be helpful to you.

20 And for all of the bases, what I'd like
21 to point out, and this really goes to the ops group
22 again, you know, we always talk about cyber and those
23 missions of cyber security or cyber defenses, it's very
24 important, but the thing that's giving everybody a hard
25 time right now is this use of cyberspace to create



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1 effects. And the biggest example of it right now, and
2 they don't refer to it that way, but the things we're
3 talking about with the Russians and the propaganda going
4 through the social media and some of the other types of
5 things where loss of control of social media or our
6 inability to respond to this. There's a growing
7 understanding that needs to be addressed. The expertise
8 you have is there you need some technical expertise, but
9 more you need the kind of expertise that Fort Polk has,
10 and that's where I think you've got a pretty good
11 opportunity do this. What Barksdale can bring to this
12 thing is that it works with STRATCOM so it can tie it
13 into the global mission, and that's where I think
14 there's a tie. So I just throw this out just as some
15 kind of ideas.

16 This is the thing, when I talk to
17 people, I say, "Here's the big advantages to bringing a
18 mission to, or a business for that matter, to
19 Louisiana," and what's interesting is it has these big
20 advantages and yet people don't -- not only do they not
21 know about it, they actually think they're
22 disadvantages. When they were looking at where to put
23 the cyber -- because there was a bunch of politics in
24 this, so they were looking for ways to undermine this,
25 but one of tickmarks against putting it at Barksdale was



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1 they said there wasn't any sufficient bandwidth. And I
2 didn't find out about this till later. I said, "I-20
3 runs right alongside the base. It's one of three major
4 east-west cyber runs through the nation. How can it not
5 have enough bandwidth?" Every ISP runs their stuff
6 there, yet that's what people believe. They also
7 believe that the weather here, that there's hurricanes
8 all of the time. You know, they don't understand that
9 they only come during hurricane season. They really
10 don't understand some of the issues. They know about
11 some issues with our primary education, but they don't
12 know about all of the work that's been done to mitigate
13 that. And they have this weird thing about the business
14 atmosphere, and the funny thing is is that the
15 businesses that come here seem to really like it, but
16 somehow or another, in DC they get this weird impression
17 of this.

18 The only original or constraints I see
19 is there really are some hurricanes that come here, so
20 how you dispel that. And then the air transportation is
21 not as good as some of the other places that they look
22 at.

23 But the biggest thing on this list I
24 think we need to recognize is that there are people that
25 don't realize that weather is not an issue here, we have



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1 good education, we have a lot of bandwidth here and it
2 really is a good business atmosphere. The more we can
3 sell that, the more we help with our bases as well as
4 the business piece of this.

5 So just some things we've been to do in
6 Northwest Louisiana, we stood up a NDI chapter, and by
7 the way, that stretches down into the Fort Polk area.
8 We've been working with them, and two divisions that we
9 working with. One is the Cyber Augmented Operations
10 Division. By the way, that's that NDI headquarters.
11 I'm the chairman of that, by the way. And then we have
12 the Strategic Forces Division that we're standing up.
13 We've been trying to reinvigorate the bomber caucus and
14 the long-range strike caucus. It used to be very active
15 about four years back. It kind of atrophied. And
16 actually that's one of the things we worked with the
17 Roosevelt Group because one of the people that works
18 with the Roosevelt Group was the guy who was like the
19 energy behind it before.

20 We stood up a we call it Strategic
21 Alternatives Consortium. We working with the Air Force
22 Association, and we're really trying to get people of
23 the Air Force, just like I ran through those different
24 role of a bomber, we're trying to get people to
25 recognize the different roles that the Air Force has



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1 played in recent history.

2 The Strategic Deterrent Coalition, which
3 Murray is on the board, is trying to promote cooperation
4 amongst strategic systems constituencies, basically
5 trying to get it so we do fight the ICBMs against the
6 bombers against the subs so that we get people to
7 understand you need all three, not look at just one or
8 two. We're trying to leverage some of the non-profits,
9 including the Stevens Technology Corporation, which is
10 in Baton Rouge here, and we've been working for a while
11 to try to expand this Fort Polk GRTC at Barksdale Air
12 Force Base relationship partially because we're trying
13 to get either F16s or MQ9s in Barksdale to support the
14 CAS mission. So it's just the ideas of things that we
15 can do.

16 There's some other opportunities. I'll
17 just leave that because I know we're hurting for time,
18 but these are opportunities that we're trying to pursue,
19 and we're trying get people to understand that Air Force
20 Global Strike Command is a foundation for returning the
21 Air Force basically to a major element of what it's done
22 in the past that kind of it lost and then trying to
23 develop these technical capabilities that we hope will
24 lead to people wanting to put businesses in here.

25 And here's the challenges that I pretty



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1 much all talked about, but the reality is that, like for
2 the bombers in particular, they really they need to have
3 12 squadrons. They have eight and a half. They're
4 maxed out, so it really limits our ability to use the
5 bombers in some of the ways we would like to have it
6 done.

7 The other thing is that the Air Force
8 Global Strike Command one was established, it's not
9 properly manned. They're doing things to help improve
10 that, but they've still got a long way to go.

11 And then the other big problem we've got
12 is that we now have a 4-Star Commander there, but none
13 of the other positions went up a grade in the process.
14 We have a 4-Star Commander, but all of the other grades
15 are roughly the same as they would have been when it was
16 a 3-Star Command. And, therefore, the counterparts,
17 when they go to a meeting, they're always one grade
18 below, and the works against you.

