Congressional Transcript

Budget and Appropriations Affairs (OUSD(C)BAA)

Action OPR: MARCORPS **OPR Suspense:** 04 Mar 08 **Transcript No.:** HACMQ-01-2008

Tasked Date: 19 Feb 08

Committee: HACMQ, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE SUBCOMMITTEE

Hearing Title: Quality of LIfe - Senior Enlisted **Hearing Date:** 07 Feb 08

Witness: Master Chief Petty Officer Joe Campa, Jr., Sergeant Major Carlton Kent, Chief Master Sergeant Rodney McKinley, Sergeant Major Kenneth Preston

Instructions

Attached is a copy of the transcript from the HACMQ, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE SUBCOMMITTEE hearing on Quality of LIfe - Senior Enlisted held on 07 Feb 08 for your review.

Please review all portions that pertain to your functional area of responsibility. Please return the transcript originally provided to you to: **Ms. Lucy Williams, OUSD(C), Rm 3D755, (703) 571-9183** by OPR Suspense Date.

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OUSD(C), Rm 3D755, (703) 571-9183
Transcript POC: Ms. Lucy Williams
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Given to GySgt Huezo
21 Feb 08 ~ 1245

TRANSCRIPT REVIEW

Witness: SgtMaj Kent
Date: 7 Feb 08
Hearing: Quality of Life – Senior Enlisted
Committee: HACMQ – Military Quality Of Life Subcomittee

Review Due Date: 1 Mar 08

Instructions: Attached is a copy of the transcript from the HACMQ, Quality of Life hearing held 7 February 2008.

Please review all portions that pertain to your functional area of responsibility. This includes all areas involving a witness from your office.

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Return the corrected transcript with this cover page to **Capt J.L. Reppert (4C349, 703-692-5750) or Ms. Annie Crum (4C349, 703-692-5745)** by the above Review Due Date (1 March 2008).

Inserts for the Record (IFRs)/ Questions for the Record (QFRs):

Questions associated with this hearing, either taken during the hearing or provided after the hearing, will be tasked to the subject matter experts for answers.

If your office has already provided answers to questions taken during the hearing please provide those answers to Capt J.L. Reppert (4C349, 703-692-5750) or Ms. Annie Crum (4C349, 703-692-5745). This will eliminate duplicate effort and ensure our answer is consistent.

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E.C. Gardiner

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Additional Comments:

1 MORNINGSIDE PARTNERS, LLC

2 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND
3 RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2009

4 Thursday, February 7, 2008

5 UNITED STATES ARMY
6 UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
7 UNITED STATES NAVY
8 UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

9 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND
10 RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2009

11 Thursday, February 7, 2008

12 UNITED STATES ARMY

13 WITNESS

14 KENNETH O. PRESTON, SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY

15 Mr. EDWARDS. [Presiding.] Let me officially open the
16 new year for our subcommittee. I want to welcome the
17 witnesses and everyone here today.
18 I am Congressman Chet Edwards, and this is my second
19 year as the subcommittee chairman of Military Construction
20 and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee. It is a
21 real pleasure for me to welcome back to our subcommittee
22 Congressman Zach Wamp, who is a personal friend of mine.
23 Zach and I have served in the House together for a number of
24 years, including on the Appropriations Committee. He is not
25 a new face to this subcommittee. He has previously served on
26 this subcommittee. He has also been a ranking member of
27 another Appropriations subcommittee.
28 Zach, welcome here. It is just great to have you. I
29 know of your long record of commitment to veterans and their
30 families and our troops and their families. We are honored
31 to have you with us.
32 Mr. WAMP. Thank you.
33 Mr. EDWARDS. I recognize you for a few moments for an
34 opening statement.
35 Mr. WAMP. I tell you what--
36 Mr. EDWARDS. Would you like make an opening statement
37 right now?
38 Mr. WAMP. Go ahead, Mr. Chairman. I will come on when
39 it is my turn.

40 Mr. EDWARDS. Judge Carter, welcome back.

41 Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

42 Mr. EDWARDS. Good to have you.

43 Let me also make some other introductions and make a few
44 comments as we begin here, before we have the testimony. I
45 want to introduce the staff that is so critical on this
46 subcommittee. We thank them. I consider the staff to be
47 without equal of the committee staffs in the Congress, and we
48 are proud to have them as our partners.

49 I want to mention that Martin Delgado is not new to the
50 Appropriations Committee, but new to this Appropriations
51 subcommittee. Martin, where are you? Welcome. It is great
52 to have you here.

53 I also welcome back Liz Dawson, and I want to welcome
54 Kelly Shea, who will work on the minority side. But let me
55 say that one of the proud traditions of this subcommittee,
56 and I know Zach and I want to continue this, is our tradition
57 of working on a bipartisan basis. When it comes to taking
58 care of veterans and our troops and their families, there is
59 not a Democratic or a Republican program. It is programs for
60 the great men and women who are sacrificing so much for our
61 country.

62 On the majority side, it is a true honor for me to work
63 with critically experienced staff. Carol Murphy is our chief
64 clerk. Carol? And we have Mary Arnold, who for nearly 20

65 years had a view of the basement of the Rayburn Building.
66 Her view is now out on the mall of the United States Capitol,
67 so life has improved for Mary. She does an outstanding job
68 of handling the administrative work of the subcommittee.
69 Tim Peterson and Donna Chevaz, both have done
70 outstanding work on Veterans' Affairs work. And then Walter
71 Herne, who is by my side, who is just an experienced,
72 talented, hard-working leader on military construction
73 issues. So I know I speak for Zach and me, and he will
74 comment later I am sure, but we consider it a real privilege
75 to work with such a critical, professional, bipartisan staff.
76 That is one of the real keys to the successes we have had in
77 past years.
78 In terms of our track record last year, let me just say
79 for the record, we make this subcommittee by working together
80 on a bipartisan basis. Truly, by any standard, we
81 accomplished a great deal. First and foremost, we provided
82 an additional $11.8 billion beginning with the fiscal year
83 2007, that continuing resolution, the Iraq war supplemental,
84 and then the fiscal year 2008 appropriation bill.
85 Together, we provided the largest single-year increase
86 in the VA's entire history, and made critically needed
87 investments in healthcare facilities, research, and claims
88 processing for veterans. Our bill passed the House by an
89 overwhelming vote of 409-2, and we are going to try to work

90 on those two this year and see if we can get that. But I
91 think that vote is a reflection of the great tradition that
92 we continued last years, with this committee working for the
93 benefit of our veterans and our troops, not for partisan
94 motivations.

95 We have a great record to build on and we are going to
96 keep fighting for veterans and the quality of life for
97 servicemen and-women and their great families.

98 To our witnesses, let me say that is not by happenstance
99 that we asked you to honor us by being the first witnesses in
100 the first hearing each year, because over the years we have
101 found that our top noncommissioned officers have been the
102 most effective voices for our servicemen and-women and their
103 families. There are probably times where you have the right
104 to wonder when you leave this room, well, did anybody hear me
105 or not? Let me just tell you tangibly that many of the
106 accomplishments for military construction and our troops were
107 the result of your previous testimony.

108 Specifically, very specifically, it was your testimony
109 over the last 2 years that convinced this subcommittee to
110 make a new initiative, the Military Family Initiative, where
111 you told us that one of the top quality of life challenges
112 was finding affordable, accessible healthcare for families
113 that are sacrificing an awful lot with the kind of op-tempo
114 we are facing. As a result of your testimony, we put

115 together $130 million for 16 new childcare centers. Three of
116 those were in the administration request, and 13 of those
117 were added by this subcommittee. So we do listen to you.
118 Your testimony is very important and that is why we are so
119 glad to have you here today.
120 Let me, before we proceed in terms of introductions of
121 our witnesses, let me offer the floor and room to my
122 colleague, Mr. Wamp. Again, welcome to this great
123 subcommittee. Welcome back.
124 Mr. WAMP. Mr. Chairman, it is hard to put in words the
125 emotion that I felt yesterday and today as I met these four
126 great Americans one-on-one in my office and listened to their
127 stories and asked about their lives, and realized that they
128 represent so many that are willing to lay it on the line for
129 our country and our freedoms and the principles that we hold
130 so dear. Their faces and their eyes and their ears, and just
131 listening to your lives, and each of you with a 30-plus year
132 commitment to the service that you are in, at the ground
133 level. It is just an inspiration.
134 So I want to open by thanking you for your service and
135 every single person that you represent for their service,
136 saying that in my professional life outside of my wife and
137 kids, this is the highest honor and the greatest privilege
138 that I have ever had to be associated with this committee and
139 the work that it is tasked to do, to serve those who serve

140 our country.

141 It reminds me of William Wilberforce when they asked him
142 about the leadership role he wanted to take in the Parliament
143 in Great Britain, and he basically said he wanted to be the
144 man who served the men who influenced the nation, and not
145 necessarily the man who influenced the nation, but the man
146 who served the men who influenced the nation. That is the
147 role that I feel like I can play.

148 Chairman Edwards is exactly the right guy for his party
149 to put in this chair at this moment in history because he is
150 a patriotic blue dog Texas Democrat who appreciates the
151 military and their role every minutes of every day. I am
152 just so honored to be at his side in a minority role to
153 support the bipartisan work of this committee.

154 I was born at Fort Benning, Georgia when my dad was on
155 active duty, and my older brother cost $8 to be born and I
156 cost $12 to be born.

157 [Laughter.]

158 My parents often joke if they got their money's worth.

159 [Laughter.]

160 My nephew is at Camp Bucca outside Baghdad right now
161 with the First Field Artillery Brigade of the Tennessee
162 National Guard. My other nephew will graduate boot camp at
163 Parris Island 3 weeks from tomorrow. That makes this close
164 to home. It is an honor. It is a high privilege. This is

165 such an important time. I want to commend Mr. Wicker, who is
166 now a senator, and certainly the chairman, and this new
167 majority, for the commitment that they made to these
168 priorities last year, because I think that helped us bring
169 the Congress together so that we could speak with one voice
170 standing behind the men and women in uniform.
171 When I heard these four leaders yesterday give personal
172 examples and stories of what these dollars are doing for the
173 quality of life, and how much better housing is today than
174 when I served on this committee in 1997 and 1998, how many
175 more Job Corps centers there are, and how many things that
176 were absolutely unacceptable that are much better today, even
177 though we have so many more needs and we are stretched so
178 thin, and we are experiencing the pain of multiple long-term
179 deployments. Yet, the quality of life is improving so that
180 we can retain and recruit the best Americans in this
181 all-volunteer force.
182 It bodes well. We have a lot of work to do. I am
183 committed to partnering with you. I understand going in that
184 I am joining the best staff front office on Capitol Hill,
185 either side, any committee, with this committee here. And
186 man, it is a great opportunity to serve.
187 Mr. Carter, Ms. Granger, Mr. Young, Mr. Crenshaw and I,
188 this is a pretty good minority team we have over here, Mr.
189 Chairman. So we look forward to working with you and the

190 majority team in getting this work done. What a pleasure. I
191 couldn't ask for more. I am grateful for the opportunity--
192 Mr. EDWARDS. Very eloquent statement. Let me add to
193 what he said about Mr. Wicker. We will miss Mr. Wicker, but
194 he left an indelible mark for our veterans and our
195 service-members and their families by his great leadership.
196 I know he will continue that commitment in the Senate. Thank
197 you for saluting him.
198 At this point, let me go through some brief
199 introductions. Understandably, if I were to give each of the
200 witnesses the entire biography, we would be here most of the
201 afternoon, because they would not have the positions they had
202 it not been for an unbelievable distinguished record of
203 accomplishment and service. I will introduce all four of you
204 and then we will go the opening statements.
205 The first witness I would like to introduce is the
206 sergeant major of the Army, Sergeant Major Kent Preston. He
207 is a returning witness, and was sworn into his present
208 position on January 15, 2004. He has over 32 years of
209 service in the Army. Thank you for those 32 years, sergeant
210 major. He served with the Fist Cavalry Division at Fort
211 Hood; was command sergeant major for the Combined Taskforce 7
212 in Baghdad prior to becoming sergeant major of the Army.
213 I anticipate Sergeant Major Preston will introduce them
214 formally, but let me also note that there are others that are

215 here that I don't recognize. Please excuse me up front, but
216 I do want to note and salute for their service, and thank
217 them for being here: Command Sergeant Major John Gipe from
218 the National Guard; and Command Sergeant Major Leon Caffie
219 from the Army Reserve. Thank you both. We know this is a
220 total Army today, and thank you for your tremendous
221 leadership, for being here.
222 Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent.
223 Sergeant Major Kent is a new witness. We hope you will
224 choose to come back again.
225 Sergeant Major KENT. I will do that, sir.
226 [Laughter.]
227 Mr. EDWARDS. You are in a friendly environment here,
228 sergeant major. He became sergeant major of the Marine Corps
229 on April 25, 2007. Congratulations to you for that distinct
230 honor. He has over 31 years of service in the Marines. He
231 served as sergeant major of the Marine Forces Europe and the
232 First Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton prior to
233 his current position. Welcome.
234 Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Joe Campa, Jr.
235 We are sorry that your son could not be with us again this
236 year, but you tell him we are thinking about him today. It
237 was great having him here--
238 Master Chief CAMPA. Thank you, sir.
239 Mr. EDWARDS. --at your testimony last year. The master

240 chief's wife, Mrs. Campa, is here. Mrs. Campa, where are
241 you? I want to especially thank you. In my book, military
242 spouses and children are the unsung heroes and heroines of
243 our nation's defense, and we don't often enough thank you.
244 While you may not wear the nation's military uniform, you
245 serve and sacrifice every day. Thank you to you and your
246 children for their contributions to our defense. In thanking
247 you, we want to share that respect for every other military
248 spouse here, or anywhere in our country. Thank you, Mrs.
249 Campa, for being with us today.

