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PRESS RELEASE

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April 23, 2009

RELEASE: ROA CAUTIONS USE OF RESERVISTS FOR NON MILITARY ROLES IN AFGHANISTAN

WASHINGTON -- The Reserve Officers Association is concerned with Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's discussion this week on the possibility of using Reservists from needed civilian fields for volunteer nonmilitary jobs supporting U.S. programs in Afghanistan.

"No doubt, the dedicated men and women in our Reserve and Guard would meet this new challenge, just as they have always done, however the Reserve Officers Association is concerned about the impact on unit readiness and integrity as well as the impact volunteering for these taskings would have on the processes that services use to identify individuals for mobilization," said Lt. Gen. Dennis McCarthy, ROA Executive Director.

There are a number of military members already filling roles that would traditionally be filled by the State Department, such as with the provisional reconstruction teams. Some of these Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are citizen warriors.

If this proposal moves forward, Reservists volunteering in lieu of State Department civil servants must count toward their expected mobilization time, ensuring predictability.

One of the great benefits of Citizen Warriors are the diverse and unique skills they bring to their uniformed jobs from the civil sector. However, in tapping those skills, leaders must consider the balance required between a Reservist's military and civilian work requirements as they continue to be heavily used in today's operations.

Keeping that balance and ensuring predictability is a key to an all volunteer force and the ability to maintain a strategic Reserve.

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