19 But these are the things. I'll leave
20 that for you to read. But these are the things that,
21 the big rocks, I guess you might say, that we're trying
22 to do specifically for Barksdale, but the one that I
23 will highlight is this linkage with Fort Polk, also add
24 to that the we would like to pursue the linkage with
25 Belle Chasse. And then the other one is there's a lot



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1 of work being done in cyber electronic warfare systems,
2 which I think could be useful, particularly with another
3 thing that we could do with Fort Polk.

4 So that's a quick rundown.

5 SECRETARY PIERSON:

6 Excellent. Thank you for that report.

7 We're still working on some technology
8 issues, so I think what we'll do is we'll withhold
9 Chris's report for just a few more minutes and pass it
10 to our Executive Director's report and Legislative
11 Update from Sherri McConnell.

12 MS. MCCONNELL:

13 Thank you. That blunder I think is
14 mine, so I'll take the blame on that, but we're going to
15 get it fixed. Sorry for that. I got so many reports
16 from you, I think one was dropped off the radar somehow.
17 We're actually having to bring a different laptop up
18 here, so bear with me, if you will. At least I don't
19 have a PowerPoint.

20 Just very quickly, most of what I was
21 going to share with you guys has been shared already, so
22 I won't be redundant. What I will tell you, of course,
23 is one of our new initiatives and one that we're working
24 very diligently on. It is the cyber security, both with
25 Fort Polk as well as our National Guard.



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1 The Secretary and I and working with
2 Chris have been to DC, had a very fruitful meeting
3 there, and as a result, we've got some interest to both
4 for this cyber school, is what they're calling it, and,
5 again, we think Fort Polk is the right place for that.
6 But we'll be sharing, as Mike mentioned that tour, for
7 lack of a better word, will be coming up soon. And
8 then, of course, there's been an initiative for this
9 cyber battalion for LANG, and we've laid the groundwork
10 for that, as the decision just simply has to be made.

11 I did want to just give you legislative
12 update as well. Our bill, House Bill 181, which is the
13 LMAC Cleanup Bill, that hopefully will make it a little
14 bit easier for us to manage. The council has moved it
15 through process without any objections. We did add an
16 amendment to it. It's in your packet. That amendment
17 actually makes it -- puts it in law that a quorum is
18 established by eight people, and even though we're
19 diminishing the size of our overall board, hopefully our
20 quorum would be more easily attained. This makes it
21 even easier. So that got on the bill without any
22 objection and is now on Senate Floor, and we don't
23 expect any problems with that.

24 We also, just to the point of this
25 licensing issue, we're very acutely aware of, you know,



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1 the law that's on the books is pretty robust and strict
2 and says you've got to do this. There's clearly
3 reluctance on those licensing and certification boards
4 to actually follow through. I think the idea, again, of
5 a single point of contact that can help spearhead those
6 efforts, but I think there also has to be a cultural
7 shift within those licensing boards that they want to
8 these things. And, quite frankly, the Governor's got to
9 make that happen, and, of course, he sent that
10 letter. We have actually drafted a resolution for the
11 legislature. Again, it doesn't do anything but urge and
12 request that these licensing boards do what the Governor
13 has said and what the law requires them to do. Just,
14 again, kind of legislative push to make that happen. So
15 we're working on that on all fronts. It is a huge
16 issue, as we know, and we're trying to make those
17 changes as best we can. The law is the law, and, you
18 know, we looked at ways to make the law more strict and
19 something that they would follow, but we couldn't figure
20 out any better way do it than what's already in there.
21 They're just reluctant to do it. So it's on everybody's
22 radar screen. It's back in the legislature as far as
23 being on their radar screen, and hopefully maybe with
24 the point of contact or demanding that they achieve
25 these goals by a certain amount of time some, sort of an



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1 ultimatum, might be, you know, a step that they can
2 take. I just wanted you to know that it's a priority
3 for LEDC and LMAC.

4 Today we'll, after this meeting, we'll
5 go to the legislature. There's a joint meeting --
6 excuse me. Not a joint meeting, but a House meeting of
7 the Louisiana Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.
8 It's just a special subcommittee. They're going to hear
9 testimony, not unlike what we heard at the last LMAC
10 meeting of the Economic Impact, Economic Impact
11 Analysis. We think it's a great story to tell. We've
12 got a lot of great press than we first did. We may get
13 more as a result of today, although there's so much else
14 going on at the Capitol, I'm not sure we'll see much
15 press in the room, but we'll do our best to get that
16 word out.

17 And as the Secretary and Chairman said,
18 it's -- we hope that you will help spread that word, but
19 we'll receive testimony both from Marti Romitti, who
20 worked on the Economic Impact studies. He's coming back
21 to town to do this today, and, of course, Secretary
22 Strickland will do it on the Veterans Affairs.

23 After that, so that committee comes in
24 at 1, the House, the full House convenes at 2 p.m. So
25 it's only an hour long meeting, but at 2 p.m., we also



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1 have a resolution that's been drafted that will be
2 introduced that basically commends the military assets
3 of the state as well as our military personnel and our
4 veterans for their good work and service and economic
5 impact that they have created for the State of
6 Louisiana. And the members of this council who are in
7 attendance will be recognized, so I would ask that you
8 tell me if you think you can stay. That will happen
9 when they first go in at 2 o'clock. They're generally
10 late when they're kind of straggling in after lunch, so
11 probably closer to 2:15. If you are going, please let
12 me know as soon as you can today. You know, give me --
13 in fact, just share with me your name, your tabletop
14 nametags and I'll share them with our legislative
15 liaison Assistant Secretary Mandi Mitchell so that those
16 names could be read at the mic and the members of this
17 council and our advocacy groups can be recognized.