250 Master Chief Campa has 27 years of service in the Navy.
251 He served as command master chief for the USS Curtis Wilbur
252 and the USS Frank Cable, and command master chief of Joint
253 Taskforce Guantanamo, and is a graduate of the Naval War
254 College. Welcome back again.

255 Master Chief CAMPA. Thank you, sir.

256 Mr. EDWARDS. Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
257 Rodney McKinley is a returning witness. Welcome back to the
258 subcommittee. He was appointed on June 30, 2006 to his
259 present position, and now has 28 years of service in the Air
260 Force. He has served as command chief master sergeant at
261 major wing command levels, and was deployed to Southwest Asia
262 in support of OEF and OIF. Thank you for that, as well as
263 your distinguished service as well.

264 Thank you all for being here. Without objection, your

265 full testimony will be submitted for the record. I would
266 like to begin now and recognize you, if you could approximate
267 5 minutes in your opening comments, and then we will turn it
268 over to members for questions and discussion.
269 Sergeant Major Preston?
270 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Mr. Chairman, Congressman Wamp,
271 committee members, thanks very much for the opportunity to
272 sit before you today and represent the men and women of
273 America's Army. Your support this past year has continued to
274 support us. Your support today has had a tremendous impact
275 on the Army. On behalf of the soldiers and their families
276 and Army civilians, I want to start by saying thank you for
277 what this committee has done for all of them out there, not
278 only over the time that I have been up here and testified,
279 but for all the years before this, so thanks very much.
280 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.
281 Sergeant Major PRESTON. I have with me today, sir, you
282 have introduced the command sergeant major of the Army
283 National Guard, Command Sergeant Major John Gipe. He is the
284 senior enlisted adviser for Lieutenant General Clyde Vaughn
285 for the National Guard. And I have, of course, Command
286 Sergeant Major Leon Caffie, who is the senior enlisted
287 adviser for Lieutenant General Jack Stultz for the Army
288 Reserve.
289 Both of them represent our citizen soldiers, and they

290 represent 50 percent of America's Army. They play a vital
291 role in defending our nation. Your Army today has more than
292 250,000 soldiers forward-deployed to 80 countries around the
293 world. We have more than 142,000 soldiers currently deployed
294 in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan.

295 General Casey earlier in his tenure as the Army chief of
296 staff searched for a way to describe the state of the Army,
297 and he uses the term "out of balance." We are not broken or
298 hallow, but the conditions of persistent conflict have
299 strained our Army resources. Those resources are our
300 soldiers, our families and our equipment. These resources
301 are strained to a point where we are consumed by the demands
302 of the current conflict and cannot do all the things we need
303 to do to sustain the force and prepare for the future.

304 With your continued support, we intend to restore
305 balance to the Army. Our recruiting and retention programs
306 are a success. Last year, we recruited over 170,000 men and
307 women, and reenlisted more than 127,000 soldiers. We
308 appreciate your continued support to our efforts, as they
309 allow us to sustain the quality of the all-volunteer force.

310 We are seeing indicators of stress on the force as we
311 enter the 7th year of the Global War on Terror. Increases in
312 suicides and post-traumatic stress disorder cases are two of
313 these indicators. Our Army soldier and family programs
314 mitigate these stresses, and we continue to resource and

315 support these critical programs and initiatives. Last year,
316 sir, Congress funded $900 million toward traumatic brain
317 injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. I want to say
318 thank you up front for that support.
319 Your support has provided improvements to the equipment,
320 soldier and family housing, soldier barracks, child and youth
321 programs, pay gains, and a host of other important quality of
322 life initiatives. I ask your support for one more critical
323 quality of life issue, medical care. Soldiers and families
324 routinely identify access to quality medical care as a
325 priority for them, and a primary reason they opt to stay with
326 the Army team.
327 We have invested heavily this past year in caring for
328 our wounded warriors returning from combat. The medical
329 challenges we faced a year ago were not limited to Walter
330 Reed. We cannot have consistent world-class healing
331 environments without proper investment in medical facilities
332 and improved quality and access to care. Our medical
333 facilities are well maintained and operated, but they are old
334 and not configured or constructed to provide the full range
335 of treatments available in modern medical facilities. Our
336 soldiers and families deserve the best access and quality of
337 care that we can provide, and I ask your support in achieving
338 this goal.
339 Over the last 4 years, one of the top five

340 recommendations from our soldiers has been the transfer by
341 soldiers of better GI bill benefits to their families. The
342 2002 National Defense Authorization Act gave the services the
343 authority to allow service-members the ability to transfer
344 Montgomery GI bill benefits to their spouses and their
345 children. This act would allow spouses to begin using
346 benefits immediately, while children would have to wait until
347 the soldier had completed 10 years of service.
348 I ask for your support in amending the law to allow the
349 transfer of benefits to eligible children when needed,
350 without the prior 10-year waiting period, and your
351 consideration of providing funding for this initiative. We
352 would also at a minimum like this law to immediately apply to
353 the spouses and children of fallen soldiers. That is really
354 where we see the emphasis in order to help.
355 Mr. Chairman, committee members, thank you, and I look
356 forward to your questions.

357 [The information follows:]

358 ********** INSERT **********

359 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you, sergeant major.

360 Sergeant Major Kent?

361 Thursday, February 7, 2008

362 UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

363 WITNESS

364 CARLTON W. KENT, SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS

365 Sergeant Major KENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
366 Congressman Wamp, and all the members for what you do for our
367 service-members today.
368 At the Marine Corps, we are focused on taking care of
369 our warriors and their families. That is the key for us,
370 especially in operational tempo that stresses the force that
371 equates to stress on the families. With their contribution
372 to the mission, comes great sacrifice, and our families can
373 be the most brittle part of the deployment equation.
374 It is our moral obligation as a Marine Corps to ensure
375 that their needs are provided for. I am pleased to report
376 that the Marine Corps continues to make positive changes for
377 Marines and their families that will benefit them for
378 generations to come. We are making investments in our
379 quality of life, and particularly our family support
380 programs. Actions are underway to broadly refresh, enhance
381 and improve installation infrastructure and support
382 mechanisms.
383 Additionally, housing and infrastructure are key quality
384 of life components. Marines and their families are grateful
385 for your continued support and attention to the condition and
386 states of our housing, our barracks, our childcare centers,
387 dining facilities, and fitness centers. Particularly, we are
388 most appreciative of your attention to the barracks and your
389 support of the commandant's bachelor quarters. Barracks are

390 a critical element in supporting our warfighters. Providing
391 appropriate and comfortable living conditions positively
392 impacts the morale and the development of these dedicated
393 young men and women.
394 On behalf of your Marines and their families, I thank
395 you for being such strong quality of life advocates. Your
396 unwavering support and interest in the welfare of Marine
397 families continues to be vital to our mission accomplishment.
398 I have submitted my written statement for the record, and I
399 look forward to your questions.

400 [The information follows:]

401 ********** INSERT **********

402 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you very much, sergeant major.

403 Master Chief Campa?

404 Thursday, February 7, 2008

405 UNITED STATES NAVY

406 WITNESS

407 JOE R. CAMPA, JR., MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
408 OF THE NAVY

409 Master Chief CAMPA. Thank you.

410 Mr. Chairman, Congressman Wamp, distinguished members of
411 the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak
412 today. It is with great pride that I come before you on
413 behalf of our sailors and their families. Joining me is my
414 wife, Diana. In addition to being my wife and the mother of
415 my children, she serves as the ombudsman at large for our
416 Navy, representing over 223,000 Navy families. Also joining
417 me is the force master chief of our great Navy Reserve,
418 Master Chief Dave Pennington.

419 From combat operations to humanitarian relief efforts,
420 our sailors continue to meet the high expectations the
421 American people have of them in defense of our great nation.
422 I wish to express their gratitude for the hard work of
423 Congress in supporting the many initiatives over the last
424 year that have directly improved their quality of life. Our
425 Navy has moved beyond the blue waters of our oceans, and as
426 of January this year has contributed over 63,000 individual
427 augmentees since the beginning of ground operations in Iraq
428 and Afghanistan.

429 Due to the high demand of our maritime forces and with
430 the continued role of these non-traditional ground support
431 missions, pillars of support such as healthcare, childcare
432 and housing are more critical than ever. My wife Diana and I
433 have seen firsthand the impact on family stability and peace

434 of mind that these traditional pillars of support provide
435 when a sailor is deployed.
436 Navy families are strong, resilient and proud of their
437 contributions during this critical time in our nation's
438 history. Surge deployments, individual augmentation, and
439 duty in places our Navy has never been has resulted in the
440 need for strong family support. The programs and initiatives
441 we presently have in place to support our families must
442 continue to evolve as the needs of our families change.
443 In my travels throughout the fleet, I continue to be
444 inspired by the dedicated efforts and the patriotism of all
445 our men and women. They are succeeding because they believe
446 in who they are and in what they do. Our total force of
447 active duty and Reserve sailors continues to rise to the
448 challenges of world events, as they always have. They do
449 this because they are keenly aware of the trust, confidence
450 and responsibility that the American people have in them, and
451 because they believe in the rich tradition of our naval
452 service.
453 Mr. Chairman, committee members, I am honored for the
454 opportunity to speak here today, and I look forward to your
455 questions. Thank you.
456 [The information follows:]

457 ********** INSERT **********

458 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you very much, master chief.

459 Chief Master Sergeant McKinley?

460 Thursday, February 7, 2008

461 UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

462 WITNESS

463 RODNEY J. MCKINLEY, CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT OF THE AIR FORCE

464 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman
465 and committee members. I am honored to speak to you on
466 behalf of the 685,000 airmen proudly serving our nation.
467 They are active, Guard and Reserve, officers and enlisted and
468 civilians. I am honored to collaborate with my fellow
469 warriors on quality of life issues impacting all our military
470 members and their families.
471 Sir, I want to thank you and this committee for your
472 invaluable support. Thank you for supporting pay raises and
473 continuing reenlistment bonuses. We are having successes
474 with our privatized housing efforts, and we appreciate the
475 authority you gave us to pursue this new avenue to better
476 house our airmen and their families. Thank you for visiting
477 our wounded warriors and their families, and thank you
478 especially for taking time and effort to visit our deployed
479 airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.
480 Your efforts pay huge dividends for all military
481 personnel and their families. Because we are an
482 all-volunteer force and because the Air Force mission
483 especially depends on highly educated, trained and focused
484 and experienced airmen, your support has a direct impact on
485 our recruiting, retention and overall combat readiness.
486 America's airmen are in the fight.
487 Our airmen have been continuously and globally engaged
488 in combat and contingency operations for over 17 years, from

489 Desert Shield and Desert Storm, throughout the 1990s, to
490 ongoing engagements in the Global War on Terror. In total at
491 any given moment, over 208,000 active duty Guard and Reserve
492 airmen directly contribute to combatant commands, contingency
493 operations, humanitarian efforts, and joint and coalition
494 combat operations around the world.

