

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
BUDGET HEARING

STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA

MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
140 MAJORITY CAUCUS ROOM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019
1:09 P.M.

PRESENTATION ON
PA DEPARTMENT OF
MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

BEFORE:

HONORABLE STANLEY E. SAYLOR, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE ROSEMARY M. BROWN
HONORABLE LYNDA SCHLEGEL CULVER
HONORABLE SHERYL M. DELOZIER
HONORABLE GEORGE DUNBAR
HONORABLE JONATHAN FRITZ
HONORABLE MATT GABLER
HONORABLE KEITH J. GREINER
HONORABLE SETH M. GROVE
HONORABLE MARCIA M. HAHN
HONORABLE DOYLE HEFFLEY
HONORABLE R. LEE JAMES
HONORABLE FRED KELLER
HONORABLE JOHN A. LAWRENCE
HONORABLE JASON ORTITAY
HONORABLE CLINT OWLETT
HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER B. QUINN
HONORABLE GREG ROTHMAN

* * * * *

Debra B. Miller

dbmreporting@msn.com

BEFORE (continued):

HONORABLE JAMES B. STRUZZI II
HONORABLE JESSE TOPPER
HONORABLE RYAN WARNER
HONORABLE MARTINA A. WHITE
HONORABLE MATTHEW D. BRADFORD, DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE DONNA BULLOCK
HONORABLE MORGAN CEPHAS
HONORABLE CAROLYN T. COMMITTA
HONORABLE AUSTIN A. DAVIS
HONORABLE MARIA P. DONATUCCI
HONORABLE ELIZABETH FIEDLER
HONORABLE MARTY FLYNN
HONORABLE ED GAINNEY
HONORABLE PATTY KIM
HONORABLE STEPHEN KINSEY
HONORABLE LEANNE KRUEGER
HONORABLE STEPHEN McCARTER
HONORABLE BENJAMIN V. SANCHEZ
HONORABLE PETER SCHWEYER

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

HONORABLE CAROL HILL-EVANS
HONORABLE MARK M. GILLEN
HONORABLE THOMAS P. MURT
HONORABLE FRANCIS X. RYAN
HONORABLE CHRIS SAINATO
HONORABLE STEVE SAMUELSON
HONORABLE MIKE TURZAI, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
HONORABLE DAN K. WILLIAMS

COMMITTEE STAFF PRESENT:

DAVID DONLEY
MAJORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RITCHIE LaFAVER
MAJORITY DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MIRIAM FOX
DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TARA TREES
DEMOCRATIC CHIEF COUNSEL

I N D E X

TESTIFIERS

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SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 * * *

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: General Carrelli, I am
4 going to ask you, before I swear everybody in, why don't I
5 let you guys introduce yourselves to the Committee.

6 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Okay. We'll start
7 all the way on the left. Mark.

8 DEPUTY FERRARO: Good afternoon.

9 I'm Mark Ferraro. I'm Deputy for Facilities and
10 Engineering.

11 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: Good afternoon.

12 I'm Mike Regan, Deputy Adjutant General for Air.

13 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: Good afternoon.

14 Dee McPherson, the Deputy for Administration.

15 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And I'm
16 Tony Carrelli, the Adjutant General.

17 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Eric Weller, the
18 Deputy Adjutant General of Veterans Affairs.

19 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL SCHINDLER: Good
20 afternoon.

21 I'm Mark Schindler. I'm the Deputy Adjutant
22 General for Army.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Very good.

24 So those of you who are about to testify, if you
25 would rise and raise your right hand:

1 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are
2 about to give is true to the best of your knowledge,
3 information, and belief? If so, say "I do."

4
5 (Testifiers responded "I do.")

6
7 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you.

8 So we'll start off with our first questioner
9 today, and that's Representative Gabler, also a military
10 man.

11 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 And thank you, General Carrelli, and everybody.
13 It's a pleasure to spend some time with you this afternoon.

14 I wanted to start out and kick off the hearing
15 with a discussion of something that has gotten a lot of
16 press recently and a lot of well-founded---

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I apologize.

18 I want to introduce, before he may disappear from
19 here, we have been joined by the Speaker of the House,
20 Mike Turzai, and sitting next to him is Retired Colonel and
21 Representative Frank Ryan.

22 I'm sorry, Representative Gabler. We'll start
23 over.

24 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
25 and thank you once again.

1 I wanted to start out with a discussion of
2 something that had some well-founded publicity this week,
3 and that's the proposal to invoke a new educational program
4 for military families within the Pennsylvania Guard. So I
5 wanted to ask if you could give an overview of what this
6 proposal looks like and specifically, also, how does it
7 differ from the existing educational assistance program
8 which we already fund?

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Okay. And I
10 appreciate the question. Thank you, sir.

11 Essentially the existing Education Assistance
12 Program was put in place in 1996 to increase recruiting
13 into the Pennsylvania National Guard, as I said, from 1996.

14 That has been a fantastic program for us. It was
15 a model. It was then the first in the country and became a
16 model for many States. Just about every State now has a
17 similar program. Everybody has copied that, and we are
18 still extremely successful in bringing in Guardsmen under
19 that program, essentially somewhere along the lines of 2500
20 to 2700 people annually in that program.

21 That gets after recruiting. That gets a lot of
22 people in the door. But our most valuable, most highly
23 qualified Guardsmen are not in there for 6 years of
24 enlistment, and unfortunately, due to the demands of
25 National Guard service, and it has gotten harder and harder

1 every year. This year, the demands on our Guardsmen are
2 much harder than it was a year ago, 5 years ago, 10 years
3 ago, and you, as a Guardsman, you certainly understand
4 that.

5 And I would like to, one, just recognize for the
6 body out here Representative Gabler and, over the shoulder
7 here, Brigadier General Mark McCormack, both State
8 employees that just recently returned from the 28th Division
9 deployment, a year overseas. So thank you so much for your
10 service there.

11 But as those two Guardsmen as examples and
12 thousands of others, service in the National Guard has
13 gotten harder and harder and harder. We deploy thousands
14 of Guardsmen overseas.

15 The average time spent away from family is huge.
16 This year in our Stryker Brigade, you know, essentially in
17 August, we had 5,000 Guardsmen in California for a month
18 for training. Many of those same Guardsmen did
19 approximately 80, 85 days of service this year, away from
20 families, away from their civilian jobs.

21 So the Guard time is becoming more and more
22 demanding. That's more time away from their civilian jobs,
23 where they usually make more money. So we're asking these
24 Guardsmen to lose money to serve for the Commonwealth and
25 for the country.

1 We see a similar circumstance in State Active
2 Duty. We're asking, we're depending upon them more and
3 more. The local communities have a lessening capacity to
4 take care of themselves. We're seeing more complex and
5 bigger storms than we ever have, you know, in the immediate
6 past, so Guardsmen deployments are going up within the
7 Commonwealth. So all of this is combining to erode our
8 retention.

9 So we're able to get people in. We're still one
10 of the top recruiting States, even though some of those
11 numbers have gone down, but they have gone down nationally.

12 Our problem right now is retention. We used to
13 be able to, when a Guardsman came up for retention, for a
14 re-enlistment, we used to be able to keep 7 or 8 out of 10.
15 Now, essentially we're almost down to five, and we're just
16 losing way too much experience. We need those people from
17 the 6- to 12-year point. We need 12 to 20 years. We need
18 the 20, 25 senior, enlisted senior officer. We need that
19 experience, and we're eroding that quickly.

20 So to get after that, we need a re-enlistment, a
21 recommitment incentive to keep people in uniform. That
22 experience is so critical for us to do our mission. So
23 this new education program, Military Family Education
24 Program, the Pennsylvania GI Bill as a number of people are
25 calling it now, when you make a commitment to stay in

1 Pennsylvania for another 6 years, so say you're that kid
2 that we went after in high school and got you here on EAP
3 for the first 6 years, now you're 24 years old with 6 years
4 of service, if you re-enlist for another 6 years, we'll pay
5 for another education in a State System, just like we did
6 on the first one, but now this is for your family. It's
7 for a spouse; it's for a kid. And what we're doing there
8 is we're recognizing the family's critical role in the
9 lives of our Guardsmen.

10 We have a saying in the military, you recruit
11 members, but you retain families, and if we don't have that
12 family support, if a Guardsman can't make the sacrifice
13 from a civilian job to do Guard duty because it's hurting
14 his family, his or her family, then we're going to lose
15 more and more people. So we need to do something to get
16 after retention.

