

United States Air Force



Presentation

Before the House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction
and Veterans Affairs

Quality of Life in the Military

Witness Statement of
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Force

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Introduction

Chairman Dent, Ranking Member Bishop and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for your continued support and interest in the quality of life of our service men and women. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to represent America's Airmen and their families. It is an honor to express their needs and offer appreciation for your support on their behalf.

Today your Airmen serve in unprecedented times. After 25 years of constant combat operations they face a dynamic, unpredictable future that does and will increasingly rely on airpower. They serve in the smallest and oldest Air Force in our history; the size of our force is at an all-time low, and the average age of our aircraft and buildings are at an all-time high. Yet our Airmen continue to provide the preponderance of combat force against our adversaries around the globe. There is no doubt they are the most talented, educated and experienced force our country has ever assembled. They are professionals who are proud to serve and accomplish their mission even under fiscal constraints.

In three short years – from the close of 2012 to the close of 2015 – limited budgets have forced the Air Force to cut its manpower by nearly 24,000 Airmen in the Active Duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. However combat operations around the globe have remained steady for the Air Force in some areas, while escalating in others; as of this January there are 24,000 Airmen deployed worldwide. In that same three year period, diminished budgets have forced the slowing of normal growth in compensation, and have begun to cut at our Airmen's buying power. Our current projections indicate that the future compensation could fall behind private sector pay And thus, we must never lose sight of the full impact on our

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Airmen's readiness and resilience, as well as our ability to recruit and retain your all-volunteer, professional force.

Many of the initiatives this Subcommittee supports allow us to strengthen the quality of life for our Airmen, even in difficult financial times. We rely on your efforts, actions and legislation to protect and support our service member's pay and benefits. We also appreciate your continued support of Airmen in the field, and hope you continue to travel to our installations to see first-hand the quality of our Airmen and families. Today's Airmen are the asymmetric advantage over every other Air Force in the world. Their continued commitment speaks to their character, passion and talent. We must always be thankful for their willingness to serve.

Right Sizing the Force

The emerging challenges brought on by an evolving geopolitical landscape, the retention of requisite force structure and the identified need to reinvigorate the nuclear enterprise have forced your Air Force to take a hard look at our current manpower. We determined the Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget levels were too low to maintain readiness and operations to support global warfighting requirements. Thus, the FY 2017 Budget requests 317,000 active duty personnel. The increase in manpower will address key capability gaps in the nuclear enterprise, maintenance, cyber, force support and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. It will also better match manpower to force structure decisions. The Fiscal Year 2017 budget request fully funds our end strength at 317,000 Airmen, along with 105,700 in Air National Guard and 69,000 in the Reserves. We continue our efforts to right size the

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force, within the constrained budget, by stabilizing and assessing critical capabilities that will likely necessitate future growth in military manpower.

Successful execution of our force management plan requires a focused effort to ensure critical resources are available in a timely manner in the recruiting, accession and training pipelines. By employing increased accession and expanded retention programs, we will aim to meet manning levels to preserve A-10 and EC-130 capabilities while continuing to build the F-35 force, increase maintenance capacity and retain experience to improve readiness.

Your Air Force has successfully met the All-Volunteer Force accession requirements for the past 16 years and is positioning itself to meet Fiscal Year 2016 enlisted accession goals for the Active Duty, Reserve and Air National Guard components. For this fiscal year, over 10,000 of America's young men and women have completed or are currently attending Air Force Basic Military Training (BMT). There are approximately 9,000 additional recruits already contracted to attend BMT in Fiscal Year 2016, with an additional 11,498 needed to fully meet this year's goal of 30,418 recruits. To bolster our recruiting efforts we have increased our advertising budget, and to support our increased accession targets we are sourcing additional Technical Training instructors for initial skills training.

In parallel with our aggressive recruiting efforts and training pipeline augmentation, we are leveraging retention tools to preserve the knowledge and skills that our more experienced Airmen provide. Specifically, the number of eligible Air Force Specialty Codes for our Selective Reenlistment Bonus program nearly tripled this fiscal year, from 40 in Fiscal Year 2015 to 117 in Fiscal Year 2016. Additionally, we will allow eligible Airmen to participate in the High-Year Tenure extension program, extending their service for up to two years with respective

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commander concurrence. These efforts are specifically focused on retaining experience in key career fields, like nuclear, maintenance, cyber and Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance, while we grow and train our new recruits.