495 Spreading their wings over America following 9/11,
496 airmen of Operation Noble Eagle continue to protect our
497 nation's air corridors and maritime approaches, having flown
498 more than 51,000 missions. Nearly 7,000 airmen continue to
499 serve in lieu of ground component personnel in Iraq, in
500 addition to the 27,000 airmen deployed to 112 worldwide
501 locations to fight in the Global War on Terror.

502 They are taking the fight to the bad guys. Over the
503 past 12 months, Air Force strike missions against enemy
504 locations and forces have increased 171 percent in Iraq and
505 22 percent in Afghanistan, proving their effectiveness in
506 counterinsurgency operations. But we also believe the maxim:
507 Where there are rooms, there is progress. Therefore, your
508 airmen have directly taken on projects to rebuild Iraq and
509 Afghanistan, building schools, digging wells, building roads,
510 rebuilding lives, winning trust, and forging enduring
511 relations. Our airmen interact daily with allies in host
512 nations, and they showcase America's image of strength,
513 freedom and hope.

514 Quality of life is key to success. Our airmen deserve
515 the best support available, and we are committed to providing
516 the highest quality of life standards possible, a commitment
517 that points to our recruiting and retention successes. Our
518 recruiting standards remain high. We have achieved
519 tremendous recruiting success and continue to select airmen
520 from among the most educated, motivated and highly qualified
521 volunteers. Knowledge and innovation are hallmarks of Air
522 Force heritage and service culture. So we are particularly
523 focused on training, education and professional development.
524 Our airmen are the most highly educated in our nation's
525 history. We firmly believe it is an indicator of future
526 mission success.

527 America's airmen now receive core and expeditionary
528 knowledge and skills training throughout every phase of their
529 career. We are also offering more numerous and specialized
530 educational opportunities along the way. We are emphasizing
531 post-performance support in assisting airmen as they reunite
532 with their families and return to their communities.

533 We have had considerable success in providing care and
534 assistance to severely injured airmen and their families. We
535 want to build upon those successes with more job placement,
536 education and training opportunities for these great
537 Americans. The civilian job market actively seeks our
538 trained and technically qualified airmen. We must continue

539 to offer viable and competitive reenlistment bonuses and
540 special duty pay in our critical job areas to retain our
541 qualified airmen.

542 We appreciate continued congressional support as we work
543 to meet our retention goals and resolve shortages we have in
544 some critical Air Force specialties. Additionally, every Air
545 Force leader understands we recruit airmen, but we retain
546 families. Our airmens' retention in the Air Force and
547 effectiveness in executing their mission and professionalism
548 representing America to the world directly reflects how well
549 we support them and their families.

550 We strongly advocate education and employment
551 initiatives specifically targeted to mitigate some of the
552 economic challenges of our military families that they
553 currently face. Nearly half of all service-members are
554 married and have children. And of course, these families
555 move frequently, this means things such as transfer of school
556 credits, in-state tuition eligibility, and professional
557 credentials for military dependents can become particularly
558 difficult for military families and can easily affect a
559 service-member's decision to continue serving.

560 We are eager to work with Congress and the states to
561 find solutions. Our airmen and fellow service-members should
562 never have to choose between caring for their family and
563 serving their country.

564 Mr. Chairman, we are working hard to continually improve
565 how we develop and care for our airmen and their families,
566 with emphasis on families. Our base commanders and their
567 local service providers are, of course, on the frontlines of
568 our efforts to maintain and improve services to our airmen,
569 their families, veterans and retirees. Local control of real
570 property and resources, combined with the natural
571 responsiveness of direct customer feedback, has proven to be
572 the most effective, efficient way for service providers to
573 respond to customers' needs, prioritize projects, and tailor
574 services.

575 We are preparing for tomorrow's challenges. We must set
576 conditions today to realize future victories. Nearly 17
577 years of continuous global operations have put extreme stress
578 on our people and equipment. It has become exceedingly
579 difficult, costly and time consuming to maintain aircraft and
580 equipment of declining military utility. These are
581 frustrations I hear and see every day, especially from our
582 deployed airmen. Quality equipment and work environment have
583 a lot to do with job satisfaction, and therefore impact
584 morale and retention.

585 To successfully meet future challenges, maintain our
586 advantages, and maximize results, we must keep pace with the
587 talent of our 21st century airmen and ensure they have the
588 best equipment, facilities, and resources available. With

589 your continued support, we will maintain and sharpen our
590 nation's global vigilance, global reach and global power
591 advantages, America's edge.
592 In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the
593 committee again for the outstanding support you extend to all
594 service-members and their families. We fully recognize the
595 link between readiness and the issues that extend from our
596 airmens' quality of life, to their duties around the world,
597 on the flightline, in the operations centers, and on the
598 battlefield. America's airmen, your airmen, stand shoulder
599 to shoulder with their fellow American warriors defending
600 this great nation and our way of life.
601 A new generation of America's airmen continues to do
602 what our airmen have always done in peace, conflict, crisis
603 and war. They set conditions for success across the entire
604 spectrum of military operations. It has been more than a
605 half-century since an American service-member has been
606 attacked from the sky. Today, the airspace is secure.
607 Thank you again for the opportunity to appear with my
608 fellow warriors and represent America's airmen before you
609 today. I look forward to your questions.
610 [The information follows:]

611 ********** INSERT **********

612 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

613 Thank you all for your excellent statements, and even
614 more importantly, for your lifetime of service to our
615 country.

616 Chief Master Sergeant McKinley, to test the
617 effectiveness of your testimony today, while you were
618 speaking about the need to try to guarantee in-state tuition,
619 an amendment that Ms. Boyda and I had cosponsored on the
620 Higher Education Reauthorization Act passed while you were
621 speaking on the floor, that will say if your son or daughter
622 has started college with in-state tuition, and then our
623 country has asked your family to move to another state, your
624 child will be able to continue in-state tuition at that
625 college. Or if you are living at a post or serving at a
626 military installation in any state in the country, you will
627 qualify for in-state tuition. There are five states that
628 don't even allow you to get in-state tuition even if you are
629 living in that state as a result of your military service, so
630 very effective testimony.

631 [Laughter.]

632 Thank you for mentioning that.

633 Let me welcome Mr. Crenshaw and Mr. Young and Mr. Bishop
634 for coming.

635 And before I just make a few administrative comments,
636 Chairman Young, we are so honored that you are on this

637 subcommittee again this year. There is no member of this
638 House, Democrat or Republican, who has done more for military
639 families than you have as chairman of the full committee, and
640 as ranking member. I would like to recognize you if you
641 would like to make any comments before we start our 5-minute
642 round.

643 Mr. YOUNG. No, sir. I will wait my turn.

644 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay. A humble servant of our military.
645 Thank you for being here, and thank you all for being here.

646 Just a couple of administrative things, if I could,
647 since this is our first hearing of the year. Everyone knows
648 the process. Again, we are going to begin every subcommittee
649 hearing on time out of respect to the witnesses' time and
650 schedules, and respect to other members' schedules.

651 In terms of the questions, we are going to recognize
652 members, after the ranking member is recognized. We will go
653 through questions based on seniority, based on whether you
654 were here at the start of the meeting, and if you weren't
655 here when we started the meeting, your order of questioning
656 will be based on the order in which you came into the room.

657 The only other administrative point I wanted to mention,
658 out of respect, again, to everybody's time, we have invested
659 in high technology this year. This is our 5-minute clock.
660 What I am going to do is just do a light tap when a member's
661 time is down to 1 minute left, and I will do a total tap when

662 there are 5 minutes. I will ask each member if they can
663 finish that thought or sentence quickly.
664 So if a member doesn't speak for 4 minutes and 45
665 seconds, then asks 10 questions in the next 15 seconds, we
666 will allow the witnesses to have 1 minute beyond that 5
667 minutes to answer your questions. So if you want a 2-or
668 3-minute answer, my colleagues, don't make a 4.5-minute
669 statement. Mr. Wamp and I talked about it. We are doing
670 that out of respect for everybody's schedules.
671 At that point, I think it would be appropriate to start
672 the first questions of this committee year with our ranking
673 member, Mr. Wamp.
674 Mr. WAMP. You are too gracious. One thing that I
675 observed yesterday meeting with you, and then listening
676 today, is that in the 10 years since I last served on this
677 subcommittee, two things I think are profound. I may be
678 wrong, but I think that these branches of our armed forces
679 cooperate more today than they did 10 years ago.
680 I was taken back 10 years ago to how much competition
681 there was, and frankly sometimes that was pointed-elbow kind
682 of competition. It sure does seem to me, and there are
683 issues we will talk about today and in the future where you
684 cooperate a whole lot more and are sharing a whole lot more,
685 and more like a combined force team. I know war has a way of
686 bringing people together, but it is noticeable.

687 The second thing is that the whole concept of
688 privatizing housing and improving the housing on-base and
689 off-base, off-post, dramatically has changed. This was just
690 beginning to start in 1997 and 1998 when I was on the
691 subcommittee.

692 So I kind of want to start on that front and let each of
693 you, any of you, say what is happening with housing and how
694 important it is. I know Sergeant Major Kent, you told me a
695 story yesterday about Camp Lejeune, I think.

696 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

697 Mr. WAMP. And the radical transformation just in the
698 last few years of housing, and what a difference it makes
699 either retention or recruitment in knowing where you are
700 going to live and where your wife and children or husband and
701 children may be when you are away.

702 Do you want to start?

703 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir. I will tell you, you
704 know, I mentioned a story yesterday to the congressman. I
705 mentioned I was stationed at a place called Camp Lejeune. It
706 was Midway Park, back in the early 1980s. If you had seen
707 that housing back then, I will tell you. That housing was
708 some housing that no one wanted to live in. And just about a
709 month go I went past that same housing and that housing was
710 torn down and brand new housing is up. If you asked the
711 average Marine what do you think about housing today, they

712 will tell you that it is the best of the best.

713 We have our junior Marines living in housing today that
714 would not touch the housing anywhere else. I will also tell
715 you that the family members are very honored to live in the
716 housing, and it is because of the members sitting here today,
717 that the Marines and their families are able to live in such
718 great housing. I would like to personally thank you for
719 that. But we still have some work to do, still have some
720 work to do, so we are looking forward to it, but I will tell
721 you today's housing is right on the mark.

722 Mr. WAMP. [OFF MIKE]

723 Mr. YOUNG. Mr. Chairman, if I might?

724 Mr. EDWARDS. Yes, absolutely.

725 Mr. YOUNG. I have met with the chiefs of the enlisted
726 ranks prior to the meeting. We are meeting with the surgeon
727 generals on the very important subject to PTSD, so I am going
728 to go over to the other subcommittee and may have a few
729 questions for them.

730 Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, are there any questions you
731 would like to ask?

732 Mr. YOUNG. I am advised that the surgeon generals have
733 already begun their testimony. I am sorry. I want to
734 welcome these guys here. They are good. I had a chance to
735 visit with them in the office personally. My wife can tell
736 you some stories about a couple of them.

737 [Laughter.]

738 Thank you.

739 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

740 Mr. WAMP. Well, then moving beyond housing, we may come
741 back to that, but let me also ask, and I want to start,
742 again, with you Sergeant Major Kent, because you have to grow
743 your force rapidly.

744 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

745 Mr. WAMP. And I know we are not going to get into
746 specifics of the president's budget request, but I was
747 fascinated studying it on the dollars that go with this rapid
748 increase here, and there are changes across the board. I
749 want to get to the Air Force and the reductions in the
750 president's budget request may be in the second or third
751 round.

752 But Sergeant Major Preston has had a challenge
753 maintaining high school graduation rates in the Army, so that
754 we can keep the quality as we meet the needs and face the
755 challenges. So for both of you all, how do you ramp up that
756 quickly and maintain that level of proficiency? And then how
757 are you doing, Sergeant Major Preston, at continuing to
758 improve that level of high school graduation rates among the
759 people you enlist?

760 Sergeant Major KENT. Sir, I would love to start. First
761 of all, on the recruiting piece, we are doing really, really

762 well. We are maintaining the standard. We have 96 percent
763 high school grads, close to 96 percent. That says a lot
764 about our force out there that is finding these young
765 individuals and bringing them in. And we have some great
766 individuals out there that actually want to join the Marine
767 Corps.