17 Just 2 weeks ago I was down in Washington for the
18 Adjutant Generals' meetings, and for the first time, a
19 slide went on the wall and had Pennsylvania as a red State
20 as far as force structure is concerned. So they're looking
21 at Pennsylvania to pull force structure out because our
22 retention numbers have fallen.

23 And there's a lot of reasons why that is going,
24 and many of those factors not our fault. But the fact of
25 the matter is, we're now being considered for reductions in

1 Federal force structure because we can't get after holding
2 our Guardsmen, you know.

3 So we need that experience. It's critical for
4 us. We're absolutely thrilled of the support that we got
5 of the sponsors and cosponsors to this point to getting
6 this program. It's going to be critical for us to be able
7 to keep our experience level in the future.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Well, thank you, sir. I
9 appreciate the information on the program and the
10 opportunity to work together with the Department of
11 Military and Veterans Affairs on the proposal. I
12 appreciate it.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

15 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative
16 Krueger.

17 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 Thank you, General, for joining us here today.

19 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: My district office in
21 Delaware County works very closely with a number of your
22 folks. My constituents really appreciate the Mobile
23 Veterans' Van. We have them in Delaware County on a
24 regular basis, and it's such an important service.

25 So I have some questions for you about the

1 Veterans Service Officers. How many Veterans Service
2 Officers are funded right now through the grant program
3 that was established under Act 66?

4 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Roughly 50, ma'am.

5 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: 50.

6 And can you talk a little bit about what kinds of
7 services they provide?

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So the Veterans
9 Service Officers are out there as an outreach to connect
10 veterans with their benefits. So we use events all
11 throughout the Commonwealth. Any gathering of people, for
12 instance, just in January we had the van and our entire
13 team out at the Farm Show, and the Farm Show is one of our
14 most successful outreach events. We get hundreds of leads
15 in just that 9- or 10-day period that we spend there.

16 We also get the outreach in the communities at
17 veterans events. I know many of the people sitting here in
18 front of me have sponsored a veterans breakfast, a veterans
19 expo, veterans appreciation events, a Vietnam Veterans
20 pinning and things. We try to partner with you in all of
21 those and make sure that we also have Veterans Service
22 Officers at all of those events to continually get after
23 our outreach to veterans and getting them.

24 Essentially about a third of Pennsylvania's
25 793,000 veterans are registered. The Act 66 program, we

1 were able to sign up 27,233 this past year, I think is what
2 our number was. So that's, you know, 27,000-plus more
3 veterans that we didn't have signed up before.

4 The history of that program, if you go back since
5 it started, I believe we just went over 201,000 people that
6 were signed up just with that program that now have
7 benefits that wouldn't otherwise have them. So it's a
8 lifeblood for us to connect people with their benefits.

9 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: That's wonderful.

10 We had a constituent who came to a senior
11 breakfast recently who was a World War II veteran, and the
12 Veterans Service Officer who was with us that day was able
13 to connect him to a benefit program. He was there with his
14 son, and he had never known about that benefit. So I have
15 seen firsthand how important the work is that these folks
16 do.

17 Now, I know that there are four designated
18 organizations here in Pennsylvania who receive support
19 through your department: the American Legion, the Veterans
20 of Foreign Wars, American Veterans, and Disabled American
21 Veterans. Are there any other organizations who receive
22 grants from the Veterans Commission at this point?

23 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, those specific
24 organizations are solely the ones provided in the
25 2.87-some million dollars for the Act 66.

1 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Okay.

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: There are other
3 grants that we do sometimes related to outreach that we may
4 use, for instance, from the Veterans' Trust Fund. So there
5 may be some other peripheral events. But the ones that you
6 are addressing are strictly for that Act 66 money. They
7 are the only ones receiving that.

8 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: So the Act 66 funding is
9 restricted to those organizations?

10 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Currently. Yes,
11 ma'am.

12 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Okay.

13 And how are the grants distributed throughout the
14 State? How do you decide how much goes to folks in
15 southeastern Pennsylvania versus western Pennsylvania?

16 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So what we'll do
17 every year, we do an announcement as to, it's a request for
18 people that want to participate in the grant program.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Mm-hmm.

20 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And we put out what
21 we feel are the emphasis areas that we're trying to get out
22 after.

23 So this year, our emphasis might be mental health
24 counseling. It might be homelessness or employment. So
25 we'll put those emphasis areas out there and do a period of

1 advertising for requests. And then we'll take in all the
2 requests. We hold a board up at the State headquarters
3 that evaluates each one of the requests, what their
4 proposals are, how exactly they plan on spending the money,
5 how many veterans will be affected, how well that gets
6 after the priorities we set, and then we rack and stack and
7 then essentially start assigning money to each of those,
8 and then, you know, the top.

9 So essentially for the grants for organizations
10 this year, we did 650,000 dollars' worth of grants for the
11 organizations. We did another \$150,000 for offices of
12 county veterans affairs, for projects that they want to do.
13 So that 800,000 was granted out of the Veterans' Trust Fund
14 this year.

15 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Wonderful.

16 Thanks so much for your service, and thanks for
17 the support that your department gives to our veterans.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: It has been a
19 pleasure to serve you.

20 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative Topper.

21 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Good afternoon, General.

22 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Hi, sir.

23 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And thanks to all of you
24 for your service, and thanks for being here this afternoon.

25 And just to piggyback a little bit off

1 Representative Gabler, just to make sure we're clear on the
2 Military Family Education Program, that is going to be
3 something that we're planning on continuing annually,
4 correct?

5 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

6 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Okay. So there are three
7 additional staff positions?

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And that's not just for
10 the rollout of the program; we expect them to be on board?

11 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: No, sir. Those would
12 be enduring positions.

13 So currently, I believe we have three positions
14 managing the EAP portion. We feel we'll need another
15 three. And then we actually feel this will be -- we're
16 going to get a lot more participation in this program than
17 anticipated because it will be able to affect more people.

18 You know, essentially when we're bringing in
19 soldiers and airmen under the EAP program for recruiting
20 purposes, we have a large number of our Guardsmen that
21 never go do a college education. So even though they
22 signed up for it and they're eligible for it, they end up
23 never actually executing it or going to college. We feel a
24 lot more people would be interested in this program because
25 it's for their family, it's for a spouse, or if it's for a

1 kid.

2 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Right.

3 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So we see this, you
4 know, if this was to go into effect, you know, the day it
5 goes into effect, we see it, really, that the enrollments
6 in this we see are going to spike huge, because I think
7 we're going to get a huge number of people that are going
8 to want to take advantage of this program.

9 So the enrollments are going to go way up very
10 quickly, but many of those people are not going to execute
11 that. So I'll give you an example. Say it's a 25-year-old
12 Guardsman. Their spouse already has a college education.
13 He re-enlists for this. Let's say he has a kid that's only
14 1 year old. They're going to sign up for it this year.
15 We're not actually going to have to pay to send them to
16 school for another 17 years.

17 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Right.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So we're going to see
19 enrollments go way up, and then eventually we'll settle
20 back down, because once we get 6 or 7 years down the
21 road---

22 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: So you feel comfortable
23 with the staffing of the---

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Okay. Good.

1 And then in your answer, also you mentioned
2 something that I wanted to touch on, which was certainly we
3 have had our share of natural disasters in this State. And
4 a lot of people know, but I'm sure also there are those who
5 don't, how active you have been in terms of the National
6 Guard and helping our communities. Do you have any
7 statistics or even just provide a general update on how
8 that has affected the National Guard this past year?

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

10 So, you know, every other day that we spend away
11 from our families or our civilian jobs is another
12 sacrifice, and if you look back at the numbers, historical
13 numbers from 10 years ago, we might go through an average
14 year with only activating 100, 200, maybe 300 Guardsmen to
15 State Active Duty. Now, consistently, we're way over a
16 thousand, this year approaching 2,000.

17 You know, last year alone in March, this month
18 last year, we had three snowstorms that mostly affected
19 northeastern Pennsylvania, but we activated 180 members in
20 the first storm, 550 in the second storm, 570 in the third
21 storm. Okay? That was over a thousand people just in
22 March alone. That's Pennsylvania.

23 Hurricane Sandy, we were all over New Jersey and
24 New York because we are the largest in the Northeast. So
25 if there's a disaster here on the East Coast---

1 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: More than just in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Pennsylvania has to
4 go.