As we approach Fiscal Year 2017, we are confident our actions will enable a stronger, more efficient Air Force. However, we plan to monitor the recently enacted compensation changes to ensure they do not hurt recruiting and retention. A study by Joint Advertising Market Research and Studies shows the top reasons new recruits were motivated to join the Air Force were, “the ability to earn pay to provide for their family, pay for education, and to travel.” This data provides valuable insight into the wants and needs of our recruiting pool and unequivocally cements our need to safeguard Quality of Life programs and initiatives in the future. These programs and the support we offer to our Airmen and their families are essential for us to successfully recruit and retain our nation’s brightest and bravest.

Taking Care of Airmen

The Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) and Chief of Staff of the Air Force’s (CSAF) priority of *Taking Care of People* is at the forefront of your Air Force’s commitment to providing the best support possible to build and maintain ready, resilient Airmen and families. Under constrained budgets, it is more challenging to maintain Airmen and family support programs at previously funded levels; however, in light of this challenge, we’ve committed to fully funding the most important Airman and family support programs like Airman and Family Readiness Centers, Child Development Centers, Sexual Assault and Prevention Response Programs and Military Tuition Assistance. This commitment to strengthen our Airman and families will better create a resilient Air Force and mission ready Airmen.

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We begin to build resiliency by developing Airmen who purposefully sustain fit lifestyles with Comprehensive Airmen Fitness (CAF). Our CAF's mission, vision and goals are designed to bolster the men and women who directly and indirectly support Air Force mission readiness. CAF is a holistic approach to maintaining and strengthening fitness in the mental, physical, social and spiritual domains. We remain actively engaged in all aspects of CAF as an Air Force wide means of improving our tremendous force.

Last year I shared with you that the Air Force stood up Airmen's Week -- a week dedicated to developing resiliency and character at the close of Basic Military Training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. As of this January, nearly 27,000 Airmen have successfully completed Airmen's Week. The week includes five days of intense focus on Air Force core values. Nearly 90% of the Air Force's newest Airmen have rated the training as positive and life-changing. It's preparing our Airmen to apply Air Force core values to real-world situations and enhancing their dignity and respect for themselves and their fellow Airmen.

In October 2015, we began work to consolidate our efforts on interpersonal and self-directed violence prevention, specifically prevention of sexual assault, suicide, and workplace and domestic violence. The Air Staff has collaborated with clinical professionals to devise a ten-year strategy that consolidates prevention policies and training while shifting our organizational culture. Contributors to the strategy include the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, the Surgeon General community, the Profession of Arms Center of Excellence, Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Safety, the Judge Advocate General and Chaplain Corps.

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As part of the prevention strategy, the Community Action Information Board (CAIB) and Integrated Delivery System memberships and missions have been re-focused and now include prevention; the CAIB is now led by the Air Force's Vice Chief of Staff. Instead of creating a new program or increasing staff, our existing functional staff and helping agencies will work together to revolutionize and consolidate education and training using the public health approach model that has shown success in the private sector. The end result will vastly reduce Airmen's training time, with a keen focus on reducing destructive behavior.

Sexual Assault

Air Force leadership involvement at every level over the past several years has resulted in fewer sexual assaults and more victim reports. However, we still have much more work ahead to eliminate sexual assault from our ranks. The multi-functional Air Force Sexual Assault and Prevention Office remains under the direction of the Air Force's Vice Chief of Staff and is refining and developing education and training, policy and programs designed to eliminate sexual assault. We have improved every aspect of our response system, building a solid foundation from which to launch new strategic prevention efforts.

In late 2015, the Secretary, Chief of Staff and I signed a five-year Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Strategy. In addition to plans for improving our robust response system, the document presented the Air Force's first comprehensive strategy for preventing future sexual assaults. Responding to and supporting victims of sexual assault is not enough to achieve our goal of eliminating sexual assault from the Air Force. We must act to prevent the perpetration of violence before it occurs.