768 We are giving some type of bonuses to individuals in
769 critical jobs just to get them in, but it is not a vast
770 amount of money. I will tell you, our recruiters are selling
771 a title, not the money. They are saying, okay, if you want
772 to earn the title, you join the Marine Corps. I can tell
773 you, last fiscal year which ended September 30, our goal was
774 to increase by 5,000, which would have put us at 184,000
775 Marines. But our recruiting force did better than that.
776 They got us at 186,000 Marines in the Marine Corps. So we
777 are ahead by 2,000 Marines right now.

778 And we are not low on quality, gentlemen. I can
779 guarantee you that. Our commandant has made his focus at not
780 lowering the quality in the corps.

781 Mr. WAMP. Sergeant Major Preston?

782 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, last year we recruited as
783 an Army, active Guard and Reserve, 170,000 soldiers.
784 Specifically, when you look at the active duty Army, 80,000
785 soldiers, and of course 79 percent of those were high school
786 graduates. The rest of those were GED equivalents. So as

787 far as the standards for coming in, the quality that is
788 there, they all met the DOD standard that is established.
789 They all have to have the high school graduate or the
790 equivalent to come into the force.
791 In the past, our benchmark has been 90 percent high
792 school graduate, with 10 percent GED equivalent. As I said,
793 we dropped to 79 percent that were high school graduates this
794 last year. But still when you look across the force, there
795 are five categories--category one through category five. We
796 take nobody out of category five. Historically, we have
797 always limited ourselves to 4 percent or less in category
798 four, and everybody else has always been in category one
799 through three. We are still on that benchmark.
800 The only thing that we missed this last year was the
801 drop in the high school graduates versus the GED equivalent.
802 There are a lot more initiatives out there. We have a lot of
803 recruiting programs that we put into place. We are now at
804 (INAUDIBLE) with the Army National Guard and the Army
805 Reserve. There are a couple of programs out there I will
806 just talk about very quickly.
807 When you look at the number of noncommissioned officers
808 we have out there right now today that are recruiting, we
809 have almost 7,000 recruiters out there for the active duty
810 Army. There are about 5,100 for the Army National Guard, and
811 about 1,800 for the Army Reserve. What we are going to do

812 now is we are going to partner, with those Army National
813 Guard and the Army Reserve recruiters. Under the Active
814 First program, we are offering bonuses out there for young
815 men and women to come in to serve anywhere from 2, 3, or 4
816 years in the active duty Army, and then once they finish that
817 commitment, to transfer into the Army National Guard and the
818 Army Reserve. So there are a lot of programs out there that
819 we are working.

820 Mr. WAMP. I need to go over my time by a few seconds.

821 Mr. EDWARDS. No, the ranking member has that right, so
822 very good. Take whatever time you need.

823 Mr. Bishop?

824 Mr. BISHOP. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

825 Gentlemen, thank you for your appearance. I, too, have
826 an obligation across the hall at the other hearing with the
827 surgeons general, but the testimony here is somewhat similar.

828 The first thing I would like to get to, though, is on
829 the Marine Corps particularly, but it will affect all of you
830 gentlemen, I think, the recent murder of Lance Corporal Maria
831 Lauterbach, with the investigators stating that the base
832 authorities didn't consider Corporal Laurean, who was
833 suspected of murdering here, and also accused of raping her
834 at Camp Lejeune base.

835 Can you explain once the services have someone accused
836 of a sexual assault or domestic violence-type offence, what

837 the military does to protect the victim? And is there a
838 general policy for a victim of sexual assault or domestic
839 violence? What kind of rights do they have? Do you have
840 specific programs?
841 Obviously, I assume that you have medical care, but if
842 you could comment on that. And how do you deal with sexual
843 assaults in combat zones? And what are the command
844 responsibilities under those circumstances?
845 Sergeant Major KENT. Thank you, sir.
846 First of all, sir, that was a tragedy that happened to
847 Corporal Lauterbach. But I will also tell you, sir, that we
848 have some things in place starting with the leadership. If
849 someone is accused of doing something that is sexual assault
850 to an individual in the Marine Corps, first of all, the
851 command, they will start and they will separate the
852 individuals. Then from there, it is an investigation that
853 will be started. From that investigation, it comes out, sir,
854 then they decide if they put what we call a military order on
855 this individual to ensure that this individual does not go up
856 to the victim or anywhere close to the victim.
857 I cannot really talk about this case because it is still
858 in the legal process right now, but I can tell you, sir,
859 there were things in place to actually, you know, protect the
860 corporal. But I will also tell you that we are on top of
861 this thing right now, and also with the state officials and

862 federal officials. Legally, you know, I just don't want to
863 touch on the process because there are a lot of legal things
864 going on, sir. But I will also tell you that if a victim is
865 accused of doing something. Well, if someone is accused of
866 doing something to the victim, then that person is separated
867 from that victim, and then we start the legal process.
868 Mr. BISHOP. Does that pertain to the other services
869 also?
870 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Yes, sir. Sir, just to add to
871 what Sergeant Major Kent said, we have trained advocates
872 right now in all of our units out there, that are trained to
873 specifically handle and work with a victim for sexual
874 assault. We also have victim assault coordinators on our
875 posts and installations, that really no one understands all
876 the different assets that are available to that victim to
877 bring that to bear.
878 And of course, to be able to sit down with a victim and
879 to talk about confidentiality or to open it out to an
880 investigation, the victim coordinator walks the individual
881 through that whole process. We have had a lot of success
882 over the last year since putting those programs into place.
883 Master Chief CAMPA. For the Navy, sir, we have a
884 similar process. Of course, you want to protect the victim.
885 One of the things that is often put in place is a military
886 protective order that is issued by the commanding officer

887 that directs the person that has been accused to stay away
888 from the victim. On similar things, a command investigation
889 is initiated, but like the Army, we have sexual assault
890 victim advocates that work with the victim and help take them
891 through the process. Those sexual assault victim advocates
892 are members of the command, but we also have further
893 resources at our Fleet and Family Support Centers that
894 support that whole process.

895 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, in the Air Force, we
896 have sexual assault response coordinators. If there is a
897 sexual assault or sexual whatever, the member gets a person
898 appointed to them, and we follow-up with that person to make
899 sure that they have someone they can continually talk to.
900 Every airman in the Air Force gets sexual assault training
901 every single year. We make sure this is a focus item on all
902 commanders' calls. We have hotlines for anybody to call to
903 have someone talk to them at any time. So we take this very
904 seriously, and I think we are doing a good job on this right
905 now.

906 Mr. BISHOP. Thank you.

907 Is my time up?

908 Mr. EDWARDS. Yes.

909 Mr. BISHOP. Okay.

910 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you, Mr. Bishop.

911 Judge Carter?

912 Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

913 Last year, we talked a lot about PTSD. We talked about
914 health services for our military, the very sad story about
915 the Marine who committed suicide while waiting in line to get
916 treated. I think we all reacted very positively and
917 attempted to try and do something about that.

918 With the 15-month deployments and the other stresses
919 that are being placed upon our military, I would like to know
920 how you feel about this mental health component? Are we
921 making process on the things we talked about last year, and I
922 would like to hear from you about that.

923 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, I will start. We started
924 this last year specifically for post-traumatic stress
925 disorder and (INAUDIBLE) injuries. We did a training series
926 across the Army. It ran from July to October of 2007.
927 Specifically, we started with the senior leadership, leaders
928 taking their soldiers, their subordinate leaders, and that
929 was driven all the way down to the lowest levels of command,
930 down at the company and platoon levels.

931 But the intent was to get the leadership out there
932 talking about what were the symptoms of mental hygiene and
933 post-traumatic stress disorder. But more importantly, what
934 that chain-teach did was it opened the doors for soldiers
935 within those commands knew and understood that the leadership
936 supported the program. It helps break that stigmatism and

937 the fear for a soldier to go and ask for help.

938 We still see some stigmatism out there to seek help
939 coming back for post-traumatic stress disorder, but it is a
940 stigmatism that is two-sided. It is from an individual
941 perspective, where an individual perceives that if he or she
942 asks for help, they are seen as being weak, or that they are
943 not effective as a soldier. And likewise, there is still a
944 stigmatism out there where the individual perceives that
945 their leadership would think less of them as a soldier, and
946 potentially impact them for assignments and promotions.

947 But we have a number of programs out there. The
948 chain-teach was very effective last year to really drive that
949 down to the lowest levels. You are a help, this committee,
950 and the investment that has been put into hiring those
951 healthcare professionals has also been a big help.

952 Sergeant Major KENT. On PTSD, sir, I will tell you.
953 The sergeant major hit it right on the head. It has to start
954 from the top, the leadership. Our commandant has focused on
955 telling Marines it is okay to come forward. You know, it is
956 okay to come forward with your families. I will tell you,
957 that message is throughout the Marine Corps. It used to be a
958 stigma out there, and I can tell you, you know, if you were
959 to ask me back in 2001, sir, I would tell you that it was not
960 good to come forward because it was a sign of weakness.

961 Now, I would tell you, I know senior leaders in the

962 corps that have come forward and said "I have PTSD." So it
963 is really a positive change.
964 Master Chief CAMPA. Sir, we work very closely with our
965 Navy and Marine Corps team, starting with our Navy corpsmen
966 that receive training in how to identify these things. In
967 the Marine Corps, they have units embedded at the battalion
968 level that work with Marines in early identification.
969 We, this last fiscal year, have put 13 post-deployment
970 healthcare clinics in fleet concentration areas and Marine
971 bases. But in addition to that, it is the education piece,
972 in educating the senior enlisted, our officer community, and
973 in our troops in general, in changing how it is viewed, and
974 changing that culture. That is probably the most challenging
975 piece. We could throw all the money and resources that we
976 have at it, but until we change that culture, we are not
977 going to get very far. But having said that, I think we are
978 on the path to doing that.
979 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, I would like to add, I
980 think the committee does a lot in helping with this PTSD, and
981 we have come a long way. We can't rest on our laurels. We
982 don't really know the effects down the road of how many
983 troops are going to have PTSD. We are doing some great
984 things. I know at Ramstein, the staging facility there, as
985 many of our wounded are coming back, you know, we try to do
986 surveys to find out PTSD from the beginning, but we also have

987 to follow it. We have to keep investing and researching on
988 PTSD.

989 Also, we need to invest and go out and recruit and
990 properly train mental health professionals. That is a key to
991 make sure we have those professionals out there in our units
992 to be there for counseling.

993 Mr. CARTER. Well, I think that is good news. The
994 (INAUDIBLE) that came up last year, (INAUDIBLE). Right now,
995 we ask them to come back and give us a statement. The one we
996 heard was check, check, check, check, and go home. And the
997 suggestion was that maybe in-theater, with their direct
998 superiors. They also might be inquired of before they come
999 back home. Is there any of that going on or is that being
1000 worked also?

1001 Sergeant Major PRESTON. What happens now, sir,
1002 in-theater, there are several things that happen. One is the
1003 training to help soldiers over there that are redeploying
1004 back to home station really understand the dynamics of what
1005 they are going to come through. I mean, out of a combat
1006 zone, being forward-deployed, coming back home again, and
1007 re-integrating back with the family and back with their
1008 post-camp station.

1009 But then it is also the re-integration assessment.
1010 There is a health assessment. Specifically, they sit down
1011 and they have a chance to talk with a healthcare provider

1012 before coming back. And then we are also doing reassessment
1013 90 to 120 days once they get back.
1014 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you, Judge Carter.
1015 Mr. Crenshaw?
1016 Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
1017 And again, thank you all for being back. Good to see
1018 you again.
1019 Just to follow up on the question about PTSD, it is my
1020 understanding that not only you encourage people to talk, to
1021 kind of talk about it, but are we doing what we should be
1022 doing in kind of making everyone aware? It is almost like
1023 treatment is one thing, but finding out early, kind of
1024 self-diagnosis, or just understanding what it is. I imagine
1025 a lot of people, you can ask a lot of questions, and they
1026 don't know exactly what you are getting at.
1027 Is it something we ought to be looking at in terms of
1028 just some of the basic training in all the new age of
1029 terrorism, all the new things we are doing in the various
1030 services? Is that something? Are we doing enough to kind of
1031 help people understand what it is on the front end, so that
1032 maybe they recognize it in themselves? Not just not be
1033 afraid to stand up and say "here is the way I feel," but
1034 maybe even help him understand where he is on the front end,
1035 to see it is common and it is all part of that being able to
1036 come forward. Are we doing enough there, do you think?