5 We went to Texas for the hurricane there. We
6 went to Florida. We went to Puerto Rico. We went to the
7 Virgin Islands. If people need help, you know, those
8 Governors call Pennsylvania and say, we need help.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And I think that's
10 critical for our people to understand, is that this is not
11 just a Pennsylvania -- yes, we are the Pennsylvania
12 National Guard, but we are truly one at the forefront of so
13 many in the nation of being able to help out in those---

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

15 But, you know, I mentioned this in many of my
16 speeches throughout the Commonwealth. You know, they get
17 that call at 2 o'clock in the morning; there's 2 feet of
18 snow on the ground. They look at caller ID. They know
19 it's us calling them and they know what we want, but they
20 still answer that phone. They throw on their uniform.
21 They dig themselves out of their own driveway. They get to
22 that armory, and for the next 3, 4, 5 days, they are out
23 there digging people off a highway. They're going
24 door-to-door. And their own family is stuck in their
25 house. They don't have electricity. Nobody is shoveling

1 them out, you know. So when that Guardsman is done that
2 duty, he goes home, he or she goes home, and then they got
3 to shovel their own family out.

4 I mean, that's what we're asking of these people
5 constantly, time after time after time. You know, it's
6 tough. It is not easy being in the National Guard.

7 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And then very briefly
8 could you give us, as I finish up with my last question,
9 just an update on our current overseas deployment, so what
10 we're anticipating for this year.

11 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Sure. I'll let each
12 of the services brief theirs.

13 General Schindler, if you want to talk Army real
14 fast.

15 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL SCHINDLER: Sure, sir.
16 Thank you for the opportunity.

17 Sir, to address our current deployments, this
18 year we have a 1928th contracting team, a small team, but
19 it's currently scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan.

20 We have about 160 soldiers of an MP company.
21 They are currently deployed right now in support of
22 Operation Spartan Shield. And we have about 18 other
23 individual soldiers that are out there doing individual
24 missions, but they're all in the Title 10 overseas
25 capacity.

1 In 2019, we have about 530 soldiers from our
2 3rd of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment. They are going to
3 deploy to Poland on a Title 10 mission. And we have about
4 50 from our 2nd, the 104th Aviation, two companies that are
5 going to deploy to Afghanistan in that capacity as well.
6 And then there's about 20 individual soldiers that will
7 take individual deployments in service to Title 10 missions
8 around the world.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: All right. Thank you.

10 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And, General Regan,
11 if you'll address the Air.

12 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: Absolutely.

13 Now, currently, we have roughly about 188 airmen
14 currently deployed overseas to Afghanistan and other
15 overseas locations. Some of them are due back here in the
16 next month or two.

17 And for next year, we anticipate about 250 or so
18 will deploy overseas in support of Title 10 in the coming
19 year.

20 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Okay. Thank you.

21 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: I would also like to
22 add that on the Air Force side, as we sit here, we have
23 airmen in Pittsburgh on Title 10 homeland security alert.
24 It's 24/7, 365. We have been doing it since 9/11.

25 And then Horsham on the other side of the State,

1 on the Philly side, we have a remotely piloted aircraft
2 mission there. So there are Guardsmen 24/7, 365 in that
3 facility flying aircraft halfway around the world doing
4 combat ops from Pennsylvania. So even though they're not
5 going overseas, they are still on a Title 10 combat
6 mission.

7 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Well, thank you.

8 And I know I speak for my colleagues and all my
9 constituents, we can't thank you enough for the job that
10 you and the men and women who serve do for all of us. So
11 thank you.

12 And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you, sir.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: General Regan, if I
15 may, just to clarify, am I correct in saying that the 193rd
16 is the most activated National Guard unit in the country?

17 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: Yes, sir. That
18 remains true. Yes.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I remember when
20 Governor Ridge and I visited the unit a number, or a lot of
21 years ago now.

22 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: They're gearing
23 up, actually. They'll be leaving in a few months again for
24 7 more.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Very good.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And, Mr. Chairman, I
2 would love to add---

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Yes.

4 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---because I know
5 General Regan is not going to brag about it himself, but
6 this year, all three Pennsylvania wings received the
7 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. That has never happened
8 before. I mean, just the top, top units--- Yes.

9 (Applause.)

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you, General,
11 for mentioning that.

12 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you, Chairman.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Congratulations,
14 General.

15 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: Oh; thank you
16 very much.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: With that, we'll go to
18 Representative Schweyer.

19 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Thank you,
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 And General, to you and your entire team, I join
22 my colleagues in echoing everyone's sentiments. Thank you
23 to the men and women who do so much to protect our homeland
24 and protect our communities, but also protect our national
25 interests abroad and our freedoms and liberties, and thank

1 you.

2 Kind of taking a step -- kind of going in a
3 slightly different direction. In Lehigh County where I
4 represent, we lost a significant amount of Federal dollars
5 that was used for homelessness prevention for our veterans
6 communities, something to the tune of \$400,000 or \$500,000
7 of Federal dollars that we have lost, the result of which
8 is in the entire County of Lehigh, we have exactly one case
9 manager who is working on homelessness prevention. It's
10 becoming particularly an acute concern for us.

11 Just last week I was at a program at one of our
12 churches, and a gentleman who served in the Marine Corps in
13 the mid-eighties was there specifically to get food
14 assistance for that day and had nowhere to go outside of a
15 warming station that we had set up at a YMCA in the City of
16 Allentown.

17 I'm wondering what, knowing that this is a loss
18 of Federal dollars and the odds of it coming back anytime
19 soon are probably pretty thin, I'm wondering what, if
20 anything, the Department could do to affect counties like
21 Lehigh -- and I know we're not the only one that has
22 received this cut in Federal funding -- to help us with our
23 homeless veterans population.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir. I would
25 love to address that. Thank you for your question.

1 If you look at our budget line items and you take
2 a look, you know, at the list of all the programs that you
3 provide us financial support for, where is homelessness?
4 Where is mental, you know; job creation. Where is suicide
5 awareness, you know. So we get asked about those many,
6 many times, and we have been struggling to do a program, or
7 should we stand up a program? Do we need to build another
8 office? How do we get after this?

9 General Weller has done tremendous work over this
10 over the past year and a half, and what we have come up
11 with is this concept of regionalization, and you see the
12 beginning of that in this budget, those five positions.

13 So General Weller has already started -- and I'll
14 let him comment here in a second. He has already started
15 this. He has taken some of his own manpower out of hide to
16 start this. And they're already paying for themselves in
17 the amount of work that they have been doing.

18 This regionalization, the five bodies that we
19 asked for in this budget, is the next piece of this. It is
20 presented as a behavioral health piece to start, and we
21 plan in the future and possibly in next year's budget to do
22 another five and maybe another five in the budget after
23 that.

24 But we're picking out five regions across -- you
25 know, it's almost impossible to run an effective program

1 that is good for Lehigh Valley from Harrisburg. So we're
2 putting this into regions. We're going to put this staff,
3 who will become experts in this region. They're going to
4 know where all the assets are. They're going to know what
5 the Federal funded programs are. They're going to know
6 what the 501(c)(3)s that are available in those areas, what
7 State programs that we have.

8 So we're asking to put some of our own DMVA
9 employees, you know, you authorize us some DMVA employees,
10 and we're going to have them working closely with DHS.
11 Because, you know, I don't want to start my own program; I
12 want to use other people's programs, and to the max extent
13 that I can, I want to use other people's money. So that's
14 how we're going to get after subjects like that.

15 I think trying to build a centralized program in
16 Harrisburg to get after that is the wrong approach. And
17 again, I give General Weller all the credit for his
18 development of this concept. I'll let him discuss some of
19 it as well.

20 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Okay.

21 I wanted to tag on to your one question in
22 relation to a reduction in Federal funding. I believe that
23 the Federal funding wasn't reduced, it was just reallocated
24 throughout the State.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: To the people of Lehigh

1 County, that's exactly the same thing.

2 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Right; right.

3 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: The impact is exactly
4 the same. When it's taken away from one and moved to
5 another, it is a reduction in funding for Lehigh County
6 veterans, the homeless population.

7 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Exactly.

8 So, I mean, the bottom line for us is, we're
9 trying to figure out how we can effect allocation of the
10 Federal dollars, and we haven't quite gotten to that point
11 yet.

