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800,000th Reservist Deploys; Reserve Contribution Record High

WASHINGTON – The Reserve Officers Association urges Congress to consider the contribution of the Reserve Components and the need to appropriately fund the total force as the military marks a significant milestone for Citizen Warriors in overseas contingency operations this week.

The Department of Defense announced it has mobilized over 800,000 Reservists since Sept. 11, 2001. Of this number, more than 250,000 people have deployed more than once.

“As troops withdraw from Iraq and the surge in Afghanistan wanes, we for the first time in years have less than 90,000 Reservists and Guardsmen from all services deployed around the world today,” said retired Maj. Gen. David Bockel, ROA’s Executive Director. “Yet noting the contributions of 800,000 Reserve and Guardsmen, we have clearly moved into an era where the Operational Reserve has become an integral and imperative part of the total force.”

This transition in use of the Reserve and Guard as an operational force multiplier brings with it the necessity to fund training and equipment for the Reserve Components at appropriate levels, particularly ensuring equipment is on par among all three components, and reset funding is available as units return from war.

The Reserve Officers Association urges Congress to consider the contribution of the Reserve Components and its serving members and the need to appropriately fund the total force in the continuing resolution and Fiscal Year 2012 budget as the military marks a significant milestone for Citizen Warriors in overseas contingency operations this week.

“The Congress has been generous with its National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation in recent years allowing the Reserve to properly equip and reset itself,” said General Bockel. “Despite the tightening budgets, we recommend NGREA continue to be funded to ensure security readiness.”

The Reserve Officers Association is also concerned by Reserve operational and equipping funding customarily obtained through supplemental funding.

“It is clear that the military cannot do its job without the Reserve Components today,” said General Bockel. “Reserve Components traditionally receive less than a proportionate share of funding to resource their equipment and training needs. Funding needs to be baselined to ensure the cost-saving contributions of the Reserve Components can continue as supplemental funding dries up.”

The Reserve Officers Association is the 60,000-member professional association for all uniformed services of the United States. Chartered by Congress and in existence since 1922, ROA advises and educates the Congress, the President, and the American people on national security, with unique expertise on issues that affect the 1.5 million men and women now serving in America’s Reserve Components.

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