1037 It sounds like we are recognizing the problem. I just
1038 want to make sure that we kind of can catch it on the front
1039 end maybe, as opposed to waiting until everything is over and
1040 somebody comes home and so many questions they are asking,
1041 and you realize, good grief, this stuff has been building up.
1042 Can you touch on that?
1043 Sergeant Major KENT. Well, we actually educate them
1044 through the chaplains, medical and the leadership, sir. I
1045 mean, down at the lowest level, to the squad leader level, it
1046 is education all the time. I will tell you, even family
1047 members, we bring them in and we educate them. And people
1048 are getting a full understanding of this PTSD. So I am
1049 confident.
1050 Mr. CRENSHAW. That is good to hear. You know, I
1051 imagine we start out that you didn't recognize it, and then
1052 all of a sudden 20 years later, somebody--it sounds like we
1053 are really, because I know that is on the forefront of a lot
1054 of the members and has been for the last couple of years, so
1055 I think that is wonderful.
1056 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, one of the things that we
1057 are doing is we have introduced what we call Battlemind
1058 training. It starts in basic training for new soldiers
1059 coming in the Army. It is done for those soldiers as part of
1060 the unit organization prior to them deploying. It also is
1061 done, too, for the post-deployment, coming back from the

1062 deployment. It really helps soldiers not necessarily telling
1063 them what to think, but how to think and how to understand
1064 the dynamics of what is going on, the anxiety, and the
1065 feelings that they are feeling inside and how to over come
1066 that and work through it. So that has been very successful
1067 the last 2 years now since we have introduced that. It has
1068 continued to grow and we have expanded on those programs.
1069 Master Chief CAMPA. The education--sergeant major
1070 brought up a good point in educating the family members to
1071 recognize those things also. One of the things that we have
1072 tried and I think we need to strengthen in this area is our
1073 Reserve force, because those folks instead of coming back to
1074 a fleet concentration area where they are around those great
1075 networks of support, they go back oftentimes to the heartland
1076 of America, and we don't see them as often. So there is
1077 follow-up with them, but that is an area that we still need
1078 to strengthen our connection with those folks as they
1079 re-integrate back into the society and go back into their
1080 civilian jobs.
1081 Mr. CRENSHAW. Okay. Let me ask you a quick question
1082 about just healthcare in general. Everybody touched on it.
1083 It is something that everybody knows and understands. I know
1084 that along with our DOD colleagues, we have done a lot in the
1085 past few years just to improve the quality of the healthcare
1086 that folks get in the military. When I talk to the senior

1087 civilians and officers, they seem to agree. I certainly see
1088 that, but I don't get to always talk to the enlisted guys
1089 that you talk to every day.
1090 I would like to hear what you all have to say, because
1091 it is interesting to me not only because I am on this
1092 committee, but I come from Jacksonville, Florida, where we
1093 have a military hospital and there have been some big high
1094 profile medical malpractice situations. So it is on people's
1095 minds in terms of what is the quality of healthcare.
1096 So talk a little bit about it, and maybe mention your
1097 overall assessment, what maybe one or two things you think
1098 you are doing well, that you hear you are doing well, and
1099 maybe one or two things that maybe from time to time you a
1100 guy saying maybe I wish they did better. I know they are
1101 talking about OB/GYN, having babies, but apart from that,
1102 just the general quality of healthcare, give me your general
1103 assessment and where you think we are doing good and where
1104 you think we can do better.
1105 Sergeant Major KENT. I will speak on the positive
1106 first, sir, and that is the wounded warriors. I will tell
1107 you, our wounded warriors are getting great healthcare. As
1108 we visit them, even family members, they say this is the best
1109 healthcare in the world. And that is the positive.
1110 A negative is the family, as far as them getting in, and
1111 they need appointments, it could take a long time for them to

1112 get an appointment on a military installation, so they have
1113 to go outside most of the time, because we have a shortage of
1114 doctors, and that is the issue, sir.
1115 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, healthcare is the number
1116 one concern when you talk to family members that are out
1117 there. It is accessibility and the quality of the care. A
1118 lot of the facilities on-post, not necessarily the doctors,
1119 but also the facilities are conditioned to providing the care
1120 that they need, so of course you push them off to civilian
1121 communities. One of the things as I look at it, we have 25
1122 major hospitals or medical centers in the Army, and of the
1123 25, 8 of the 25 are now over 50 years old, and another 25 are
1124 somewhere between 25 and 50 years old. So there are aging
1125 medical facilities.
1126 On the good side, the Army medical action plan, what we
1127 have done over the past years to take care of the wounded
1128 warriors and to get the care, to rehabilitate, get more of
1129 them back on duty, or to help them with their transition, has
1130 been very positive.
1131 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, I would like to just
1132 briefly talk about the great job the medical community is
1133 doing in taking care of the wounded warriors. If we get the
1134 wounded to a medical treatment facility, they now have a 97
1135 percent chance to survive, which is unbelievable. We have
1136 critical care teams that go on (INAUDIBLE) teams, and we get

1137 them back stateside very quickly.

1138 I have flown on those missions and I have seen what the
1139 capabilities of what they do. It is absolutely incredible,
1140 from the battlefield to the time that we now can get them
1141 stateside for medical treatment is about 3 days, versus in
1142 the Vietnam era, it was about 2 weeks. They are doing a
1143 fantastic job on the medical side.

1144 One area in the Air Force where we do need some help is,
1145 once again it goes back to equipment. Our equipment is
1146 aging. We need to update all of that.

1147 Master Chief CAMPA. Sir, I will just add something real
1148 quick. I don't hear very many complaints on the quality of
1149 care within our military treatment facilities. I don't. I
1150 know the cases you are speaking of that might have blocked
1151 out a lot of press attention. What I do hear complaints
1152 about is the access to care when a family member cannot get
1153 into that military treatment facility, understanding the
1154 process outside of that.

1155 There is frustration at times with understanding that.
1156 So what do they do? They go into the emergency room, and
1157 then that creates a whole other problem. So the education
1158 piece, and maybe improving how we do that is something that
1159 is a consistent theme that I hear. My wife and I recently
1160 had some calls with the family members, and that was one of
1161 the big frustrations--accessing the care.

1162 Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you.

1163 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

1164 Let me follow up on that. Sergeant Major Preston, you
1165 already mentioned healthcare as the number one concern. The
1166 question I would like to ask each of you, and I would ask
1167 again now, is if you think of the quality of life concerns
1168 that you hear from the men and women you represent and their
1169 families, aside from pay and time away from family--we know
1170 how important pay is and we know you can't put a price tag on
1171 the time away from family--but on the quality of life issue
1172 we can have a great impact in this committee, and the Defense
1173 Appropriations committee. We have a lot of members on this
1174 committee that also serve on Defense Appropriations.

1175 Let me ask you, among the choices of healthcare,
1176 housing, daycare and education--those four--which would you
1177 rank as your top three? Healthcare, housing, daycare and
1178 education? And if there is another one you would put in the
1179 top three that I didn't mention, please feel free to do that.

1180 Sergeant Major Preston, we will start with you, and then
1181 just go down the line.

1182 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Well, probably the one, sir,
1183 that I would say now is healthcare, waiting to get into it.

1184 Mr. EDWARDS. I heard that at Fort Riley. Okay.

1185 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Childcare is number two, and we
1186 have been working that very hard this past year. And

1187 education has always been an issue. We specifically look at
1188 soldiers and families, and education is a big priority. It
1189 is education for the soldiers to continue their education.
1190 It is also education for the children.
1191 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay. How about, do you know how many
1192 soldiers are living in barracks today that don't meet Army
1193 standards for barracks?
1194 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Right now, today, for permanent
1195 party, 35,400.
1196 Mr. EDWARDS. So there are 35,000 soldiers.
1197 Sergeant Major PRESTON. About 35,000 soldiers.
1198 Mr. EDWARDS. About 35,400 that are not living in
1199 barracks that meet the Army 1-plus-1 standard?
1200 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Yes, sir.
1201 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay.
1202 Sergeant Major Kent?
1203 Sergeant Major KENT. Sir, I would first of all say
1204 housing is number one. The reason housing is number one,
1205 when I speak of housing, sir, I am talking about the single
1206 Marine barracks. We need to really focus on the single
1207 Marine barracks. I spoke with you about some barracks up at
1208 Camp Pendleton that a Marine made a comment, "I would rather
1209 be over in Iraq than to be living in the barracks here,"
1210 which is a flat-top single barracks. So our focus is taking
1211 care of the single Marine barracks. That would be number

1212 one.

1213 Mr. EDWARDS. Do you happen to know the number, and it

1214 is okay if you don't, that are inadequate?

1215 Sergeant Major KENT. Inadequate? It would probably be

1216 about ~~2,300~~ 3,300, sir.

1217 Mr. EDWARDS. About ~~2,300.~~ 3,300

1218 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

1219 And then the second one would be healthcare.

1220 Mr. EDWARDS. Because of the waiting lines?

1221 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

1222 Mr. EDWARDS. Not the quality so much as the waiting.

1223 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

1224 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay.

1225 Sergeant Major KENT. And then third would be childcare,

1226 building more childcare facilities, and then the last one

1227 would be education, sir.

1228 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay. And not to downplay education. We

1229 know anything less than third or fourth ranking, our military

1230 troops and families ought to get quality services in all four

1231 of these areas, but this does help get a sense of priorities.

1232 Master Chief CAMPA. Yes, sir. I would have to say that

1233 number one would be childcare consistently just about

1234 everywhere, especially in our fleet concentration areas.

1235 Number two, I would say access to health care. And number

1236 three would be our single sailors that live onboard ship. We

1237 have a program called Homeport Ashore. We still have 9,000
1238 sailors across our Navy that still live onboard ship, junior
1239 sailors, when that ship is in port.
1240 Congressman Wamp asked me the other day, we talked about
1241 the Harry S Truman. I talked to the command chief this
1242 morning. They are at sea, and I asked him out of your E4 and
1243 below that would qualify to live in single sailor barracks,
1244 how many do you have living there. He has none, because that
1245 program hasn't affected that command yet. We have plans to
1246 do that, but he cites that as his number one quality of life
1247 issue. They remember your visit. So he has about 600 that
1248 would benefit from that program. So those Harry S. Truman
1249 sailors when they get back from their deployment, those that
1250 live onboard the ship will continue to live there when they
1251 get back in home port.
1252 Mr. EDWARDS. Would you happen to have a number, an
1253 estimate of the number of sailors living in housing that
1254 doesn't meet the standard set by the Navy?
1255 Master Chief CAMPA. The DOD standard is 90 square feet.
1256 We have a hard time meeting that standard because we
1257 typically put two and sometimes three in a barracks room, but
1258 it far surpasses the quality of life of having to live
1259 onboard that ship, but I could get you some numbers.
1260 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay, if you could. We do appreciate it.
1261 Chief Master Sergeant?

1262 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Yes, sir. Without question,
1263 I would put number one as childcare. From base to base that
1264 I visit, that is the number one thing that always pops up.
1265 There are not enough spaces available. As I said earlier,
1266 with so many military working together on active duty in the
1267 Air Force, and also spouses having to work, not having the
1268 spaces available on base, it makes them go downtown, and some
1269 of the costs are just enormous. That would be number one.
1270 Number two, I would continue on with healthcare. Our
1271 focus is always taking care of the wounded and so forth, and
1272 making sure that we are taking care of PTSD, traumatic brain
1273 injury, securing a good future for the wounded after their
1274 injuries and so forth, but also making sure that we update
1275 our facilities as we go. We can go out and hire the
1276 healthcare professionals, but we do have some intruding
1277 issues with getting the doctors and dentists and so forth.
1278 So I think that would be number two.
1279 And number three, education. I think that that probably
1280 might fly down the list a little bit after the good news that
1281 you gave us today, but continue to make sure that we go and
1282 we take care of students as they transfer from state to
1283 state, that they don't drop a grade lower because they didn't
1284 transfer. And also the possibility of the GI bill that we
1285 can pass on to spouses and family members, that would be a
1286 great benefit to all airmen.