18 So other than that, of course we're
19 engaged in much of what's been discussed today. I'm
20 always pleased to get these meeting updates, but we do
21 have an ongoing base status call discussion once a month
22 so that, you know, our advocacy groups are talking to
23 each other, as they always do, but so that I can be
24 further informed and kept abreast of what's going on.

25 Yeah. I think that's about it for me,



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1 Mr. Secretary President.

2 SECRETARY PIERSON:

3 Doesn't look like we've made progress
4 against our technology challenge.

5 MS. MCCONNELL:

6 It's coming, though.

7 SECRETARY PIERSON:

8 As the time grows late, we are going to
9 go ahead and ask Chris if he can --

10 MS. MCCONNELL:

11 Or we can go to New Business and come
12 back if you'd like.

13 MR. GATTI:

14 I have one licensing comment.

15 SECRETARY PIERSON:

16 All right. Let's move to that.

17 MR. GATTI:

18 Just quickly, I recently got my physical
19 therapy license in Missouri, and after going through
20 that process, I kind of felt like I may have been a
21 threat to their -- even though I was just volunteering
22 at a Christian camp, I just required a license. I kind
23 of felt like they may have pictured me as someone that
24 was taking away one of their citizen's jobs potentially,
25 and I think that may have been down at the level of the



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1 secretary that answered the phone or the administrative
2 assistant. And so I don't know, you know, how we
3 overcome that culture, you know, but that's the way I
4 felt. And, you know, even though I had disclosed I'll
5 never make a penny off being a physical therapist in
6 Missouri, it's all volunteer. So I don't know, you
7 know, how we're going to change that at the -- I met
8 with our physical therapy board and they assured me that
9 military personnel moving into state get preferential
10 treatment, but, you know, they may have just been trying
11 to shut me up.

12 MS. MCCONNELL:

13 And, you know, because we have so many
14 different boards and commissions, you know, one's
15 operating differently than the other. I worked a lot
16 with boards and commissions back in another life, and
17 many of them are just about protecting the people that
18 are already licensed in the state and they're not
19 looking for competition.

20 MR. GATTI:

21 That's right. That's exactly the way I
22 felt.

23 SECRETARY PIERSON:

24 I think in the interest of time, we're
25 going to proceed with Chris Goode.



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1 MS. MCCONNELL:

2 Sorry about this. And I will send this
3 to the members.

4 MR. GOODE:

5 No problem. Yeah. It's probably just
6 as easy. I'll just keep it to five minutes and review
7 some of the advocacy highlights that the Roosevelt Group
8 have been pursuing in Support Fort Polk and Barksdale
9 and New Orleans.

10 In terms of the budget, I think Mike and
11 Murray addressed this well, you know, you may not be
12 comfortable with one large omnibus budget to the tune of
13 \$1.3-trillion put together at the last minute and it
14 sucks in all 12 appropriates bills with very little
15 oversight down at the leadership level, but in terms of
16 defense, it does matter. I mean, there is an
17 \$80-billion increase in if FY18, and the budget deal
18 called for an \$85-billion increase next year. That's
19 the biggest increase in defense in 15 years. Bottom
20 line. And it will have an impact to Louisiana. It's
21 just in the scope.

22 When you look at things like FSRM, which
23 is something that the facilities sustain readiness in
24 making some budgets, that's really well -- it's very
25 much needed, and it will trickle down to Louisiana.



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1 Trump, there's 17 programs that are
2 funded by appropriations in 12 separate bills. Trump
3 proposed cutting all but three departments. He
4 increased three, defense, homeland security and
5 veterans. In the end, the appropriators increased all
6 17. That's what drove everybody crazy from on the
7 republican side, but, nevertheless, it's a huge jump
8 going from 523 to 589-billion.

9 So FSRM, \$580-million. When you talk to
10 people like Lucian Niemeyer, who runs all of the
11 installations, he testified before congress just
12 recently and said, "I have \$116-billion backlog in
13 facility maintenance." He also has now eight objectives
14 on -- those facilities, and I'm just going to point out
15 a couple of them, enhance collaboration with defense
16 communities, explore new opportunities for third-party
17 partnerships and getting the energy support and
18 resilience. Every base needs to be doing that.
19 Thankfully I think the Louisiana facilities are very
20 attuned to that.

21 So FSRM, if you are CO of a military
22 installation, trust me, your or your engineer is looking
23 for an increase right now. You're going to see more
24 money probably by July. You're going to see demolition
25 funding. The Army's got increased 56 percent this year.



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1 The Air Force had a 100 percent increase in FSRM funding
2 in FY 18. And as Mike and Murray pointed out, it's two
3 years, and in '20, you snap back to sequestration.

4 In terms of MILCON, that's always kind
5 of the marker, are you healthy, are you not. You know,
6 big states get bigger amounts of MILCON. Gary is right,
7 \$15-million alert facility. That's a good project.
8 It's the only one in Louisiana this year, but over the
9 next three years, Louisiana has about 575-million pretty
10 much guaranteed in MILCON. That's in the future year
11 defense plan.