12 So anyways, just following up with what General
13 Carrelli had to say, I mean, basically we're just funded
14 for service at the veterans homes, a limited outreach
15 program, and we have a limited State benefits program.
16 Obviously a lot of the questions you're asking today and
17 everywhere else that we go is in relation to veterans
18 homelessness, PTSD, suicide prevention, TBI, drug and
19 alcohol issues, none of which we're funded for.

20 So as General Carrelli said, we have come up with
21 a strategy to start with. We're just laying the
22 foundation. We have had the opportunity to start the
23 Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services. We have
24 about six committees under that council, and participants
25 come from most of the departments in the State.

1 The idea, again, as he said, is that we can tag
2 on to some of the things they're doing just to help put
3 that veterans slant on the Aging Committee, on the
4 Judiciary Committee, on the Women Veterans Committee, so on
5 and so forth.

6 And then we just want to take that one step
7 further down to the boots on the ground at the county level
8 and address the people that he has already mentioned. What
9 we're finding is, there's a lot of money out there. And
10 again, I can ask you for all the money in the world and
11 you're probably not going to give it to me, but I want to
12 get to point B, which covers the entire gamut of how we
13 service veterans.

14 So I know the money is out there. It may belong
15 to other people, and I just want to help them reallocate
16 it, their money, to veterans.

17 What we're finding is that a lot of the services
18 that are provided are not known to people out in the
19 counties, and that's just a plain fact. Whether you're a
20 Federal employee, State employee, local employee, a member
21 of a 501(c)(3), there just is not a good informational
22 database, and that's what we're going to set up so
23 everybody will have access, easy sailing, to services and
24 funding.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: I appreciate it. Thank

1 you.

2 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Sure.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative Culver.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Good afternoon. Thank
5 you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Over here.

7 Thank you, General Carrelli and team, for being
8 here today.

9 One of the things I have to say is thank you for
10 your service, but I always think of our Servicemen as the
11 people who have the courage to do what the rest of us just
12 simply don't have the courage to do. So thank you for
13 that.

14 I just want to talk about PTSD a little bit. We
15 have a constituent in my district who actually wrote a
16 post, Josh Mantz, the "Darker Soul," about PTSD, and he was
17 doing a tour around the United States and came home, did a
18 tour last year, and really brought to light the effects of
19 PTSD and how difficult it is for one, the veteran, to
20 recognize themselves; two, for their family members; and
21 three, for the community to recognize. But it can take
22 months, years, or decades for it to surface, and sometimes
23 it resurfaces. So it's pretty important that we as a
24 community and a Commonwealth are abreast of what's going on
25 and that we're funding it appropriately.

1 So one of the issues I think I'm concerned with,
2 in the Governor's proposed budget, there was the
3 elimination of, I think as you just said, of the \$750,000
4 to treat veterans suffering with post-traumatic stress
5 disorder. So I guess the question is, I assume you're very
6 concerned about that, and did I hear that there's a panel,
7 did you say, of six different committees looking at how we
8 can make sure we continue to provide services?

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, the program
10 that you are addressing, the 750 was a legislative add, so
11 it wasn't a program record of DMVA. So that was an add.
12 That money went to a specific purchase. We didn't have any
13 program associated with that money.

14 We feel that through regionalization, that's the
15 way for us to get at this program. We do not feel a need
16 at this point to come to you and say, well, I need a
17 million dollars for regionalization to get me to get after
18 these things. I need the bodies first.

19 We have already taken the first cut out of our
20 own organization and we got people out there. This next
21 one, again, is to specifically get after some of the DHS
22 programs.

23 And again, I don't want to give these to DHS.
24 DHS currently serves veterans in Pennsylvania. They just
25 don't know they're veterans.

1 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Right.

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Veterans need -- they
3 have unique circumstances, and their care should be a
4 little different because of the different things that they
5 have experienced, as you just addressed.

6 So are we going to get to the point where, if I
7 can use Federal funds, I'll use the Federal funds. If I
8 can use a charity, I will use the charity. I have had
9 these other organizations. You know, we talked about
10 Lehigh Valley for addiction. We use New Vitae. In
11 Lancaster County, we use Retreat. These are places we have
12 been able to put veterans at no cost. Those organizations
13 are covered through their own fundraising, through their
14 own donations. So we have been very successful at getting
15 veterans help without charging anybody any money.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: So you don't need an
17 allocation?

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Well, I don't need it
19 just yet.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Yet.

21 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So when this
22 regionalization gets kicked off and if every veteran that
23 comes to us for help I'm able to find a place to help them,
24 great, I will never ask you for another dime for that.
25 Well, I'll be specific.

1 If, if I'm having problems, you know, and I'm
2 running out of places, I just have some veterans that are
3 falling through the cracks and there's no way to get them
4 funded, well, then yes, I'll be the first one back here to
5 say, I need some sort of grant, I need some sort of program
6 to cover the expenses for these veterans that I just
7 otherwise can't find, you know.

8 We just don't think it's responsible to come to
9 you first and say, well, you should pay for all this,
10 because, you know, there are some other ways out there that
11 I can find to get things done. We're doing it right now.
12 Let us exhaust those options. And like I said, if I need
13 more help, I will be the first one to ask, but I'm not
14 there just yet.

15 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: How could you think what
16 you do could be any more admirable than what you just said.
17 We probably want to have you here for every hearing and
18 just you say that.

19 So are you not receiving State dollars now, and
20 are you receiving any Federal dollars?

21 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: For? Specifically
22 for PTSD?

23 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: PTSD; yeah.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: I do not believe we
25 have any grants. We are using -- we used some of our

1 Veterans' Trust Fund money, which, again, it's not
2 appropriated money, but we're getting that through the sale
3 of license plates, donations, on car registration and
4 license renewal. We get -- through the lifetime of that
5 program, we got about \$10 ½ million.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Okay.

7 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: We have granted out
8 8 million of that. So we have been using some of those
9 grants to get after some of these issues that you're
10 talking about.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: So I see we're running
12 out of time, so just quickly, for all of us, I know we all
13 have constituents that have PTSD or don't know that they
14 have it yet. What's the best course of action for somebody
15 to take if they're looking to get some treatment or some
16 help?

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: If they're already
18 registered as a veteran, go to your local Federal VA,
19 because there are Federal VA programs designed to cover
20 that. If you're not registered, get to your county
21 director of veterans affairs and get registered.

22 And then in most cases, you are eligible for
23 benefits that you didn't even know about, and then that
24 will get you, if it's a service-connected disability from
25 your service, we'll be able to get you in through the

1 Federal system first.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Okay. Thank you very
3 much.

4 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CULVER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative
7 Comitta.

8 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
9 General -- Generals -- and team.

10 I wanted to follow up on a couple of things.

11 Some of the special services for veterans include
12 problem-solving courts, and I know they're available in
13 some counties. Chester County has a lot of special courts,
14 but I don't know about other counties. And I know these
15 are really valuable in finding the right solution to really
16 help someone. And so I'm wondering what the program is for
17 expanding the problem-solving courts for veterans to other
18 counties.

19 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

20 We currently have veterans courts in about a
21 third of the counties in the system. Originally when we
22 first started this, I think we were advocating for a
23 program in every single county. I think after having
24 worked with the counties, talked to a number of the judges,
25 I think that's probably an unrealistic goal, because some

1 of our rural counties just do not have the throughput that
2 is going to justify the expense of doing one of those
3 programs.

4 So in those areas now, our new strategy is to
5 overcome some of the jurisdictional issues, because we have
6 neighboring counties that have volunteered to take from
7 other counties. But we just got to get past the
8 jurisdictional questions, and some counties have been able
9 to do that.

10 The other way that we have seen this, and I have
11 been on a number of veterans court forums sponsored by
12 Widener University. We do a forum there every year, and I
13 have talked to a number of the veterans court judges.

14 The other way that some of these courts are
15 getting at that problem is they use a specialty court. So
16 they don't have a full-blown, qualified veterans court, but
17 they do a specialty court that will talk about veterans
18 issues. So they're handling it through the specialty
19 courts.

20 And essentially the biggest holdback for most
21 of these counties is getting the number of other
22 veterans volunteers to be mentors. You know, it doesn't
23 work just to have this veteran put in front of a
24 veterans-understanding judge. There needs to be a veterans
25 mentor that goes through every step of this rehabilitation

1 process with them. So we are also out there beating the
2 bushes to find more veterans who are willing to give their
3 time to volunteer as mentors.

4 So I think that's the key right now, to continue
5 to get the grassroots support for mentors, and then for
6 those smaller counties that don't have the big veterans
7 throughput, to either give up jurisdiction to an adjacent
8 county or consider using a special court.