1287 Mr. EDWARDS. Good. By the way, there are 17 states
1288 that will start charging out-of-state tuition if your son or
1289 daughter started college at a state university in that state,
1290 and then you were re-stationed in another state. In fact, I
1291 got some very powerful letters from some servicemen and-women
1292 whose children had to drop out of the college of their choice
1293 for the reason that our country asked their family to move to
1294 another place in service to all.
1295 Thank you all for that testimony.
1296 I would like to go to Mr. Wamp.
1297 Mr. WAMP. Well, two quick points, two quick questions.
1298 One thing I will tell the master chief of the Navy is that
1299 they don't have enough space to live in, but they sure do eat
1300 well.
1301 [Laughter.]
1302 Master Chief CAMPA. Yes, sir.
1303 Mr. WAMP. It doesn't matter how far out to sea they
1304 are, they eat really well.
1305 Also, I want to make a point, looking at the 2009 budget
1306 request, of how grateful I am that the president recognizes
1307 these needs, and that he also recognized that the increases
1308 that the new majority put in last year become the new
1309 baseline, and that we don't retreat from where we got to.
1310 That hasn't been discussed, but I want to lay that out and
1311 compliment him, while he doesn't get many compliments much

1312 from some people, but I want to point that out.

1313 Because we are starting from a good place, because he
1314 recognized that what was done here last year was necessary,
1315 and then goes forward above that in his budget request does
1316 go forward. There are a few areas that Chairman Edwards has
1317 already brought to my attention that we are going to need to
1318 look at hard, to adjust, but overall I am pleased to be
1319 starting at that point.

1320 The third big area that has changed in 10 years for me
1321 is 10 years ago the Guard and Reserve forces were not
1322 partnered with our active duty men and women, and today they
1323 are, big time. I heard that all day yesterday from you all.
1324 I just want to ask you in general, what are you doing?
1325 Sergeant Major Preston introduced the command sergeant major
1326 specifically with the National Guard, but what ways do you
1327 make sure that the Guard and Reserve know that the focus is
1328 not just on the active duty and this really is a partnership,
1329 and that everybody frankly is pulling the same wagon with the
1330 same string?

1331 Sergeant Major KENT. Sir, I can start off.

1332 Mr. WAMP. Sure.

1333 Sergeant Major KENT. Sir, first of all, it actually
1334 starts in boot camp. Every Marine is a Marine. You know,
1335 once they graduate, there is no separation between the
1336 Reserve and active. And that is the focus coming out of boot

1337 camp. You are a United States Marine.

1338 From that, I mean, they go through the same training.
1339 Once they get called back on active duty, they go through the
1340 same training, and they get trained up to go forth. So we
1341 just let them know that they are a Marine first. We don't
1342 separate then at all, sir, and that is where we keep the
1343 focus.

1344 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, same thing. All of our
1345 soldiers are all treated the same, and of course now with the
1346 Global War on Terror and with the way we are using the Guard
1347 and Reserve, it is really going in there and expanding on all
1348 the family programs and the services that are available for
1349 the Guard and Reserve to make it the same. It is one team.
1350 It is one fight.

1351 Master Chief CAMPA. Yes, sir, we could not do our
1352 mission if it wasn't for our Navy Reserve. When I go out and
1353 visit sailors in-theater, onboard ships, you can't tell the
1354 difference between an active duty sailor and a reserve
1355 sailor. They provide that same quality-level of service
1356 across the board.

1357 But we take a different approach to our reserves over
1358 the last few years in how we train them. Gone are the days
1359 where they come to a reserve center and sit around and just
1360 give classes. They are out there doing meaningful training,
1361 mission-specific training, and it is paying off tremendously

1362 as we integrate them into the total force.

1363 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, I said it from the
1364 beginning. I represent all airmen--active, guard and
1365 reserve. The Air Force is committed to total force
1366 integration. I you are flying a C-17 airlift, whatever, you
1367 don't know if that is a guard, reserve or active duty person
1368 on there flying that plane, and you really don't care because
1369 they are out there doing a mission. They are fully
1370 integrated and fully trained. We could not survive without
1371 total force integration.

1372 Mr. WAMP. Master Sergeant McKinley, there may not be
1373 time in my time to finish this question, but maybe on the
1374 third round you could, but I want to go ahead and start. I
1375 talked about the cooperation and it is very noticeable, but
1376 there is one big issue that I don't think we have total
1377 agreement on, and that is joint basing. I know that it
1378 certainly affects the Air Force in a big powerful way.

1379 Can you just share a little bit without getting yourself
1380 in trouble what you shared with me yesterday?

1381 [Laughter.]

1382 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Thank you, sir.

1383 [Laughter.]

1384 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. You know, we as the Air Force
1385 are fully committed to joint basing. Anytime that we can get
1386 together in bringing all four branches of service together,

1387 to find ways to be more efficient, to spent the taxpayers'
1388 dollars more wisely, we are all for that. But I would also
1389 like to say that for the Air Force, one of the great
1390 recruiting and retention tools that we have is the quality of
1391 life, the standards that we have had on bases for a long
1392 period of time. And this didn't happen overnight.
1393 We have invested in the quality and standards of our
1394 bases for decades, and we just want to be able to maintain
1395 those same standards, sir.
1396 Mr. WAMP. And point out that you fight from those
1397 bases. You operate from those bases.
1398 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Yes, sir. That is where we
1399 train. That is where we get ready to go to war. That is why
1400 we need to make sure that that base is ready and fully
1401 capable. And we put a lot of money, a lot of emphasis, in
1402 taking care of those individual bases.
1403 Mr. WAMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
1404 Mr. EDWARDS. You bet. Thank you, Mr. Wamp.
1405 Judge Carter?
1406 Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
1407 Getting back to some of the challenges, I would
1408 encourage everybody that you talk to, my wife has a saying in
1409 Dutch that says it's not the mountain that you have to climb
1410 that gets you, it is the grain of sand in your shoe.
1411 It is the little things that can make families

1412 irritable, make soldiers and Marines and airmen worried about
1413 what is going on back home. And all of those little things
1414 are not that hard to fix. For example, I have a bill right
1415 now that we discovered that spouses have a hard time getting
1416 jobs--a pretty simple little thing we put in already for
1417 convicted felons when they get out of prison, is we give a
1418 one-time tax benefit to the employer who will hire that
1419 convicted felon. Well, if they can do it for convicted
1420 felons, I certainly think they ought to be able to it for our
1421 military personnel. Give a one-time tax benefit to the
1422 employer who hires them. I think that allows more jobs--
1423 I got that. So I got the wife of a soldier telling me
1424 that when her husband transfers, he gets to claim Fort Hood
1425 as his home base, so he is taxed under Texas law. This means
1426 he doesn't have an income tax. But when they get transferred
1427 to Virginia, she pays the income tax, and he doesn't, because
1428 he gets to claim Texas as his home and home base. To me,
1429 that seems fairly easy to fix, to allow the spouses also to
1430 claim the home base of the soldier.
1431 Soldiers are making good economic decisions on their
1432 future by doing that. These are little things. So if you
1433 have those little things, I would sure like to hear about
1434 some of them that can help--the tuition issues. Another one,
1435 General Taylor tells me all the time, is the students that
1436 are halfway through high school in North Carolina and then

1437 they get transferred to Texas, and they have all these things
1438 they lose, and their high school friends. We need to work
1439 out a uniformity for our military personnel on that, and I
1440 would like to hear anything you have to say about those kind
1441 of things. I am just looking for more avenues to help.
1442 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, I will just talk a little
1443 bit about the new rolling out this year our integrated the
1444 Army's integrated family support network. One of the things
1445 that families of soldiers told General Casey and Mrs. Casey
1446 as they came on as the chief of staff is that the Army has a
1447 lot of great programs. Instead of adding more programs, fund
1448 the programs we have. There are a lot of programs out there
1449 that in the past were funded at 100 percent, and we have
1450 talked about childcare, and we have talked about housing and
1451 barracks.
1452 Of course, there is a lot of investment now going in
1453 this year to bring that up to the levels that we want to
1454 achieve. But the Army's integrated family support is really
1455 a star-gate portal to pull together all the quality of life
1456 issues out there, and really push that information out to
1457 families.
1458 You specifically talked about spouse employment. We
1459 have partnered now with 31 different companies out there.
1460 These are Fortune 500 companies that are giving spouses
1461 preference for hiring. One of the companies out there that I

1462 am very proud of is the Army-Air Force Exchange which gives
1463 preferential hiring to military spouses, and that is on-base,
1464 as well as those Fortune 500 companies that you find
1465 off-base, like Home Depot and Sprint and those kind of
1466 things.

1467 So there are a number of those programs out there
1468 working very hard. You listen to what soldiers and families
1469 out there want, and then you try to put those programs in
1470 place, but the Army integrated family support network, it's
1471 really getting the information that is available out to the
1472 families. That is one of the things now that we are going to
1473 work at pushing that information out there to make more
1474 awareness.

1475 Sergeant Major KENT. Spousal preference, sir, as far as
1476 a federal job. When a spouse leaves from one duty station to
1477 go to another, and she is a GS worker, most of the time that
1478 spouse has to start all over again. You know, continuing
1479 moving up the ladder, they have to start from scratch. We
1480 have gotten a lot of feedback from spouses in reference to
1481 how can we fix that.

1482 Mr. CARTER. (OFF MIKE)

1483 Sergeant Major KENT. Yes, sir.

1484 Master Chief CAMPA. Military spouses on average earn $3
1485 less an hour when they are employed, and they are also three
1486 times more likely to be unemployed, because of the fact that

1487 they move around. A lot of time they cannot take advantage
1488 of state-funded programs with job placement or job training
1489 because they are not a resident of that state. That is an
1490 area I think we can make a difference in also.
1491 The spousal preference in hiring is an initiative, but I
1492 think we need to make beyond the lifelines of DOD or the
1493 federal government and just create a greater awareness out
1494 there in the community about the talents that they have.
1495 There is a program that started this year. It is called
1496 career advancement accounts. It started in eight states, 18
1497 different military installations, which will give a military
1498 spouse $3,000 a year for education or vocational education.
1499 If they come back a second year, they can request to get a
1500 second year of funding.
1501 Now, from what I understand, it is supposed to be a
1502 3-year pilot program, but the initial success of this
1503 program, the number of spouses going toward that, is very
1504 encouraging. It is focused to our spouses that are from E1
1505 through E5, and I believe it is O1 through O3--a very great
1506 initiative. I think more publicity about that and programs
1507 like that would certainly help our military spouses.
1508 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, I would like to echo
1509 what my peers have said. I would like to publicly thank all
1510 spouses for what they do to serve this great country of ours.
1511 They have sacrificed much and they do it silently. We PCS

1512 and travel so much, and many of them have passed on the
1513 opportunity to have a career because they know what we do is
1514 good for the country. We don't do enough for them. We need
1515 to find opportunities to employ them and thank them for the
1516 great service they give.

1517 Mr. CARTER. Yes, sir. I agree.

1518 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

1519 Before I recognize Mr. Crenshaw for his next round of
1520 questions, let me follow up on Mr. Wamp's comments about the
1521 president's request for daycare centers. For the record,
1522 compared to a 2008 request of $25 million to $26 million, the
1523 president for the 2009 budget has requested $168 million for
1524 daycare centers. So I don't know when you guys got into the
1525 Oval Office, but--

1526 [Laughter.]