12 The entrance road is hugely important
13 for a million different reasons. The WSA, if you don't
14 get it, Barksdale is suddenly at risk again. It just
15 is, because there will be a BRAC round, and the Air
16 Force has options, so, you know, the road is important.
17 We've got to get the WSA, and that comes with a whole
18 host of other military construction projects, like the
19 weapons storage facility.

20 And the JOC at Fort Polk, I mean, that's
21 programmed for '21. You know, we try every year. We
22 advance it, you know, show a value, and it's just a
23 struggle. I mean, the Army had 26 MILCON programs last
24 year. I mean, and the Army's just a frustrating
25 service. I mean, we were really good in services and we



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1 get in to see all of the right folks, but when it comes
2 to some of the mechanisms you can use, like unfunded
3 priority list, on the one hand, the Army will say, "Oh,
4 yeah, we got 26 programs," but they don't have it on the
5 unfunded priority list. All of these unfunded priority
6 lists, a big percentage of those programs in the last
7 two years have been funded because the delegation, if
8 they're aware them, they jumped on it and they fund
9 them. That's why we talk to so many appropriators. The
10 Army, though, they're not comfortable. We've got --
11 it's agonizing.

12 So let me just talk two minutes about,
13 you know, what we're working on. You know, over the
14 last few months, since December, we've put a pretty big
15 push -- I've got to give Murray Viser some credit here.
16 You know, we've developed some talking points for Vice
17 Chief and for Robin Rand on the new gate. We went in to
18 see the engineer of Air Force, Don, and Sherri supported
19 that meeting. We talked to the deligation, and we
20 really hammered home, "Hey, you've got put this project
21 on the '19 unfunded priority list, because if you do, it
22 will give the Louisiana delegation some ammo to put it
23 on," and sure enough, there's 12-million on the unfunded
24 priority list. And the priority list says given the
25 fact that the State of Louisiana is going to help build



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1 a road, we're going to help them build a gate. We did
2 the exact same thing in Massachusetts at Hanscom Air
3 Force Base. The Air Force said, "Hey, you give us the
4 land for a new gate, we'll build a gate." Massachusetts
5 signed a check, gave them the land and they built a gate
6 that year. So we were thrilled to see that on this
7 unfunded priority list. I talked to Doc Abraham just
8 two weeks ago. He said we're going to get the funding.
9 So hopefully.

10 Every year we've done legislative
11 requests. In '19, you know, we'll put language in for
12 the JOC. We'll put language in to help to kind of push
13 the Air Force to tell the state how are we going to link
14 all of these projects together, and obviously we put a
15 request in for the full appropriations for 12.5 on the
16 entrance gate. And that was basically in December.

17 So February, in February we supported
18 one-on-one meetings with the Association of Defense
19 Communities out in San Diego with Mike. We met directly
20 with General doll to discuss the JOC, the Security Force
21 Assistance Brigade and the gates of the
22 Intergovernmental Service Agreement that is now pending.
23 In February we met with Pete Schoomaker, who is an AVA
24 Air Warfare Op now, regarding the F18 recap at Belle
25 Chasse, and we met a month later with Dan Nega, who is



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1 the -- for Aviation and the Deputy Secretary of the Navy
2 for Air. And across the board, it was no doubt that
3 Belle Chasse is going to get recapped next year. So if
4 anybody's talking about, "Oh, this aircraft can't fly
5 through to the boat and they don't work and the base is
6 going to close because they can't get F18s," that's
7 nonsense. Those bases -- that base is going to get F18s
8 Cs and Ds across the board. Everybody said, "Listen,
9 the Navy is truly committed to Naval Reserve Aviation.
10 We're committed to Belle Chasse. It's a great base, and
11 we're going to modernize those F18s as we can."

12 The Navy is all in on F18s. So 24
13 funding in FY18 and about the same amount in '19.
14 They're going to fly the F35s as well. The F18 is an
15 extremely capable aircraft, and Belle Chasse plays a
16 role in that.

17 In terms of Barksdale, I mentioned
18 meeting with Carol Gaudette, the Air Force Deputy Civil
19 Engineer, regarding the I-220 and putting it on the
20 priority list.

21 Talked with Cedric Richmond. Cedric
22 Richmond, we want to get him involved and focus a little
23 bit more on SPAWAR. We had Pat Sullivan up there, the
24 Executive Director, and we supported Senator Kennedy's
25 staff on asking some questions in terms of that mission.



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1 It's still a little too fuzzy for me. I still don't
2 feel, you know, great about SPAWAR, but it's kind of the
3 nature of the beast. They are not the headquarters.
4 They're not San Diego and they're not Charleston. So we
5 just need to hunker down on that as best as we can.

6 And then going forward, interestingly we
7 had a meeting with Secretary Wilson. She was up in
8 Boston two weeks ago and we met with her on March 18th
9 at an AFA event. And she said there are two things that
10 we are going to start looking closer at when it comes to
11 basing future missions, good schools and the reciprocity
12 of professional licenses. So everything you're doing on
13 professional licenses, believe me, it has an impact.
14 That's a pretty strong statement from the Secretary of
15 the Air Force.

16 We met a few days or one month later
17 with Robin Rand. Murray attended with us at a different
18 AFA event. You know, restoring readiness first, the Air
19 Force must be ready to fight tonight, as evidenced with
20 B1s and Syria. But, man, this whole, you know, when
21 look at Barksdale and you look at this next couple years
22 of funding, B52 modernization, NC3, the Nuclear Command
23 and Control Mission, WSA, they're all huge priorities
24 and it's all good news for Barksdale.