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While we are increasing our prevention efforts, we remain committed to responding to and supporting survivors of sexual assault. In particular, we have more work to do in regard to male victims and retaliation against survivors. Over the past several years, we've seen reports from male victims of sexual assault increase as estimates of prevalence decrease. This is a promising start, but we know we still have victims who aren't coming forward to report and receive help. We are working with the Department of Defense (DoD) to develop a strategy to understand the unique challenges and needs of male victims and how we can better meet those needs.

We are also addressing retaliation against survivors. In 2015, we asked our Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) to begin working with victims to gather information about incidents of retaliation. Currently, our SARCs review incidents of retaliation at monthly Case Management Group (CMG) meetings at each installation. These meetings are hosted by the installation or host wing Vice Commander and include the SARC, the legal advisor, investigators and unit commanders. The CMG monitors all reports of retaliation until each case has reached final disposition or the retaliation has been appropriately addressed. What we're finding is that most of the retaliation victims report being treated differently by their peers at work. We have given clear guidance that this will not be accepted, whether these acts are intended to be retaliatory or are simply misguided. This is another challenge we continue to work with DoD and our sister services to solve.

There is no quick fix to eliminate sexual assault from the Air Force. We must take the time and deliberate steps necessary to ensure all our Airmen's actions and words make it obvious to everyone they encounter that sexual assault will not be tolerated in our ranks. We

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are steadfast in our commitment to eliminate sexual assault from your Air Force, and until we achieve that goal we will strive to establish a national benchmark for prevention and recovery.

Suicide Prevention

2015 was an extremely difficult year as we witnessed the highest number of suicides in my tenure as the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. We clearly must, and will, do more to combat suicide and prevent our Airmen from making a terrible, life-ending decision. Our suicide prevention training seeks to promote early intervention and destigmatize help seeking for those in distress. We believe the trio of involved leadership, concerned Airmen and an environment that encourages Airmen to seek help is key to combating suicide in the Air Force. We are taking deliberate steps to strengthen our training in these areas.

In September 2015 the Air Force held a suicide prevention summit, bringing together a broad cross section of subject matter experts and nationally renowned researchers from federal agencies and academia. Summit participants identified six lines of effort to reverse the rising trend: integrating prevention, strengthening our Airman culture, leveraging strength-based messaging, enhancing civilian support services, targeted resilience outreach and improving medical management for at-risk Airmen. Working groups are currently defining specific actions within each line of effort under the oversight of senior leadership and the CAIB. At the direction of Air Force leadership, these working groups have made reductions in interpersonal and self-directed violence and destructive behaviors their foremost priority.

Quality of Life

We sincerely appreciate continued congressional support and funding for quality of life initiatives for our Airmen and families. Airmen, along with their families, overwhelmingly factor

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these support programs into their decision to continue serving our nation. As we continue to support a healthy lifestyle with a strong sense of community in and around our bases, we focus on four areas: health and wellness; Airmen and family support; education and development; and Airmen and family housing.

TRICARE

TRICARE is one of the most recognizable brands in US healthcare serving 9.5 million Active Duty, Guard and Reserve members, their families, retirees and survivors. The benefits provided under TRICARE are appropriately earned by our service men and women, to include their families. Notably, active duty family member satisfaction with the health plan is high; however, there is certainly room for improvement and new authorities from Congress are helping. For example, TRICARE can pay for emerging technology and treatments, ahead of Federal Drug Administration approval, when evidence indicates the treatments are safe and effective. Additionally, TRICARE can also waive referral requirements for urgent care visits to streamline access-to-care when patients need it most.

It is important to Airmen and families that we continue improving the TRICARE program by building upon what is working and fixing the aspects of the plan that cause frustration. As structured today, the TRICARE health plan is fully integrated with our military treatment facilities. TRICARE complements military medicine with local civilian health care professionals, pharmacies and hospitals when needed. This integrated approach not only provides Airmen and their families with portable medical care anywhere they are stationed, but it also assures our military medical teams stay sharp and ready to support our nation's missions.

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As TRICARE evolves and national health costs continue to rise, it is important our Airmen and families are not overburdened by out-of-pocket medical expenses. We must consider any new healthcare costs with the totality of other pay and compensation changes. As TRICARE evolves, it must always provide Airmen and families a selection of high value health plans that balance cost, access and military readiness without compromising quality or portability.