1527 The president and the DOD leadership heard the daycare
1528 concerns that you mentioned.

1529 Mr. Crenshaw?

1530 Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1531 On that point, in terms of childcare, we spent more
1532 money and now we are getting ready to spend even more money,
1533 but we are still not at a zero waiting list time. I just
1534 wonder, do we ever in localities where there is a long
1535 waiting list, do we ever outsource? Do we ever use some of
1536 the local daycare centers that are in the communities? And

1537 if we do that, I think that is appropriate, but how do we
1538 make sure that we have the same quality of care?
1539 And then maybe as you answer that question, what are
1540 some other options until we get, in terms of all the military
1541 construction we need, which is probably going to be--you
1542 know, it is always going to continue to grow and we may never
1543 get to the place where you don't have to wait. But if we are
1544 doing any outsourcing, are we making sure we have the same
1545 quality? And are there other options that we are looking at?
1546 I heard every one of you say you would rank it in the top
1547 two or three of issues.
1548 Can you talk a little bit about that? We know it is a
1549 problem, and appreciate that, and we are dealing with the
1550 construction side, but are there other things we can be
1551 doing?
1552 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, I will start off. I
1553 know in the Air Force one of the things that we do is we kind
1554 of outsource to some spouses. We go out and we license them
1555 to make sure that they are ready to have a daycare set up in
1556 a room in a house for five or six children, whatever. We
1557 follow up and make sure they are educated and make sure this
1558 is a good home environment. So if someone cannot get on
1559 base, there are some opportunities that they can use some of
1560 these daycare spouses outside the gates.
1561 Master Chief CAMPA. Sir, in the Navy we have about

1562 3,000 home daycare homes set up, and that has been a
1563 successful program. But your comments about looking to the
1564 community, and this is something that I have asked about.
1565 Our standards for our daycare are very high. So as we go to
1566 look to the community to see that they have to meet state
1567 requirements, we have federal requirements that are higher.
1568 So when looking at this, we are looking for the options
1569 in trying to partner and leverage some of that that is out
1570 there, but some of the challenges are those higher standards
1571 that our daycares hold themselves to.
1572 Sergeant Major KENT. And that is the issue here, too,
1573 sir. We have a lot of home childcare, and it is working
1574 great in the Marine Corps. It really is. But the thing is
1575 is just sourcing outside the base. Most of the spouses, they
1576 actually do the home, and it is working fine, but the issue
1577 is finding a great place outside the military installation.
1578 Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Crenshaw, if I slow down the clock,
1579 would you mind if I piggybacked with you on that?
1580 Mr. CRENSHAW. No, sir. Please.
1581 Mr. EDWARDS. On a recent trip to Fort Riley and Fort
1582 Leavenworth--and I need to check my facts on this--I was
1583 given the impression that the costs of childcare on a post
1584 come out of the MWR program. Is that correct? In effect,
1585 they have to pay for themselves. I may be mistaken there,
1586 but you know, we don't ask our military families to pay for

1587 100 percent of the cost of their healthcare. At a time when
1588 we are asking our soldiers, sailors, Air Force and Marines to
1589 spend so much time away from family in Iraq and Afghanistan,
1590 it just doesn't make sense.

1591 If I am correct, if we are asking them to pay for in
1592 effect 100 percent of the cost of childcare other than maybe
1593 the construction costs that we pay for up front, that seems
1594 somewhat unfair. Maybe we need to talk to our defense
1595 appropriators about subsidizing that, because even where we
1596 have childcare, apparently it can be very, very expensive.
1597 So we are trying to address the accessibility issue through
1598 this subcommittee in the president's budget request, but
1599 there is still the affordability issue. Can you shed any
1600 light on that?

1601 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Just from as far as on-post and
1602 off-post, we have for the married soldiers--67 percent of our
1603 married soldiers and their families live off the post. So
1604 naturally, you wouldn't want all your childcare centers on
1605 the installation. So we partner with those childcare centers
1606 that are off-installation. There is an accreditation process
1607 they go through to make sure that they meet the high
1608 standards. Of course we subsidize that, so what you would
1609 pay for childcare living on Fort Riley would be the same
1610 thing that someone would pay living off-post.

1611 Mr. EDWARDS. We purposely met with enlisted spouses,

1612 and many of these were first sergeant spouses, and they were
1613 having to pay $500 a month for childcare. On a sergeant's
1614 salary, that has got to be a pretty big hit. I hope that is
1615 something we could follow up on.
1616 Mr. Crenshaw, thank you for letting me in. You still
1617 have several minutes left.
1618 Mr. CRENSHAW. Okay, good.
1619 [Laughter.]
1620 Let me ask on kind of a related issue dealing with
1621 finance. You know, when you ask the question, what are some
1622 of the issues--housing, healthcare, childcare--I don't know.
1623 You hear people say, well, one of the problems is just
1624 overall financing, and then it gets into this whole issue
1625 that we face in terms of payday loans. We finally, I think,
1626 got a handle on it to say, look, we are going to limit that
1627 to 36 percent. That is still pretty high, but before that it
1628 was a whole lot higher. If you ask them what the interest
1629 rate is and they say it is only 4 percent, and then they tell
1630 you that is 4 percent a week, and it is just astronomical.
1631 So I know that is brand new law and it has just kind of
1632 been put in place, but can you talk about now that we have
1633 that, are we trying to kind of offer financial counseling to
1634 some of these enlisted guys who probably aren't as savvy as
1635 they could be about finances. Now, they have some
1636 protection, but also like how we can deal with that

1637 alternatively within the services.

1638 But also, do we have any information yet on how it is
1639 working? I can envision a lender saying, well, I am not
1640 going to lend it to you because they capped me at 36 percent;
1641 I would rather go gouge somebody else; I can't gouge members
1642 of the military. And then you might envision some guy in the
1643 military saying, well, I really need to borrow the money, so
1644 I am not going to tell him I am in the military because then
1645 they won't lend me the money.

1646 Are we looking at ways to deal with that? We have that
1647 law in place, but it seems like we have a ways to go in terms
1648 of really helping folks understand this picture of finances.

1649 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, it is education. It
1650 really starts from day one when we bring a soldier in going
1651 through basic training and advanced individual training. It
1652 is financial counseling. One of the things that I use as a
1653 yardstick to help gauge the successfulness of that training
1654 is, one of the things that we included for soldiers in
1655 advanced individual training is the thrift savings program.

1656 We have had a very high success now with those soldiers
1657 that sit through the training that are now investing in the
1658 thrift savings program. It is up to about 90 percent of
1659 those now investing. So to my mind, that has been a very
1660 successful program. Of course, we do financial counseling
1661 and training down in all of our units and organizations. We

1662 also push that out and make it available for families as
1663 well.
1664 Mr. CRENSHAW. Has anybody--can you comment--has anybody
1665 found any issues with now that we have the new payday loan
1666 cap? I mean, would it ever be too much of a reach for us to
1667 say in geographic areas, you hear about people that are
1668 members of the military, and when they go in, then you know
1669 they are members of the military and they know they can't be
1670 charged more. And if they try to get a loan by saying they
1671 are not in the military, can they kind of get around it on
1672 either side? Is there something we ought to be doing there,
1673 or is it too new to really know? Can you talk about that
1674 along the way?
1675 Sergeant Major KENT. It is actually new right now, sir.
1676 I know California is a high-cost place. It is actually
1677 working out there, because I will tell you a lot of those
1678 payday lenders outside of Camp Pendleton, it is feeling the
1679 pain. So thank you very much, gentlemen.
1680 But I will also tell you that it is the education
1681 process. It starts from day one. So that is the key, sir,
1682 is the education.
1683 Master Chief CAMPA. We are still assessing the impact
1684 that the law has had. I think it will take a little bit of
1685 time to see what the full impact is. I think if we start to
1686 see less of those institutions around our bases, maybe that

1687 will be an indicator, because if you go into Norfolk or one
1688 of the fleet concentration areas, you see those places. They
1689 are all around. So maybe as we see them disappear, that may
1690 be an indicator.

1691 But education--but an alternative for the sailor also,
1692 and maybe the lending institutions that are on-base and
1693 looking at the ways that they lend to our sailors, to provide
1694 an alternative instead of seeking those places outside the
1695 gate. Our Navy-Marine Corps relief has just started some
1696 quick assistance loans that are a lot easier to get than the
1697 loans that we traditionally give them. We typically make
1698 them go through counseling and try to get to the root of the
1699 problem. These quick-assistance loans are meant as a quick
1700 alternative, because you go into those places and you could
1701 walk out of there with money pretty fast.

1702 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, the same in the Air
1703 Force. It is about education. We start it in basic
1704 training, tech school. They get to their first duty station,
1705 and the first term, entry center, we get them financial
1706 counseling from the very beginning. When the airman moves
1707 into the dorms, the last thing we want him to do is go out
1708 and buy a 42-inch plasma TV in the dorm room and a brand new
1709 car with $350 a month car insurance.

1710 So we try to educate them on making wise choices, having
1711 a budget, setting up a savings plan and save for the future

1712 and not live for the moment.

1713 Mr. CRENSHAW. Great.

1714 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1715 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

1716 Can I ask you about the challenge of BRAC on top of
1717 going forth, particularly going forth as it affects Marines
1718 and the Army? And then global repositioning, added to the
1719 fact that we have inflation factors for military construction
1720 projects that are far beyond the 2.4 percent inflation that
1721 the OMB bureaucrats dictate that we follow.

1722 Can you comment on whether there is a pattern of real
1723 shortages? If so, in what areas? Is it housing barracks
1724 particularly, as those installations that are growing as a
1725 result of BRAC and grow-the-force and global repositioning?

1726 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, as you know, one of the
1727 biggest installations we have that is growing that has seen a
1728 lot of influx of soldiers and families has got to be Fort
1729 Bliss, Texas. Of course, that will be the future home of the
1730 First Armored Division, and there will be six brigade combat
1731 teams that are going in there.

1732 Right now, I sit down and I talk to the BRAC folks. You
1733 know, everything is online. When you go out there onto the
1734 airfield, out there behind the Sergeant Major Academy, that
1735 entire desert floor now is under construction. It is amazing
1736 to see the working up that is going in. As for what is going

1737 on right now at Bliss construction-wise to take care of the
1738 brigade combat teams that are going to be based out of here,
1739 that is on-target.

1740 Mr. EDWARDS. Is there a lot of temporary housing,
1741 though, as troops are coming back from Iraq or Afghanistan,
1742 and being stationed out there and having to live in temporary
1743 housing?

1744 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Yes, sir. We have a brigade
1745 set of temporary barracks there that we have used, and that
1746 is because military construction takes so long to get the
1747 stuff stood up. Of course, we are growing units quicker than
1748 we are building.

1749 I was just down at Fort Hood a couple of months ago and
1750 visited Third Brigade of the First Infantry Division. That
1751 brigade will be based out of Fort Knox, Kentucky. With the
1752 surge that went in last year, we knew that we needed that
1753 brigade a year sooner, which was originally planned to be
1754 stood up this year.

1755 So in order to stand it up, to have the facilities, the
1756 barracks and the facilities at Fort Knox were not built yet.
1757 They are still under construction. We would like to stand
1758 that brigade up at Fort Hood, Texas, so that brigade is going
1759 to be equipped, manned and trained. They will deploy, and
1760 then we may come back and we will move that brigade up to
1761 Fort Knox. So there is some of that transition that is going

1762 on out there.

1763 Money-wise, as I look at the BRAC moves, and it really
1764 involves Fort McPherson, Fort Gillem down in the city of
1765 Atlanta. I am told that is on track, but I have concerns
1766 because we are getting down now towards 2011, and I haven't
1767 started construction yet for those headquarters and those
1768 facilities yet that have to move. But right now as I sit
1769 down and talk with the BRAC people, they say we are still on
1770 track and everything is in line.

1771 Mr. EDWARDS. Can I follow up and ask if particular
1772 communities such as Bliss and Riley and Carson that are going
1773 to receive such an influx, and maybe we haven't seen all the
1774 largest numbers of influx yet, but have you seen or do you
1775 expect to see off-post housing rental rates and housing costs
1776 to go up dramatically? Is there any evidence of that?

1777 Sergeant Major PRESTON. We have seen some of that at
1778 Fort Riley--off-post, some of the rental rates going up.
1779 Right now, Fort Bliss has been, and the city of El Paso, has
1780 been phenomenal. They have been a great city and they have
1781 really embraced the soldiers and the moves that are now
1782 starting to come in.

1783 I talked with some of the senior leadership there, the
1784 parent-teachers organization, with the school districts in
1785 and around Fort Bliss. There was initially concern. They
1786 have put a lot of teachers into the schools to prepare for

1787 the influx of children that were coming in. Of course, when
1788 we stood up Fourth Brigade of the First Cav Division down
1789 there a year go, a lot of the soldiers that moved from Fort
1790 Hood or new soldiers that were coming in, because they knew
1791 that they were deploying with a year, they elected not to
1792 bring their families.

1793 So we have seen some of that transition, where families
1794 have stayed in place at previous duty stations because they
1795 were going to a unit that was getting ready to deploy, they
1796 didn't elect to move. So that has kind of thrown some of the
1797 numbers off. In the case of El Paso and Fort Bliss, it has
1798 been a great partnership down there. At Fort Riley, we have
1799 seen some of the rental rates going up, but I know that the
1800 leadership has been working very closely with the city
1801 officials in and around the installation.

1802 Mr. EDWARDS. Wouldn't you say that is one item we ought
1803 to watch in this subcommittee at these bases, at these
1804 installations that are receiving a huge influx of Marines or
1805 soldiers. Is it barracks or is it single family housing
1806 off-post that we need to watch? Or is it family housing?
1807 How much temporary housing for barracks or families? Is
1808 there one issue more than any other that you think we need to
1809 keep an eye on?