25 And then finally, last week we met with



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1 Ivan Bolden on the Army Public-Private Initiative, and
2 this was a tough fight that Mike is engaged in. He
3 doesn't really get into it, but this would be the
4 biggest Base Operating Support Agreement in the history
5 of the Army, and unfortunately the incumbent is a
6 company called Pride, which is a subcontractor to
7 AbilityOne, which is a stable company that -- they
8 charge a lot of money. It's just simple as that. And
9 when Ivan -- I met with met Ivan actually on Monday, he
10 said, "Listen, the numbers don't make sense," and, you
11 know, everybody -- I think in the Army really doesn't
12 want this to happen for the city, but Pride, I mean, the
13 CEO got on his private jet and flew to DC when he saw
14 this thing unraveling. And Ivan, you know, the Chief on
15 Public-Private Initiatives, told me on Monday that --
16 you know, this is at the White House. These guys are --
17 this is a big concern, and if falls apart on Fort Polk,
18 it's going to be bad for Pride because there are a lot
19 of other Army installations looking at what Fort Polk is
20 doing. Fort Polk is really on the forefront for this.
21 So but the delegation is involved and in that as well.

22 So my outreach to the Air Combat Command
23 over the last few months, I want to touch just real
24 quickly about 159th, which is the Air National Guard
25 Unit in New Orleans. You know, the F15 C/D that they



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1 have, their five corner or four-corner base or whatever,
2 they have an Air Sovereignty Alert Mission. The F15 Cs
3 are going to go away, and this is pretty new information
4 that's coming out in this new fighter plan. The next
5 four ops selections are F35s, were all supposed to go
6 the active Air Force, mainly to Kadena. That's been
7 changed over the last month. They are now going to go
8 to Air National Guard bases, three of the four. The
9 next four, the F35 will go to Hawaii and it will replace
10 the F22 Air National Base. Those Hawaiian F22s are
11 coming back to active force probably Lanier or somewhere
12 else, or Tyndall.

13 So the next three, which is above the
14 2023 to '27ish timeframe, those are going to F15 bases.
15 So New Orleans suddenly is in the mix to get F35, and I
16 think they're going to have a good chance to do so.

17 F15 X, it's fantasy, not going to
18 happen. I don't think you're going to see light-attack
19 aircraft trying to do an air control mission. The step
20 for the 159th is going to be to get to the F35 sooner
21 than later, and we'll be working that.

22 Just two more points. Another meeting
23 with Lucian. ERCIP, if you don't know what ERCIP is,
24 you need to know about it. It's the Energy Resilience
25 and Conservation Investment Program. It's a program



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1 that's expanding. Barksdale is already a pilot program
2 for energy resilience, but when you look at places like
3 Belle Chasse and Fort Polk, ERCIP and DOD and Lucian are
4 going all in. And that is DOD is a separate pot of
5 money to help you get resilient, not energy efficient,
6 but resilient, so that obviously is important in a
7 nuclear mission base. But the money's increasing and
8 it's something that we're getting closer to and working
9 with.

10 Then the last piece, that ADC National
11 Summit we are sponsoring the reception again on June
12 18th. If you are in DC, you are invited. It's in the
13 Trump Hotel, and it's nice. I think some of you were at
14 that event last year.

15 So, just quick, our priorities going
16 forward, you know, tracking this F18 thing, making sure
17 those F18s roll in as planned and using the delegation
18 as necessary, getting 159th a 5th generation fighter,
19 having representing the State of Michigan and
20 representing the State of Massachusetts, I can tell you
21 that F35 battles are hard and fierce. It's crazy
22 because ultimately the bases are going to get them
23 anyway, but the communities want them sooner rather than
24 later, which is understandable.

25 Number two, WSA; Number 3 is the IGSA



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1 with the City of Leesville; Four, increasing visibility
2 of SPAWAR; Number 5 is the standard control issue at
3 Fort Polk is the number one challenge there and it has
4 to be addressed. And then the last one I think it, you
5 know, covering down a little bit better on energy
6 resilience goals in Louisiana. I know energy, the price
7 of energy in Louisiana is different than the price of
8 energy in Massachusetts, but, nevertheless, it's
9 resiliency, it's not efficiency in costs in Louisiana.

10 Any questions?

11 SECRETARY PIERSON:

12 Thank you for that report, Chris.

13 Any questions for Chris?

14 MS. MCCONNELL:

15 And we'll get all of these reports out
16 to everybody electronically.

17 Chris, I cannot --

18 MR. GOODE:

19 No worries.

20 MS. MCCONNELL:

21 It still won't download on the one that
22 you sent me for whatever reason, but, again, I apologize
23 for that.

24 SECRETARY PIERSON:

25 Murray and I have worked in this field



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1 for a long time together, along with Colonel Lo Walker,
2 Mayor in Bossier, with Barksdale, Barksdale Forward,
3 then iteration coming to Fort Polk with the great
4 progress that's been made around base support there.
5 Certainly we're pleased to say Gary Silbert leading that
6 activity and enhancing the coordination, conversation
7 and communication across Southeast Louisiana.