Wounded Warrior Support

The Air Force Warrior and Survivor Care office leads our effort in orchestrating a comprehensive, continuum of care that synergizes DoD and Veterans Affairs programs to meet the medical and non-medical care of wounded, ill and injured service members. Over the past year, your Air Force Wounded Warrior program has continued to increase enrollment with improved outreach to Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units. We strive to ensure affected Airmen are aware of the professional resources available to help them when symptoms manifest themselves. Bringing healing and focus to their lives is an ongoing priority and is a promise we will always keep. Challenges for wounded warriors remain a constant for which no end appears in sight.

We continue to recognize that a wounded Airman's success of recovery depends heavily on the involvement of their family and caregiver, so we include them and their needs, goals and wishes every step of the way. We connect spouses to employment and educational opportunities as well as support resources for everything from marital counseling to financial support to housing assistance. Your Air Force also hosts several regional support events each year. These events include caregiver support symposiums; adaptive and rehabilitative sports camps/training; Recovering Airmen Mentorship Program training; and employment and career

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readiness fairs. Through these events, wounded warriors and their caregivers lean on one another for support, strength and compassion as we continuously work to ensure our wounded, ill and injured are provided the tools necessary to reach self-sufficiency and find a new normal in life. The strength of our Airmen lies in the support and sense of community maintained through the Air Force Wounded Warrior programs.

Airman and Family Readiness

Our Airman and Family Readiness programs support individuals, families and leadership with programs and services to strengthen communities, encourage self-sufficiency and enhance mission readiness. A critical connection between the mission and family is our Key Spouses, volunteer spouses who understand the challenges of a military-family lifestyle and are trained on critical family-based programs. This year we continued our efforts to strengthen the program. We highlighted the importance of the program throughout the chain of command, developed three new guides with specific roles and responsibilities for Commanders, Key Spouse Mentors, and Key Spouses, and conducted the first Key Spouse training event at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. To further connect and lead our family members, my spouse, Athena, joined Ms. Betty Welsh, the spouse of Air Force Chief of Staff General Mark Welsh, during multiple *Tweet Chats* on Twitter where family members engaged in discussion and question and answer sessions.

Our spouses also benefit from the Department of Defense led Military Spouse Employment Partnership that successfully prepares them for the job market. The partnership helped numerous spouses overcome the challenges of routine relocation by developing portable job skills that can be used in today's vastly interconnected business environment.

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Since the partnership began in 2011, 89,000 military spouses have been hired through the program. It has proven to be an extremely valuable support program for our spouses who must pick up their lives and move in order to support the service members they love.

Our Personal Financial Program Managers are keenly aware of the financial challenges our Airmen and families face and are leading the charge to adopt new policies and practices as a result of the financial literacy changes identified in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2016. We've capitalized on an established partnership with a national non-profit financial education foundation to offer a unique education experience at ten installations following a pilot test at six bases in 2015. The training teaches families how to set financial priorities, pay off debt and build long-term savings. In addition, we continue to offer on-base classes and one-on-one counseling with our certified financial counselors. As we move to a new retirement system, we'll continue to bolster our financial education to better prepare our Airmen for the financial decisions they'll face.

An initiative that promotes healthy lifestyles for our Airmen is our Air Force Food Transformation Initiative (FTI), which is now fully implemented at 14 installations. FTI delivers fresher and healthier menus and recipes in a college campus style cafeteria. I've had the opportunity to meet with Airmen in the new facilities and the feedback has been very positive. We are pressing forward with FTI implementation with plans to convert eight additional facilities during Fiscal Year 2016 and Fiscal Year 2017.

Additionally, we enhance the readiness, camaraderie and resiliency of our single Airmen through the Single Airmen Program Initiative. In Fiscal Year 2015, with support from OSD, we invested \$3 million in this program at 97 installations, providing over 137,000 Airmen

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opportunities that fostered resilience and a sense of community. Limited budgets dropped the funding to \$808,000 in Fiscal Year 2016, but we continue to work with OSD to support this program. We firmly believe the activities positively impact our Airmen's quality of life and strengthen the bonds between their fellow Airmen.