9 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Thank you.

10 And following on the National Guard discussion
11 about natural disasters, climate change, and so on, and
12 Pennsylvania having the largest National Guard in the
13 region, can you talk about---

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am, in the
15 Northeast. So currently, not by authorized numbers but by
16 actual numbers, we're the second largest in the country.
17 Texas is bigger than us. We just passed California.

18 But our force structure numbers have been
19 declining. I mean, if you look in our packet, you know,
20 we're about 2,000 smaller than we were 2 or 3 years ago.
21 We used to be over a hundred percent; now we're well under
22 that.

23 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: So with the concept of
24 mutual aid---

25 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

1 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: ---we're giving mutual
2 aid---

3 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

4 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: ---but not so much the
5 reciprocal, because we have got the capacity.

6 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: No, ma'am. We have
7 not, to my knowledge, and I'm trying to think here. So
8 when we did the Pope's visit a few years ago, we had about
9 6700 of our Guardsmen on the streets in Philadelphia for
10 that. We did accept some Federal special teams. That came
11 from the Federal Government into Pennsylvania.

12 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Mm-hmm.

13 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: I don't believe --
14 and we had some civil support teams from some neighboring
15 States that came and helped us, special qualifications.
16 But to my knowledge, that's the only time we have asked for
17 outside help.

18 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: So is there, with the
19 upswing due to climate change and natural disasters, is
20 there a regional discussion with other National Guards, a
21 national discussion about the National Guard needs --
22 certainly Pennsylvania and other States -- to beef up, you
23 know, the ranks so people are there to address this growing
24 need?

25 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, unfortunately,

1 the National Guard is put in place federally for equipment,
2 for training, for all the purposes really essentially to go
3 to war. So we maintain the force structure that we
4 maintain because that's what's required to supplement the
5 Army and to supplement the Air Force to go out and fight
6 national wars.

7 We take that force structure and use it to do
8 natural disasters.

9 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Right.

10 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: But it's not the
11 other way around. They don't build us for the disasters,
12 they build us for combat, and then we use that to do
13 disasters. So it's kind of backwards from the way that
14 you're presenting it. Does that make sense?

15 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Yes, it does.

16 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

17 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Thank you so much.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

19 REPRESENTATIVE COMITTA: Thank goodness for all
20 of you and all of our National Guard and certainly our
21 veterans. Thank you.

22 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you for your
23 support, ma'am.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I did want to
25 recognize that we have been joined by two individuals who

1 are not Members of the Appropriations Committee,
2 Representative Dan Williams and Representative Gillen, who
3 are here also observing today.

4 And with that, we'll move to Representative
5 Struzzi.

6 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
7 Good afternoon.

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

9 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you for being
10 here.

11 I want to talk a little bit about veterans.
12 Obviously I applaud your efforts to provide services
13 without needing to ask for additional money and everything
14 that you are doing to make sure that the needs of our
15 veterans are met, but really it saddens me that we just
16 don't do this stuff. I think that it should be one of our
17 fundamental responsibilities as a government to take care
18 of our veterans. So I appreciate everything that you are
19 doing.

20 I want to talk a little bit about workforce,
21 specifically obviously related to veterans, and some of the
22 other programs you mentioned, that lack of awareness that
23 veterans have for the services that are out there.

24 Now, the county that I come from, Indiana County,
25 we have some great people who help provide veterans

1 services, and Team RWB is very active in doing events to
2 highlight homeless veterans and things like that. But
3 again, it's sad to me that we have to rely on volunteers
4 for all those services. But I do appreciate the work that
5 they do, and I wanted to let that be known, that, you know,
6 I have a lot of respect for everyone who has served in any
7 capacity and the people who try to provide for them on
8 their own.

9 So related to workforce, you know, we have had a
10 lot of discussions. There's a lot of jobs out there right
11 now, a lack of people, you know, in the trade industries,
12 and veterans would fit perfectly into some of those job
13 positions.

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Sure.

15 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: So if you could just
16 talk to me a little bit about, you know, some of the
17 efforts that are occurring, some of the successes perhaps
18 that you have had in helping veterans acclimate to the
19 workforce and get back into a good career.

20 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

21 You know, unfortunately, we have an aging
22 veterans population, so many of our veterans are out of the
23 workforce at this point in their lives.

24 We have an active program in both the Air Force
25 and in the Army in Pennsylvania for military members that

1 are transitioning. Essentially we have a great outreach
2 from the civilian community of people that want to hire
3 military members, and they essentially make it well known.
4 We do job fairs and we do job expos to connect these
5 military service members and these veterans with these
6 corporations that want to hire them. There's a number
7 across the Commonwealth that have made commitments to hire
8 a thousand, 5,000, or 10,000 veterans over the next
9 10 years. So we're very excited about those, and we're
10 trying to make those key connections to help do the
11 employment.

12 Another piece of this is licensure, and we're
13 trying to get after this. This is a difficult problem.
14 But, you know, we're studying it now. When we have more
15 information, we're going to come back to you and say, we
16 need this licensure relief, because we have a fair number
17 of our military members that get outstanding training,
18 experience. You know, they're phenomenally qualified in
19 areas and they'll come in to Pennsylvania to get some sort
20 of license in that field, and they say, well, you haven't
21 gone through our approved course, approved Pennsylvania
22 course; we don't give you credit for anything.

23 In some cases, if we could just do some sort of
24 job test for military or veterans for them to display those
25 aptitudes, maybe that's the solution. What we're trying to

1 get after is getting the military services, and this is
2 where the problem essentially is, the military services to
3 produce a product.

4 I mean, I can hand you a letter signed by
5 Tony Carrelli saying, this 68 Whiskey combat medic is a
6 phenomenal medical provider and should be granted a license
7 as a nurse, but you're not going to take that because I
8 signed it and say, oh, yeah, I want to give you a license
9 and we're going to credential you in a health-care system
10 and provide you insurance, just based on what I signed. So
11 we need the Federal Government's help in each one of the
12 services to produce what these qualifications are from the
13 military equivalent to what the civilian equivalent is and
14 be able to bridge those, and I think that will help us
15 tremendously.

16 You know, and again, we need the cooperation of
17 this body to ease the licensure piece once we have that
18 done for people to be able to come right out of the
19 military and get right into a job and not have to go to a
20 school for 6 months that they really don't even need,
21 because they have probably way more experience than a
22 number of people that are already in that field.

23 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Well, thank you. That
24 got right to the heart of my next question, which is, you
25 know, what are the deterrents?

1 But it sounds like there's an opportunity for us
2 to help you. Are there other deterrents that are out there
3 that prevent veterans from getting into the workforce
4 again?

5 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

6 I think one of the biggest ones of those is
7 really the complexities of navigating the Civil Service
8 system. So many of these jobs are tied to Civil Service
9 requirements. I think with the reform that we were able to
10 do last year, and I thank you for that, that goes a long
11 way.

12 We're working very closely with the Office of
13 Administration to try to translate military resumes so that
14 people can look at that, whether it's a State job or any
15 other job in Pennsylvania. And then we're encouraging
16 agencies and companies to publish their veterans hiring.
17 You know, so what percentage of your employees are
18 veterans? And those that are lower we're going to
19 challenge to raise that.

20 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: All right. Thank you,
21 and thank you all again for your service.

22 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you, sir.

23 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Continue the good work.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I just want to make an

1 announcement.

2 We will, most likely around 2:15, be starting the
3 hearing on Aging if we are done here early. Originally
4 that had been scheduled for 3 o'clock. So just public
5 noticing those that are watching that we will be starting
6 most likely a little earlier than 3 o'clock for the
7 Department of Aging.

8 With that, we will move to Representative Cephas.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Thank you, Chairman.

10 And thank you for testifying.

11 And I am from Philadelphia County, and the papal
12 visit was a huge undertaking. So just to hear your level
13 of support for that event, I just want to thank you for
14 that. And given the magnitude of the event, it was really
15 appreciated, so thank you for that.

16 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. We went
17 back to back in Philadelphia, so we did the Pope's visit,
18 and then a year later we did the Democratic National
19 Convention. That was another showcase---

20 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: No; I remember.

21 Listen, I held my breath both times to make sure
22 he got out safely and that each event was executed great.
23 So thank you for that.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

25 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: I just wanted to follow

1 up with some of the line of questioning that was just asked
2 in reference to licensure.