8 We weren't represented today by Major
9 General Curtis, but he's also staying close to us with a
10 strong initiative around securing the possibility of a
11 cyber battalion. That has not yet been award by Army
12 National Guard. So a lot of moving parts here. We're
13 fortunate in that Chris and his firm are both in the
14 halls of Congress and in the halls of the Pentagon are
15 keeping the situation awareness communicated back to us
16 so that we can link in these community leaders so that
17 we can be impactful in conversations with the
18 congressional delegation that is so critical here. We
19 have a very strong support in terms of our Governor. He
20 gets it. If Chris tells us that there's an important
21 message that his voice can be lent and that it will be
22 helpful, he's been very responsive, and we've utilized
23 that on a number of occasions. And so we just we would
24 want to report to you that while we only meet a few
25 times in a year, there's a very important and robust



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1 effort on the many fronts that you've heard about today.

2 Now, at 12:02, I don't know that we
3 haven't properly addressed our two new business items
4 that are on the agenda relative to further discussion
5 about Belle Chasse or the Charter school schools.

6 Are you comfortable we've reported...

7 MR. MIZE:

8 No.

9 SECRETARY PIERSON:

10 Okay.

11 MR. MIZE:

12 She's got a handout, and can you give us
13 just a couple minutes to --

14 SECRETARY PIERSON:

15 Yes.

16 MR. MIZE:

17 And I'll definitely be brief.

18 So Chris Schlafer is with us, who is the
19 Commandant of the New Orleans Military and Military
20 Academy, and Colonel -- or Jane Dye, who's the school
21 leader at Belle Chasse Academy, are passing out some
22 handouts here.

23 We have two direct military support
24 schools in New Orleans that are very important to the
25 military down there. The state has been very



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1 instrumental in getting the charters and supporting
2 those. We're having some great success and some
3 challenges that we haven't updated you about here. We
4 had on the board Colonel Bill Davis, who was predecessor
5 of Colonel Chris Schlafer here, who has now moved on to
6 be the National Director of the Young Marines, so I
7 don't know if there's a plan to replace Bill Davis
8 with -- Colonel Schlafer with Bill Davis. So just so
9 that you're aware that that's the situation here.

10 I was previous commander of MARFORRES.
11 I know a lot of you, but not all of you. I was a leader
12 in the BRAC process. The Governor and the Mayor asked
13 me lead the efforts in South Louisiana, give a
14 presentation for the state on active duty. I was
15 heavily involved in doing the Marine Corps development
16 and what how you value the bases to put in BRAC. And
17 I've been for a number of years now the Chairman of the
18 Mayor's Military Advisory Committee in the Greater New
19 Orleans as the community interfaces with the military
20 bases in the New Orleans area.

21 When I was the Commander of MARFORRES, I
22 did a little study and I found out that 20 percent of my
23 married folks were not coming in and bringing their
24 families into geographic fashions, and so obviously I
25 wanted to find out why that was. The main reason was



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1 because they didn't like the schools and they felt their
2 kids weren't here. So that initiated an effort that a
3 lot of people have been involved in for a lot at time
4 and were able to get these two charter school
5 established, one Kindergarten through 8th, one high
6 school now, where the charter was specifically approved
7 for military folks. And there's a lot of advantage, we
8 thing, to Louisiana having that. First is the economic
9 standpoint by having hundreds or more families come down
10 that now rent houses, buy houses, get involved in scout
11 leaders and being coaches and all of that is a positive
12 thing.

13 As we talk about, it's a big BRAC issue,
14 too, and it's the right thing to do to take care of
15 military kids who are bouncing around all of the time
16 now having their parents deployed through many
17 deployments to combat zones over the last 10 or 15
18 years.

19 Now we have Type 2 charters in New
20 Orleans because we have multiple parishes. So we've got
21 to get students from the multiple parishes, so we have
22 to a state Type 2 that allows use us to do that as
23 opposed to the charter, which is in one district here.

24 Now, what we're caught in the backlash
25 for is kind of the battles between charter schools and



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1 not charter schools and the philosophy and we're trying
2 to clamp down on that. And so more and more of the
3 charters are kind of treated all the same, and then that
4 causes us some significant difficulties. We'd like to
5 get the education out here, which we ought to be in the
6 charter school, even non-charters would love, because
7 we're doing a great job of teaching the students, and
8 then also we are taking care of military, which is the
9 right thing to do both for economic development as well
10 as supporting those who are sacrificing for us overall.

11 I've got on the chart here, the second
12 page gives you the Belle Chasse Academy statistics.
13 That's our Kindergarten through 8th grade. We've got
14 almost 1,000 students in there, almost entirely military
15 folk there. It's one of the top schools in Louisiana.
16 I've got some of statistics to prove that. Also I show
17 you where they come from. The racial diversity is the
18 great in these schools. One of the things is that
19 sometimes our folks who don't like our schools say,
20 "Well, you're picking the cream of the crop, kind of the
21 white folks out of the military who are smart anyway."
22 Well, that's absolutely not the case here. We have, you
23 know, a wonderful mix here of all of the people in
24 Louisiana as far as demographics and whatnot.

25 So the school is doing extremely well.



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1 It's the same with our high school. It's got 752
2 cadets. Now, the high school is where the -- the
3 elementary school is almost 100 percent military because
4 we have that number of military dependents here. For
5 the high school, we don't have it because the military
6 is obviously hiring because we don't have as many high
7 school students, so we have -- we are able to ensure at
8 least 20 percent of the high school that's military if
9 we need to.

10 Some other advantages here for these
11 high schools, why they're so important is with the
12 charter situation in New Orleans, you know, you lock up
13 what school you go to by February of the year before
14 with all of the application process. Our military kids
15 don't come in up till the Summer rotation and whatnot,
16 and all of the schools are taken if you don't have
17 someone to take care of the military kids here.