Child and Youth Programs

Air Force Child and Youth Programs proudly help Airmen balance the competing demands of the Air Force mission and family life by managing and delivering affordable programs and services for eligible children and youth, from newborn to 18 years of age. Our Child Development Programs continue to maintain 100% national accreditation with the National Association of Early Childhood Education, ensuring only the safest care for our youngest members. Our School Age Programs equal that mark as well with 100% accreditation through the Council on Accreditation. This is a remarkable feat when compared to the less than 10% national accreditation rate of civilian child care programs and only further demonstrates our commitment to our youngest family members. In 2015 we improved school readiness by providing training opportunities to our staff to expand their knowledge of scientific concepts, mathematics and literacy.

The Expanded Child Care Program provides a diverse array of approaches to support active and reserve component Airmen and their families with specialized child care needs, as well as nontraditional child care for our Airmen who serve outside the typical duty schedule. In 2015, your Air Force provided 214,000 hours of extended duty care, up 30,000 hours from 2014. Furthermore, we implemented a new program called *Missile Care 2* that assists military spouses with appointments when their military member is deployed to the missile field for

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more than 24 hours. This year we will continue to pursue avenues to assist families with their unique and specialized child care needs.

We are also expanding capacity in critical areas where wait times for Child Development Center enrollment exceed 90 days. The website militarychildcare.com, a DoD initiative, assists in this effort by providing a tool for wait list management. Currently 17 Air Force installations are using this service; all others will fully implement the service by the end of 2016. In addition, we are currently assessing our child care operating hours to determine where we need extended hours, and what resources are required to make needed adjustments.

To improve the education for our children we are partnering with local communities. Today we have five charter schools operating on Air Force installations as well as a variety of local public schools. Our Airman and Family Readiness Policy Branch is finalizing new policy guidance to better facilitate requests from local and state education authorities to place public schools on Air Force installations. The policy will synchronize the efforts of parents, communities, commanders, civil engineers, security forces, school liaison officers and school authorities. The connection between local public education and our military families is crucial to deliver quality education for our school-aged children. We need to ensure our school-age children are provided priority placement in all schools on military installations.

Air Force Youth Programs continue to excel with an impressive 24 teen Air Force Youth Program members winning state Military Youth of the Year honors. Three teens garnered regional titles, and one was selected as the National Military Youth of the Year. Overall, Air Force Youth Program members earned more than \$260,000 in scholarships through the Military Youth of the Year program, bringing them one step closer to their post-secondary goals.

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Youth Programs staff continued to mentor the Air Force Teen Council to ensure successful 2015 Teen Movement Projects. Teens collaborated with base and community partners to develop positive leadership and citizenship skills while impacting the lives of military youth and families. In 2016, we'll add additional focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) with regional STEM camps for youth, a centralized purchase of STEM materials for installation youth programs, and targeted STEM programming training for staff.

Education and Development

Your Air Force men and women comprise the most educated enlisted force the world has ever known - more than 43,044 enlisted Airmen have bachelors and master's degrees or higher and 167 have earned a doctorate or professional degree. Every Airman is enrolled in the Community College of Air Force's (CCAF) associate of applied science degree program and immediately begins receiving credit upon completion of their technical training. Since April 25, 1977, the CCAF has awarded more than 474,000 degrees to Airmen. 23,206 Airmen received their CCAF degree in 2015, the highest number of annual graduates in the history of the college.

We remain committed to providing the tools and funding Airmen need to pursue a higher education. In 2015 we committed \$159 million to Military Tuition Assistance (MilTA), and have requested \$138.6 million to fund MilTA in 2017. Airmen are able to apply their CCAF credit toward a bachelor's degree through Air University's Associate-to-Baccalaureate program. The program now encompasses 60 civilian university partners offering 214 bachelor's degree programs. Last year 61,823 Airmen participated in the program and 1,943 earned their bachelor's degrees. 49 of the graduates have become commissioned officers.

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We've also expanded our Air Force Credentialing Opportunities On-Line program which we launched in 2014 in support of the Veterans Opportunity Workforce and Veterans Employment Initiatives. The program covers the expense for enlisted Airmen to pursue 1,700 total licensures and certifications supporting 133 enlisted career fields.