3 One of the legislative things that I have seen in
4 other States is around apprenticeships and looking at our
5 veterans that are leaving the service and given the
6 training that they have had while they were in service and
7 how that can apply to apprenticeship credits when they, you
8 know, partner with companies. Because when we're having
9 this workforce development conversation, it essentially has
10 to address all different populations and ensuring that our
11 men and women that are coming out of the service are able
12 to attach to job opportunities.

13 I just kind of want to get a sense, because I see
14 some other States are looking at legislative opportunities
15 to match apprenticeship credits with the training programs
16 that you offer while they're in service.

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. And
18 that's an important piece of what we were just talking
19 about.

20 So it's not only are we looking to just license
21 people coming out of the service but give credit. So there
22 may not be someone who is fully qualified that's ready for
23 a licensure, but maybe their apprenticeship is already
24 halfway there---

25 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mm-hmm.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---and we're giving
2 them credit for the time served that they already did.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mm-hmm.

4 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So we are looking for
5 those.

6 Another interesting apprenticeship thing, and we
7 have had great success in agriculture so far with this, is
8 using the Federal GI Bill.

9 So traditionally, the GI Bill, and even our own
10 State education program, has been looked at as a
11 university, okay? In order to use that benefit, you got to
12 go to a university. So we have had great success using the
13 Federal GI Bill in the rural agricultural communities.

14 We have service members coming out of the
15 military that want to be farmers.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mmm.

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Okay? So what
18 college are they going to go to to use their GI Bill? So
19 we're able to convert that GI Bill, those resources. You
20 know, we find a participating farmer that is willing to
21 accept that money that was essentially going to go to a
22 university. We build an apprenticeship program on that
23 farm, and that member works at that farm over the next
24 2 years.

25 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Uh-huh.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: The farmer is being
2 supplemented by the money that we would otherwise be giving
3 to the university with the GI Bill benefits, and it's an
4 apprenticeship.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Yeah.

6 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So we're starting it
7 with farms. We're doing it for other trades.

8 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Okay.

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And I think this is
10 just going to expand as time goes on.

11 And I think this is a good way, because you know
12 what? Not every one of our members wants to go to college.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mm-hmm.

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Or needs to go to
15 college.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mm-hmm.

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Or may already have a
18 degree, and now we're requiring additional education
19 requirements. Well, if we can use that in a trade in some
20 way, that's going to be a lot more helpful to our members.

21 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Well, that's exciting.
22 It seems that you are really ahead of the curve, and
23 especially when we have the Secretary of Agriculture
24 talking about the need to fill 75,000 jobs over the next
25 several years.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: It looks like that we're
3 bridging---

4 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Secretary Redding,
5 he's one of our best partners with Military and Veterans
6 Affairs. We have partnered with him on a number of
7 initiatives. Vets and agriculture, military and
8 agriculture, is just a good fit together.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

10 Now, are there any models that you're looking at
11 to develop this type of programming with apprenticeships in
12 our industries, models across the country?

13 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: I'm not an
14 expert on the subject, but, I mean, suffice to say we're
15 working with the Department of Agriculture in relation to a
16 couple of grant programs right now, you know, on that same
17 subject, so.

18 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Okay.

19 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL WELLER: Yeah.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Okay. Well, thank you so
21 much.

22 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative White.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: So veterans and our
25 military personnel, you guys are basically my favorite

1 people to talk about in my district.

2 I have the Delaware Valley Veterans Home.

3 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: I have the National Guard
5 Armory. And I really pride myself on just my whole entire
6 constituency who heavily support all of you in the efforts
7 that you put forth each and every day. So we're very
8 grateful for your service and sacrifices.

9 And yet, you continue to make sacrifices. You
10 are cutting into your own personnel to make sure that our
11 veterans are being served all across this Commonwealth, and
12 again, we are very grateful for that.

13 And it's incredible to see the amount of respect
14 that you have for taxpayer dollars, and it's also
15 incredible to see the work that you do to make sure that
16 even in our veterans home in my district, the costs
17 affiliated with the renovations are competitive. The level
18 of service, the quality of service that you provide to our
19 veterans for the cost affiliated with it is incredible.

20 So I just want to say thank you again and talk
21 about one particular area that, in my district office, we
22 actually have a veterans specialist that comes in once a
23 month, and we make sure that we schedule various veterans
24 that come into our office. We are constantly, as a
25 standard practice, asking the people who come in, are you a

1 veteran or do you know a veteran, because if people don't
2 know that the service is available, they continue to not be
3 served.

4 So one of the things I saw in the budget was an
5 appropriation that's proposed to increase \$57,000, or
6 2 percent, in the veterans outreach services' appropriation
7 to continue the program. How are those moneys going to be
8 used, and how do you think that will benefit our veterans?

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So, ma'am, on the
10 outreach money, that 57,000, the reason behind that number,
11 it's 2 percent. So our Consumer Price Index last year was
12 2 percent.

13 So I, of course, and General Weller were at the
14 State Veterans Commission meetings almost monthly, and it's
15 essentially a promise that I made to the veterans community
16 that I will try to keep the value of their money current.

17 So last year, this body was gracious enough to
18 put a \$500,000 increase on our Act 66 money, and that was
19 the first increase in a long time. Well, our veterans
20 groups, the four that were mentioned earlier, they employ
21 Veterans Service Officers with this money to bring more and
22 more veterans in connection with their benefits.

23 For many, many years, that was a flat line, so
24 every year their salaries eroded, and many of those people
25 quit and they moved on to other positions and they went to

1 other places. So I made a commitment to them that I am
2 going to try to keep the value of their money the same. So
3 my intention is to ask every single year for whatever the
4 CPI index is to that, to keep that value of money there.

5 Now, this year we were able to, if you look in
6 our veterans homes, the cost to carry that we're
7 essentially asking for there is about 1 ½ percent. I mean,
8 normally, it's 12 to 14 percent. So we were able to do,
9 our staff did some phenomenal work on some Federal
10 augmentations in the EVR, the PACE, and the Medicare Part D
11 pharmaceutical programs. We brought in a lot more Federal
12 money this year, so we're covering down on a lot of that.
13 But we want to reinvest some of that savings into new
14 veterans programs. That's why we're asking for adult day
15 health care. That's why we're asking for this
16 regionalization piece, you know.

17 But I look at that as we're paying for that
18 ourselves. I mean, normally, you know, our 12 to
19 14 percent cost to carry, that's not in there. We were
20 able to save money, but I need to reinvest some of that
21 money because there are veterans out there that still need
22 help. And I also need to keep our Veterans Service
23 Officers' money valuable. So if I continue to let them
24 erode, we're going to lose more and more.

25 So that's what that 57 is, is just trying to keep

1 up with the CPI. And again, I intend to do that every
2 year. Maybe next year I'm going to look for additional
3 outreach, so maybe it's going to be CPI plus another, you
4 know, some figure. But every year, I hope to keep their
5 money at the same value so that we can have them continue
6 to serve veterans.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Well, thank you very much
8 for making that a priority. I know we are constantly
9 interviewing veterans specialists. As, you know, one moves
10 on to another career path or proceeds to retire, we see
11 there is certainly a need, and the fact that you have made
12 it a priority, we definitely thank you for that.

13 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

14 I also want to mention, you know, the four groups
15 that were mentioned before, there is also the Vietnam
16 Veterans of America and the Military Order of the Purple
17 Heart that also participate in that program.

18 And I just wanted to take a moment to thank you
19 for being on the advisory council at Del Val. I'll tell
20 you, just about every time I'm out there visiting, you're
21 always there. So I appreciate your interest and your
22 participation at our home.

23 Thank you, ma'am.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative
25 Delozier.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Thank you,
2 Mr. Chairman.

3 Thank you all for being here to answer some
4 questions.

5 One of the issues that I wanted to talk about,
6 you know, earlier it was mentioned by the Minority Chairman
7 about the crocodile tears being shed for services that
8 weren't rendered to certain populations. And I would take
9 issue with that, because the points that we're trying to
10 raise are the fact that the Governor supports certain
11 issues in his priorities that he has and we disagree with
12 those priorities, and he'll fund more things and then zero
13 out things that he does support, and that's confusing to us
14 as to where his real priorities are.

15 And one of those things that I wanted to bring up
16 was the Youth Challenge Program.

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

18 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: That's a line item.
19 It's a bill that was passed. It was a bill that was
20 supported by the Governor and signed into law by the
21 Governor, but yet he zeroed it out and he has not paid, put
22 any dollars towards it. He has put dollars towards a lot
23 of other programs that, you know, might have some fuzzy
24 math. But this is a program that is supported by the
25 Governor, I thought, except with zero dollars to go along

1 with it.