18 So those are some of the advantages,
19 but, again, the good news here is they're both A rated
20 schools. They're two of the best schools we have in
21 Louisiana now overall, but we're having some challenges
22 here. And part of our issue with the military has
23 gotten to be not only a reality, but perception is that
24 we have good schools. One of the problems we've
25 encountered here over the last almost four years was the



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1 Iberville Parish and the teachers union came in and put
2 a suit that Type 2 charters were not public schools and
3 they ought to be de-funded. So the military families
4 that have had their students in these schools for this
5 extended period of time don't know if right in the
6 middle of the school year, they're about to get
7 de-funded and have no idea what to do with their kids,
8 et cetera. There's no alternate plans that have been
9 provided here, et cetera. So nobody thinks about that,
10 but obviously then the military folks report back, "Hey,
11 you know, our school here could be pulled out from
12 underneath us here." That's the kind of thing we
13 definitely don't to need facilitate confidence in good
14 schools four our military folks.

15 We also run into situations where
16 charter schools have an annual report card essentially
17 that they are to taken, unlike the non-sector public
18 schools, and you get a lot of categories. Some, for
19 example, are how many economic disadvantaged students do
20 you have in the population, how many special ed
21 students. Again, because we're an elementary school
22 here, we are mainly military. We've taken a small
23 number of civilian folks. We have a -- the highest
24 we've ever taken was 85 in one year. The lowest is 30.
25 But there's a great demand to get into our school. The



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1 same with the high school. We have 800 applications for
2 300 slots here. I mean, that tells you how good the
3 schools are, how strong people want to get into them.

4 But these processes are force fed to us,
5 so we get through lobbying system or they're waiting.
6 So then we look at numbers, and we don't have the right
7 economic advantages for special ed kids. Then they give
8 us on the reports here, because the force fed us kids we
9 don't have any choice of taking, but then they mark us
10 off. And the reports, if you don't get a high grade in
11 all of the reports, then you potentially don't get your
12 charter renewed for the max amount as well as your
13 reputation is not safe to get a, you know, a totally
14 clean report card in our high school.

15 In our high school, they have a OneApp
16 process for charter schools in Orleans Parish. Only 35
17 percent roughly of our student in high school go to
18 Orleans Parish, but we have to do all of the processing
19 through this OneApp. So all of the people that want to
20 come in from Jefferson or Plaquemines Parish or other
21 parishes, we get those nominations for school, and then
22 we have to give them to Orleans Parish to do the OneApp
23 process here and then they figure out who's coming in
24 your school system. So it's a not exactly the, you
25 know, the process that really supports well or military



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1 system here, but something we're living with and
2 adapting here.

3 In Plaquemines Parish, unfortunately,
4 through, I think, some bad information, the local
5 superintendent would like to close our Belle Chasse
6 Academy, our wonderful, wonderful school. If he sees
7 those 960, you know, people there that generate a lot of
8 money per student that come with it the Federal Impact
9 Aid, but the reality is, of course, there's only about
10 500 of those students are in Plaquemine Parish. But
11 also when he gets it and dilutes into his parish, he
12 doesn't understand the Economic Impact Aid is on a
13 sliding scale, so he gets very little money. Also the
14 chances of him getting those wonderful facilities on
15 board with the base, if we were -- if our school were to
16 close, it would very problematic if he were to get those
17 because of security and ownership issues, you know, et
18 cetera.

19 So even though all of these are
20 presented, he still has, you know, an effort to try to,
21 you know, close our Belle Chasse Academy. Not
22 successfully so far obviously, but he's -- that's his
23 interest.

24 So those are the kind of things we run
25 into in people not appreciating that as we get caught up



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1 the wash. So we don't necessarily need any specific
2 help right now, but we would love to have Economic
3 Development or others make sure the Department of
4 Education understands that particularly these schools
5 are very important schools for the state, for both
6 Economic Development, for attention to military bases,
7 et cetera, here, so that they need to have some support
8 and some consideration when we work through issues at
9 come up that are, when you try to cookie cutter all of
10 the charter schools into one set of standards and
11 recommendations.

12 So that's kind of our pitch here. We'd
13 also, we'd like to invite the LMAC to come hold a future
14 Board meeting, next Board meeting, at the school. We
15 would host it so that you can see firsthand what the
16 quality of the schools are, and our school leaders here
17 are very ready to answer questions or help other
18 communities understand how we've done things.

19 One of the things that helps us in the
20 BRAC business too, the Department of Defense has come
21 down and looked at our Belle Chasse Academy -- how many
22 times, Jane?

23 MS. DYE:

24 Twice.

25 MR. MIZE:



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1 -- to see it, and they use it as a model
2 in other places around the country to try to replicate
3 this wonderful example. So that's given us a real
4 strong, you know, leg up here in how they perceive at
5 the DOD what we're doing in Louisiana with our military
6 support schools. So we don't want to lose that kind of,
7 you know, poise, what they think about us by closing or
8 having the folks think schools are bad here or they
9 might be closed because of lawsuits or things of that
10 nature. So we're doing great here, but as any good
11 enterprise, you know, you've got to nurture it and help
12 it get through some stormy seas sometimes that are as
13 you get caught up in, et cetera.