To continue to bolster our world class education opportunities, which will facilitate more capable Airmen, we are pursuing an undergraduate program for enlisted and civilian Airmen through Air University (AU). AU is developing the accreditation prospectus and outlining a way forward to design, develop and deliver a Bachelor of Arts in Military Leadership. The education, delivered via facilitated distance learning, would address leadership and management theory and practice specific to the Profession of Arms, but applicable to a wide variety of leadership and management opportunities. Enlisted Airmen could leverage the higher education in their duties as senior leaders in our Air Force, and in their post-service careers to secure employment or continue their educational journey. We firmly believe greater education opportunities provide the foundation for robust recruitment and retention, and solidify our Airmen's professional capabilities.

Airmen and Family Housing

Quality unaccompanied and family housing ensures our Airmen and families have an adequate and comfortable place to call home as they serve in defense of our nation. We provide this through military construction (MILCON) and housing privatization. In 2013, we completed privatizing more than 99% of housing at Air Force installations in the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii for an end state of over 53,000 housing units at 63 installations. Housing privatization continues to transform our installations and create efficient,

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modern communities where Air Force families choose to live. We have eliminated almost 33,000 inadequate homes since the program started in 1998, with another 2,400 privatized homes to be replaced or renovated by the end of Fiscal Year 2019.

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) continues to be a critical entitlement for our Airmen and families. We supported the proposal to gradually slow the annual BAH increases by an additional four percent over the next two to three years until rates cover 95 percent of housing rental and utilities costs. We felt this was necessary given the top-line budget, yet certainly not desirable. We stand adamantly opposed to the proposal to eliminate dual BAH for our joint-spouse Airmen and reduced BAH for our single Airmen who reside together. Every American who volunteers to serve our country does so in his or her own right and is individually entitled to the compensation that comes with military service. The proposal compromises that entitlement, penalizing a military member for marrying or considering living with another brave volunteer. If the proposal is implemented, enlisted dual-military couples would lose between \$20,000 to \$50,000 of their annual compensation depending on their grade and current assignment. We simply cannot implement such a proposal.

In this stringent fiscal environment, we continue to invest in sustaining and modernizing government-owned housing overseas. Approval of our requirement for \$61.4 million this year will improve 216 housing units at Okinawa, Japan and two family housing units at Moron Air Base, Spain. Another \$274.4 million is programmed this year for leases, family housing operations and maintenance for government-owned homes, and for privatized housing oversight.

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As with family housing, we are making strides eliminating inadequate dormitories from our inventory of 804 dormitories. This year, if Congress supports the President's Budget request, we will invest \$94 million to build new training dormitories at Joint Base San Antonio–Lackland, Texas and Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington.

Military Construction

For several years, limited budgets have forced the Air Force to take risk in infrastructure in order to invest in critical modernization efforts. This risk has significantly threatened our readiness and has led to aging facilities that are too expensive to operate. Today the average age of our facilities is 36 years old, and 33% of our facilities are more than 50 years old. Additionally, we have a backlog of \$22.6 billion of deferred maintenance and repair. In the current fiscally constrained and complex security environment, we are forced to prioritize our MILCON program to cover our most critical requirements. There is no question we must turn this negative trend around in the future, through a combination of Base Realignment and Closure and greater top-line budgets.

Our priorities include projects to enable core Air Force capabilities and take care of our people. We continue to heavily invest in child development centers and fitness centers, but requirements remain. We have \$186.8 million in projects programmed over the next five years to continue our efforts in this area, as well as an additional \$193.1 million in projects to recapitalize Basic Military Training infrastructure and \$27.3 million to improve dining facilities. The support of this Subcommittee is vital to the success of these MILCON programs supporting our Airmen and their families, yet you can see how far we still will need to go into the future.

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Conclusion

Chairman Dent, Ranking Member Bishop, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for this opportunity to represent our incredible Airmen and their families. Despite the many challenges we face, your Airmen, supported by some of the strongest families our nation will ever know, continue to stand ready. They fully understand the Joint Force depends on their ability to employ and enable airpower around the world. It's a source of extreme pride, and will continue to be even in the face of an unpredictable future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide insight into the Quality of Life of our Airmen and MILCON affecting our force. We appreciate your continued support for our brave Airmen and their supportive families, and for your commitment to protect the quality of life initiatives they need to confidently defend our nation. We're counting on each of you to lead our nation and ensure we have the resources to remain the World's Greatest Air Force.