2 So my question to you is the fact, I know you're
3 working on it to kind of set it up in anticipation and
4 hopes of getting the \$2 million that you need for Federal
5 matched funds. Can you tell us where the program stands in
6 setting that up?

7 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

8 What we need, what we need to initiate this
9 program, and I understand the law is now passed, we need a
10 special fund. So we need a special fund to be set up.

11 We have been working with the Legislature. I
12 heard, just before the gathering of this hearing, that it
13 was going to go out today. So we need a special fund
14 that's essentially non-lapsing and a fund that I can also
15 put a foundation in. Because every State that has one of
16 these programs sets up a foundation, and we will go out
17 there and look for private donations as well. And if I can
18 get, you know, if the State's share is \$2 million and I can
19 fundraise 1, well, then the State only has to pay 1.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay.

21 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: But---

22 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And it's ongoing. It's
23 continual.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. It needs
25 to be an ongoing, continuing. We have to make this

1 commitment to the National Guard who is funding the rest
2 that it's an ongoing funded, you know, program. So we need
3 the special fund first.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And, I mean, this is
5 something where 93 percent of the kids that go through this
6 or the students that come through, they end up going on to
7 some sort of additional education, whether it's college or
8 technical or--- I mean, it's a successful program.

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Right.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: It's something that's
11 proven.

12 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: It's extremely
13 successful.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And there's no fuzzy
15 math in that.

16 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: No, ma'am.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: It is a very
19 effective program. We fully support it. We're asking for
20 a special fund to be set up.

21 We just had, 2 weeks ago the National Guard sent
22 a team, a site survey team, out to Fort Indiantown Gap.
23 We're going to plan it. We showed them two prospective
24 sites. They were absolutely thrilled with one of the
25 sites. And they told us, if we can get the fund done and

1 essentially, at a minimum, if we can get \$500,000 in the
2 fund, they already have money left over this year, they
3 will do the 1.5 million on top of that to give us the first
4 year of construction that we're going to need to modify
5 these buildings.

6 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And my understanding is
7 this is the last shot at it, because they're not doing it
8 again.

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: No, ma'am.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: This is the last year.

11 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: No, ma'am.

12 It is an ongoing, supported program. What they
13 don't know is how much money is going to be in the Federal
14 budget next year.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And I'm sorry; I meant
16 with the Federal support.

17 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

18 So they are willing to upfront, you know, if we
19 can get a special fund and get 500,000 in it, they're
20 willing to match the 1.5 to get us initial construction.
21 We'll probably need 2 years of construction to do this.

22 And then we are essentially waiting, if we have a
23 letter of commitment, we have a special fund and we have a
24 commitment letter, then we're going for the Federal budget
25 in October.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay.

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And if we can get in
3 that as a new program, well, then we're set.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay. And I appreciate
5 that. I guess the frustration is that when we have things
6 that are supported but yet zeroed out, it becomes a battle
7 when it comes down to the budget.

8 If I could switch issues a little bit.

9 I know you have been on site with Upper Allen and
10 our new veterans clinic there and the ability to provide
11 for our diverse veterans. At this point, we have many more
12 women coming back that have served, and I know that that
13 clinic in particular was a priority to have more female
14 services for female veterans. So I want to thank you for
15 that recognition of the fact, and I know it was Federal as
16 well. But having that new location, I think in proximity,
17 is a very big issue.

18 One of the issues that also came up is Centric
19 Behavioral Health in the budget, and that's something that
20 it sounds, you know, with the PTSD and those types of
21 services as well as behavioral health, women's services for
22 women veterans, you have such a wide breadth of types of
23 health-care needs. Can you expound on the fact as to what
24 this behavioral health unit is and the 237,000 that will go
25 along with that?

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. That is
2 the beginning of our regionalization, and we thought one of
3 the greatest needs right off the bat was mental health.

4 As I mentioned before, we have a number of
5 veterans that are being served by other State programs---

6 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Mm-hmm.

7 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---but those State
8 agencies don't know they are veterans. So we need to get
9 veterans specialists, DMVA people, out in those regions in
10 those programs.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Oh; that was the
12 connection between the two.

13 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. Yes,
14 ma'am.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay. Okay. I missed
16 -- I heard you talking about that earlier. I didn't
17 realize that that was---

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: That is the
19 connection for that.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay. I appreciate it.
21 Thank you very much.

22 And I just as a final thing just want to say that
23 the ability to have our veterans served in our area,
24 homelessness, PTSD, there are so many issues, they go and
25 serve us and then they come back, and as well as the fact

1 of bringing in new young people with JROTC programs within
2 our local high schools.

3 As a mom of one, or two in JROTC and one going to
4 ROTC for college, while I'm proud, I'm also scared. But
5 the ability for having those funneling programs, I think
6 educating kids, and even if they don't go military, the
7 ability for them to learn from the military-minded thinking
8 and the way that you guys think is a good thing. So thank
9 you very much.

10 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you, ma'am.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative Kim.

12 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Good afternoon. Over here.

13 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: How are you, ma'am?

14 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Good. Thank you so much for
15 being here today.

16 I am reading your written statement and, you
17 know, really proud that PNG, you know, has the second
18 largest, you know, members. It looks like you could be
19 authorized to have maybe another 1200. Is this number
20 status quo or is it low where it's creating problems for
21 you guys in that you could use another thousand members
22 with the Pennsylvania National Guard?

23 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, you know, I
24 don't want to give any indication that we're not fully
25 prepared to support any contingency in Pennsylvania---

1 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Understood.

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---or to support the
3 Army or the Air Force in any way that we have signed up to
4 do.

5 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Right.

6 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: We are fully capable
7 of performing all our missions. But I do feel obligated to
8 show the trend here in the last couple of years that we
9 have been following in our manning, and that's why we think
10 this Military Family Education Program is so important to
11 us.

12 So the National Guard is looking at us, and they
13 are very concerned. I'm getting phone calls. We're being
14 put up on slides. There are discussions about moving force
15 structure, and there are people, there are people in
16 Washington and throughout the country that are looking to
17 take it from Pennsylvania, because they're like, well, if
18 you can't hold your soldiers, we're going to take you to a
19 State that can.

20 And I said, well, there's a lot of unique reasons
21 for that in Pennsylvania, so two things is, you know, what
22 the service has been. You know, we have been on the
23 cutting edge of transformation in the Army over the last
24 3 years. No other State has gone through the transitions
25 that we have gone through. And transitions just create

1 turmoil. So a lot of this, I believe, is the service's
2 fault. But, you know, we're the ones that have to answer
3 for it.

4 One of the other things that they ask, and they
5 said, well, what are you doing in your State to fix it?
6 Because we have asked for Federal programs to support our
7 employers. We have asked for Federal programs to support
8 our families. And essentially, you know, the President's
9 budget is coming out here in a week or two weeks. From all
10 indications, there's nothing in there that's going to solve
11 any of that, so Pennsylvania needs to take a stand to
12 support Pennsylvanians.

13 You know, for every thousand Guardsmen that we
14 have, we get \$37 million of Federal support from the
15 National Guard. You know, this body is only funding
16 5 percent of the cost of your National Guard.

17 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Wow.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ninety-five percent
19 of that is Federal funded. Now, most of the money that you
20 graciously appropriate for us is for veterans programs.

21 So, you know, we're looking for that. So if
22 we're going to lose a thousand, 2,000, 3,000, I mean, that
23 could be 100 million, 100-and-some million Federal dollars.
24 So we are very concerned about that. We need to do
25 something.

1 And again, Pennsylvanians will always answer the
2 call. I mean, I mentioned in the story, they know who is
3 calling them when the phone rings---

4 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Right.

5 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---but they answer it
6 anyway, because they know it's important and they know what
7 they're about to do could mean the difference in someone
8 getting to go home for dinner or not, you know.

9 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Right.

10 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: So they're going to
11 continue to answer that call until we burn them out, and
12 when we burn them out, they're going to leave. So we got
13 to do something here, and that's why it's such an important
14 program for us.

15 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Thank you for that answer.

16 And then in terms of recruitment, what are some
17 of the challenges that you see that we may not know of and
18 that maybe we could be helpful in that?