1810 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, I would say single family
1811 housing. You know, we have some single senior

1812 noncommissioned officers that are living off-post. We are
1813 doing some pilots right now to do some privatization for
1814 single soldier quarters for senior noncommissioned officers
1815 on the installation. You know, we have 60 percent of our
1816 married soldiers and their families that live off the base,
1817 so that would be the concern is to make sure we take care of
1818 those families.

1819 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay.

1820 Sergeant Major Kent, any comments?

1821 Sergeant Major KENT. We have a younger force, sir, so
1822 most of our force is single. But we have a lot of Marines
1823 married also, but most of the force is single. As we grow
1824 over the next 4 years, it is important for the growth, too,
1825 as you know sir, so we can get on a cycle as far as
1826 deployments going over.

1827 Right now, we have 1-to-1 for most of the unit--7 months
1828 over and 7 months back. The commandant's goal is to get them
1829 more dwell-time back in the states, which would give them 7
1830 months forward and 14 months back. And we really want to get
1831 them more than that, but as we grow the force, the barracks
1832 are the main concern because we have a younger force, sir.
1833 So the shortage for us would be the single Marine barracks.

1834 Mr. EDWARDS. Master Chief Campa of the Navy, in terms
1835 of BRAC?

1836 Master Chief CAMPA. Our numbers are continuing to go

1837 down in the Navy. We are more in shaping the force so we
1838 don't have some of the challenges that the Army and the
1839 Marine Corps has as they grow their force in that
1840 infrastructure part of it.

1841 Mr. EDWARDS. Any installations where BRAC may be
1842 bringing them in, while your numbers are going down? Or at a
1843 particular installation where the numbers are going up? Any
1844 we ought to keep an eye on?

1845 Master Chief CAMPA. Not that I am aware of, sir.

1846 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay.

1847 Chief master sergeant?

1848 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, BRAC is on track in the
1849 Air Force, but it is highly dependent on timely revenue flow.
1850 So we are looking to this committee to reinstate the full
1851 request of the amount in 2008 if possible.

1852 Mr. EDWARDS. And as you know, in calendar year 2007 we
1853 did replace dollar-for-dollar the money we took out of BRAC,
1854 frankly, to fund other priority military construction needs,
1855 including daycare centers and our VA needs, knowing that in a
1856 supplemental we could go back and replace BRAC. So I can't
1857 make any promises, I think we will see real bipartisan effort
1858 to replace the $933 million we had to frankly borrow out of
1859 BRAC to take care of 5.8 million veterans in the VA system
1860 and some of our other MILCON needs. But thank you for
1861 mentioning that.

1862 Mr. Wamp?

1863 Mr. WAMP. Well, Mr. Chairman, my final question is kind
1864 of directed at all of you, but Master Chief Campa has Diana
1865 back there, and I have been watching her, and man she is
1866 radar for the families and spouses, and interested in all
1867 these issues.

1868 [Laughter.]

1869 I was just going to say that encourages me. I know you
1870 all have to kind of be the radar for all the men and women
1871 that you represent here at this table today. How do you do
1872 that? I mean, you have your wife and she is here today, and
1873 that is one really great example, master chief, but how do
1874 the rest of you stay connected to all the people? I mean,
1875 you have to represent so many different needs, and you seem
1876 so in touch, but how do you do that?

1877 Sergeant Major KENT. That is easy, sir. We have to get
1878 out of the Pentagon and travel around the Marine Corps. My
1879 spouse actually travels with me constantly, and she talks to
1880 the spouses and families on family issues. The commandant
1881 and his spouse constantly travel. As a matter of fact, the
1882 commandant is out in California right now visiting families
1883 right now. I will join him tomorrow out in California so we
1884 can talk to Marines and their families, just to find out what
1885 the issues are, sir.

1886 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Sir, Tuesday, myself, my wife,

1887 General Casey and Sheila Casey, were out at Fort Ladmore. We
1888 go out there each month. It is part of a pre-command course.
1889 He had all the new battalion brigade commanders and their
1890 spouses, and all the command sergeant majors and their
1891 spouses, that were out there for that course. We have a
1892 chance to go out there, and we do a joint seminar and we do
1893 separate sessions with them. Then, of course, with all the
1894 other travel to posts, camps, and stations.

1895 Master Chief CAMPA. Sir, I think we all operate very
1896 similarly in going out and seeing our troops, going out and
1897 seeing them as they operate, visiting families back in our
1898 fleet concentration areas and our bases. I think all our
1899 spouses play a pretty big role in keeping in touch with the
1900 families, because the families don't hold back on what they
1901 tell us. Often, a sailor may be a little reluctant to bring
1902 up an issue, but we find that when we engage with the
1903 families, they are honest and forthright and they will let
1904 you know what their needs are.

1905 Mr. WAMP. Congressional families do that, too.

1906 [Laughter.]

1907 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. We spend a lot of time on the
1908 road throughout the whole world, whether it be in Iraq,
1909 Afghanistan, or the Pacific or Europe, and meet with a
1910 tremendous amount of airmen and their families on a regular
1911 basis. In my house, I am not the chief master sergeant of

1912 the Air Force. I am just a husband and she tells me to take
1913 the trash out and keeps me in line.
1914 Mr. WAMP. You all are an inspiration, I tell you. I
1915 feel good about our country sitting here listening to you and
1916 meeting with you. It has been a great 5 hours these last 2
1917 days. Thank you.
1918 Mr. EDWARDS. I will finish just a couple of points.
1919 First on the public-private housing partnership, we have
1920 heard over the last several years the positive things. I am
1921 thrilled to hear that this subcommittee, working with this
1922 administration and the previous administration, really worked
1923 hard to change the old way of building military family
1924 housing.
1925 Let me just ask, though, the question: Are you hearing
1926 any complaints about the housing itself or perhaps the
1927 maintenance of the housing? We want to be sure that not only
1928 good houses are being built--and I have looked at a lot of
1929 them and I have heard wonderful comments back--but we want to
1930 be sure that the developers have incentive financially to
1931 maintain them well. Are any of you hearing any periodic
1932 systematic complaints that is not just maybe a one-shot deal?
1933 Anything out there?
1934 Sergeant Major PRESTON. Nothing systematic. Sir, as an
1935 invitation to the committee, Fort Belvoir is very close, and
1936 Fort Meade, but I would offer you the invitation to go down

1937 if you really want to see what residential communities
1938 initiative is all about, and really see the quality of
1939 housing out there now that is being provided for soldiers and
1940 families. I offer that invitation anytime you would like to
1941 come, sir.

1942 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay.

1943 Sergeant Major Kent?

1944 Sergeant Major KENT. No, sir.

1945 Master Chief CAMPA. One of the greatest initiatives, as
1946 you said, sir--no. We have with some of our partners. When
1947 we start out with these relationships, there are things to be
1948 worked through, but we have found that they have been very
1949 responsive, not only in the construction phase, but in the
1950 maintaining and being responsive to the needs of our family
1951 members.

1952 Master Sergeant MCKINLEY. Sir, we are not really
1953 getting any issues from the family members. I think
1954 privatization is a tremendous success. We have had some
1955 issues with some of the contractors, and we have to work
1956 through those.

1957 Mr. EDWARDS. Okay. My final question, I don't know how
1958 many protocol toes I will step on in doing this, but Mrs.
1959 Campa, you are an important voice for the families out there.
1960 I have found in my trips to military installations, I have
1961 learned an awful lot from listening to spouses. You have

1962 been kind enough to listen to all of us speak and talk today.
1963 Could I ask you if you wouldn't mind responding to the
1964 question of what are the two or three most common concerns?
1965 I know you could talk, as we have had today, the many
1966 positive things going on, but we are here to try to address
1967 concerns. If you don't mind my asking, what concerns are you
1968 hearing? I probably need you to, if you wouldn't mind coming
1969 forward. I apologize for doing this without notice, but I
1970 have found unscripted conversation with spouses have
1971 oftentimes been the best conversations I have had.
1972 And for the record, if you wouldn't mind identifying
1973 yourself.
1974 Mrs. CAMPA. I am Diana Campa, and I am the ambassador
1975 at large for the Navy.
1976 Mr. EDWARDS. Right.
1977 Mrs. CAMPA. I guess I would say what Joe would have to
1978 say is that childcare is a big issue. I don't know about the
1979 programs that the Army has that funds the additional costs of
1980 going to a civilian provider, but in talking with families in
1981 the Navy, we don't see that, and that is one of the reasons
1982 why they will opt to not work because they can't afford the
1983 childcare on-base.
1984 And also our deployment cycles for the Navy. Our
1985 families are really feeling that, with them going out longer,
1986 the surge, coming home and not spending as much time. That

1987 is taking a toll on our families. So that also is I believe a
1988 retention problem for our service.
1989 Then also the working, not being able to come into
1990 another area. Lots of times we are not here for 3 years.
1991 Sometimes we come in for 1 year, and we know we are coming in
1992 for a year and that is a hard sell for an employer. You
1993 know, if they ask you what brings you into the area, and I
1994 know they are not supposed to ask, but that is also difficult
1995 for somebody to come in and expect to get a really good job
1996 based on only being here for a year.
1997 Mr. EDWARDS. Right, right.
1998 Mrs. CAMPA. But overall, I think our families are
1999 resilient. We have a great program, our ombudsman program,
2000 that is all over the world wherever our Navy is at, and they
2001 really have a way of bringing the problems and addressing
2002 them at the regional levels, and then also as we go out and
2003 travel, being able to pick up on that in a town hall, and
2004 just sitting down with them.
2005 Mr. EDWARDS. Thank you for those insights.
2006 For families of enlisted personnel that have two or
2007 three children, and the spouse is working, what are they
2008 doing on childcare? How can they afford it? Or do many of
2009 them just quit their job because they can't make enough money
2010 in the job to just even pay for the childcare?
2011 Mrs. CAMPA. Well, it is difficult. I can speak for my

2012 family. I worked from the beginning when our kids were
2013 young, and sometimes I had to find somebody, and sometimes I
2014 would pay a lot more in childcare and bring home a lot less,
2015 but I knew it was part of the progression for me to be able
2016 to get the work experience. So we sacrificed in that way.
2017 Sometimes we looked at shortening our hours, things like
2018 that, and we would get creative with it. But for a lot of
2019 parents, and also there are some military that are having
2020 difficulty getting their children into the daycare because it
2021 is a priority for people that are deployed for their children
2022 to go to that daycare. So you have regular active duty that
2023 are on lists also, and when they are single parents, it is
2024 difficult for them also.
2025 Mr. EDWARDS. Well, I hope we are going to make real
2026 progress between the money we put in the budget for the 2008
2027 fiscal year, and what the president has asked for in 2009, to
2028 see real progress. I know it won't happen overnight. I will
2029 take a while to build the facilities. I want to further look
2030 into how we cost those out to our military families.
2031 Thank you for your testimony.
2032 Mrs. CAMPA. Thank you.
2033 Mr. EDWARDS. You know, listening to you speak and
2034 thinking of your son coming here last year, I guess it is
2035 probably better not to do this in a formal hearing. We
2036 wouldn't want to intimidate military children, but I think it

2037 would be important for members of our committee to sit down
2038 with some sons and daughters and ask them what the challenges
2039 are. I mean, they are such an important part of the
2040 sacrifice for our country. Maybe we can talk with some of
2041 you about arranging an opportunity to meet with some children
2042 of enlisted servicemen and-women.

2043 Mrs. CAMPA. He would have been here, but actually
2044 Hillary Clinton was going to be at their school today. So
2045 that is where he is.

2046 Mr. EDWARDS. He had to choose between Mr. Wamp and me
2047 and a presidential candidate.

2048 [Laughter.]

2049 Mrs. CAMPA. It wasn't his turn to come, so he is
2050 educating himself.

2051 Mr. EDWARDS. Well, congratulate him. It is a great
2052 compliment to the two of you. Your children have done so
2053 well educationally. Thank you, Mrs. Campa, for that eloquent
2054 testimony on no notice at all.

2055 Mr. Wamp, I have no additional questions. I just echo
2056 what Mr. Wamp said. It is an honor for us to just be at the
2057 same table with each of you. Thank you for your service to
2058 the country and for all the great families you represent so
2059 eloquently here. Thank you very much.

2060 We stand in recess at the call of the chair.

2061 [Whereupon, at 3:53 p.m., the subcommittee was

2062 adjourned.]

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