14 So any quick questions for my school
15 leaders or anything else we you think we ought to be
16 doing that we're not doing to make their case better
17 or --

18 MR. RICHARD:

19 Are these problems unique to Louisiana,
20 Dave, or are there other states that...

21 SECRETARY PIERSON:

22 Well, these problems are unique to our
23 budget status probably.

24 MR. MIZE:

25 Great schools, as we heard from



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1 Roosevelt Group here, or a key part of BRAC and quality
2 of life issues that will be brought up in how bases are
3 looking at the future. So the better we can tend to
4 this, the better position we can be in for the
5 overall -- - we've put a lot of effort here in the state
6 into making this good. It would be a shame to have us
7 somehow dilute or lose these wonderful schools who are
8 doing fantastic right now.

9 MR. MIZE:

10 Is this the only Marine Corps-funded
11 high school of its kind?

12 MR. SCHLAFER:

13 The largest Marine Corps JRTC in the
14 nation is right here in Louisiana. So the Marine Corps
15 has the best -- the Maritime Academy. No other school
16 in the country.

17 MR. MIZE:

18 So you have how many instructors that
19 the Marine Corps pays for?

20 MR. SCHLAFER:

21 We have eight that they pay for, and the
22 others civilian teachers, with the addition of the 8th
23 grade next year, and we're applying for a few more for a
24 total of 10 instructors.

25 MR. MIZE:



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1 Plus the Marine Corps pays for all of
2 the uniforms and equipment and --

3 MR. SCHLAFER:

4 Right.

5 MR. MIZE:

6 So we get, again, it brings us
7 additional money.

8 And as you can see, by 800 people
9 applying for the 300 hundred slots that we have in the
10 school, that the reputation is built up, and even though
11 this is not for everybody, it's having a wonderful
12 success and a lot of people looking at it to replicate
13 it in other places in other ways. So we've got a great
14 program going. We just need to make sure we sustain it.

15 MR. RICHARD:

16 There's 53 percent of Plaquemines
17 members going to the Academy, but then it drops to two
18 percent going to the high school.

19 MS. DYE:

20 That's mostly due to demographics. Our
21 military members stationed in the Greater New Orleans
22 Area are younger, so we have much fewer.

23 I will say that Plaquemines Parish High
24 School is a great high school, and a lot of parents, a
25 lot of folks that live on the base, which is the



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1 Private-Public Venture Housing Project in 2002, do opt
2 to send their children to Plaquemines High School.

3 MR. MIZE:

4 They have a good sports program at
5 Plaquemines Parish High School. Belle Chasse High
6 School is there, which is another.

7 MR. SCHLAFER:

8 And you asked if it was unique to
9 Louisiana, and I will just say that Louisiana, New
10 Orleans is a leader in charter schools in the nation,
11 and then those with the military flavor, I think these
12 are particularly unique within the country. So, you
13 know, that's why I say that -- you asked if Marine Corps
14 funded other schools, JRTC, you know, is optional in
15 many different schools, but this is -- like our high
16 school is all -- it's mandatory JRTC for all four years.

17 MR. MIZE:

18 That's the only high school in the
19 country like that.

20 MR. SCHLAFER:

21 That's correct.

22 MR. MIZE:

23 So you have to buy into the concept of
24 it. So you see when there's 800 applying for the 300
25 slots and we're always maxed out every year. People



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1 really like the concept here, and it's doing great.

2 MS. DYE:

3 Our 8th graders remain for 9th and 10th
4 grade. Almost invariably, if they don't live in
5 Plaquemines Parish, almost invariably, we are a feeder
6 school for Houma, Jefferson, Orleans and St. Bernard.

7 MR. MIZE:

8 Again, we'd love to show it off to you
9 firsthand, and, again, we support any other interests in
10 the state that you might have to replicate or learn any
11 lessons from what we're doing.

12 SECRETARY PIERSON:

13 Thank you for that report.

14 We'll take the invitation, which we
15 greatly appreciate, under advisement. And, also, I
16 think collectively we recognize the importance of the
17 educational infrastructure around all of our military
18 installations as being, you know, part of BRAC proofing
19 in those facilities. So we're greatly appreciative of
20 the efforts that you-all make around the progress there.

21 All right. Well, this will conclude the
22 formal meeting of the Military Council for today.
23 Certainly we will entertain a motion to adjourn. We can
24 only have people of stamina on this council in that
25 we're now talking about a forced march over to the



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1 capitol.

2 So with that, I'll entertain a motion
3 for adjournment.

4 MR. VISER:

5 So moved.

6 MR. REESE:

7 Second.

8 MS. MCCONNELL:

9 That was moved by Murray Viser and
10 seconded by --

11 MS. RANDOLPH:

12 I did.

13 MS. MCCONNELL:

14 Oh, Deborah Randolph. Thank you.

15 SECRETARY PIERSON:

16 All in favor, please signify by saying
17 "aye."

18 (Several members respond "aye.")

19 SECRETARY PIERSON:

20 Thank you for your time.

21 (Meeting concludes at 12:19 p.m.)

22

23

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1 **REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE:**

2

3 I, ELICIA H. WOODWORTH, Certified Court

4 Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the

5 officer before whom this meeting was taken, do hereby

6 certify that this meeting was reported by me in the

7 stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed

8 by me or under my personal direction and supervision,

9 and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my

10 ability and understanding;

11 That the transcript has been prepared in

12 compliance with transcript format required by statute or

13 by rules of the board, that I have acted in compliance

14 with the prohibition on contractual relationships, as

15 defined by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article

16 1434 and in rules and advisory opinions of the board;

17 That I am not related to counsel or to the

18 parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the

19 outcome of this matter.

20

21 Dated this 17th day of May, 2018.

22

23

24

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