19 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: You know, one of the,
20 one of the biggest issues, and this is nationwide, is there
21 is less proclivity to serve in the military. I can show
22 you numbers from 7 or 8, 9 years ago. We were pulling, all
23 the military services were pulling over 10,000 people out
24 of Pennsylvania every single year, recruiting into the
25 Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, you know, all the

1 services, all components of all services. That number has
2 slowly been shrinking. We're down, last year there was
3 8800 came out of Pennsylvania. So that number continues to
4 fall, and now all the services are fighting over those
5 bodies.

6 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: I see.

7 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: We used to have a
8 much better share. So we out-recruited the United States
9 Army, the Active Duty Army in Pennsylvania for years. The
10 last 3 years, they have way out-recruited us.

11 So the Navy has out-recruited us last year. The
12 Navy has never been able to out-recruit us here in
13 Pennsylvania at home. We used to have a 20-percent share
14 in our Army Guard of those that enlisted into the military
15 from Pennsylvania. We're down to like 15 percent now.

16 So those numbers are continuing to fall. Some of
17 that, you know, if you talk to our recruiters, some of that
18 is just schools that are unwilling to let us go into their
19 schools. There are some schools -- I mean, there are
20 families out there that are concerned about having their
21 children in the military, and I completely understand that.
22 And there are families that can opt out of having a
23 recruiter speak to their son or daughter, but some schools
24 are essentially sending the paperwork home just to sign to
25 say, I don't want recruiters, instead of saying, well, do

1 you want them or not want them, you know?

2 So there are things like that that we're working
3 internally with the Department of Education and some other,
4 you know. And we're looking for other ways to get into the
5 schools, not necessarily to recruit. But, you know, in
6 Pennsylvania, there are no more major, big military
7 installations in Pennsylvania. If you see somebody walking
8 around in uniform, generally they're probably in the Guard,
9 or they might be in the Reserve.

10 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Right.

11 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: But people just don't
12 see uniforms anymore, and a lot of today's young people
13 don't even know that that's really an option for them.

14 So we're trying to get in to do education on
15 citizenship issues, you know, respect for the flag, respect
16 for the National Anthem, counterdrug-type things. We have
17 a counterdrug specialist in our National Guard. We're
18 trying to get them into the schools and wear their
19 uniforms. You know, it's just important for people to see
20 the uniform to understand that this is a viable career
21 option.

22 So those are the kinds of things that I think we
23 could possibly get some help from you guys for.

24 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Wonderful.

25 And one last thing. It's just a statement.

1 You know, with the downward in recruitment, it
2 also affects our local police departments---

3 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

4 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: ---because we're not getting
5 more recruits. So it's really important to get those
6 people in there.

7 Thank you so much for being here.

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you, ma'am.

9 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Representative Brown.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 And thank you very much, all, for being here.

12 Thank you for your service, everyone in the room.

13 And Representative White mentioned before how
14 much she really enjoys working with the veterans, and I
15 have to say probably most Members feel this way. With all
16 the madness that we deal with, it's always nice when you
17 get to help a constituent, but it's even nicer when it's a
18 veteran. Because we have so much other madness we're
19 dealing with, it's nice to feel good that you have really
20 helped someone that deserves it, so.

21 But with that, I have had arrows and questions
22 for you as you're talking, so just a follow-up quick couple
23 of questions.

24 You mentioned with the Veterans' Trust Fund
25 grants that I think 150,000 went to the counties and about

1 550,000---

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: 650 to organizations.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: To organizations,
4 501(c)(3)s, and to help.

5 So you also mentioned that you establish a
6 mission or an idea that is important to you that you're
7 going to focus on, and then you put out that statement---

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: ---in order to then accept
10 applications for the grant process. Okay.

11 So can you tell me, I have questioned a little
12 bit about where these grants, you know, have landed. Do
13 you know how many counties have applied or who have not
14 applied over the last couple of years that we have had the
15 fund in place?

16 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, I don't know
17 off the top of my head. I can certainly give you those --
18 I can give you that data as to who applied and who was
19 awarded and who was not awarded.

20 I can tell you, not on the county side, but I can
21 tell you on the private organization side, I think we got
22 about \$2.8 million in requests and that we were able to
23 fill 650,000. So there are a lot of requests. There were
24 a lot of unmet requests out there. And amongst the
25 counties, I just don't have that information offhand, but

1 we can get you that.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay. I just really want
3 to make sure that our counties are applying for it. And,
4 you know, obviously as a Legislator, you always want to
5 make sure that your counties are applying for it and that
6 we're utilizing it as best we can. I know there's a lot of
7 veteran needs within the counties, the counties that I
8 represent. So thank you for that.

9 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: I have seen the awards
11 come out---

12 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: ---but I'm not always
14 aware of have we applied.

15 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Of who applied.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Right. So thank you very
17 much.

18 The other thing that you mentioned was on the
19 specialty courts, so not necessarily a veterans court but a
20 specialty court, and really the first that I have heard of
21 it as far as the veterans mentor position and program that
22 you said you are consistently recruiting for. So can you
23 tell us a little bit, if we don't have a veterans court in
24 certain areas, how that process, how someone would go about
25 applying to be a veteran mentor for a specialty court?

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. And I
2 would say if you don't currently have one and you're
3 interested, then I think the best resource is to go to a
4 county that actually has it and talk to one of their
5 judges, I mean, particularly some of the ones that have had
6 them for a long period of time.

7 It's a phenomenal program. I believe the
8 recidivism rate, and maybe I get this backwards, but
9 essentially 90 percent of the people that successfully make
10 it through the veterans court program we're never going to
11 see again in the court system. And how that compares to
12 the regular rate is phenomenal. So it has great, great
13 success.

14 But the key to that is, one, to have a judge who
15 understands what this person has been through, you know,
16 with their experiences are, and then to have that key
17 mentor program. You know, that mentor is going to spend
18 tons of time, and every single time, you know, there are
19 some veterans courts that bring that veteran back in front
20 of the court weekly to look at their progress. And that
21 mentor is standing---

22 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: That's a heavy volunteer
23 position, if somebody who is watching is interested.

24 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, ma'am. And that
25 mentor is side by side with that veteran the entire time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay.

2 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: And they're spending
3 time with them at home. They're spending the time with
4 them helping them look for a job.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Would it go pretty much
6 through the court system for the application to be a
7 mentor, or would it go through your agency?

8 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Ma'am, I believe it's
9 through the county. It's through the court system.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Through the court system.

11 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay. That's really
13 pretty much---

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: We serve as an
15 advisor. We don't certify anyone in their program. I
16 mean, that has to be done---

17 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: That's through the
18 courts.

19 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---at the courts'
20 level. Yes, ma'am.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay. That's what I just
22 wanted to verify. Thank you.

23 And one last final question.

24 As far as the outreach concerns, I know there are
25 a lot of Federal restraints that sort of hold us back a

1 little bit with being able to reach out to our veterans
2 after they come back home.

3 In an ideal world, and some of our staff know
4 that a couple years ago I was looking at the fact of, you
5 know, 6 months or a year for us or the Federal Government
6 or anyone to send a letter to our veterans saying, how are
7 you doing; we're checking in, basically following up with
8 you.

9 Now, I know there was some legislation passed in
10 the House that kind of gives more of an opt-in, volunteer
11 type of connection and communication that we can reach, you
12 know, work with veterans. But what would you do to maybe
13 enhance that a little bit more within a year timeframe with
14 the restraints that you're under from the Federal
15 Government and from privacy standards to be able to allow
16 us to connect quicker with these veterans so that they know
17 what services they have?

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: You know, I think,
19 you know, most of our holdbacks with the Federal Government
20 was getting previous veterans records. So there are, you
21 know, hundreds of thousands of veterans in Pennsylvania
22 that we just don't know who they are or where they are, and
23 we never had access to those records. We can't get access
24 to those records.

25 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: That's a problem; yeah.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Now, we're getting
2 current. So people that are coming out currently, we're
3 building that database, but that doesn't solve the backlog
4 of people that we're missing.

5 When this Legislature approved putting the
6 veterans designation on our driver's license, we know that
7 over 500,000 Pennsylvanians have taken advantage of that.
8 We don't have that many registered.

9 So we have been working through the Chief
10 Counsel, because that database was not intended for us,
11 you know, to use as an outreach tool, so there's privacy
12 concerns. But I think we have solved some of those
13 problems to where at least we are allowed to then
14 communicate to them saying, hey, you are eligible; if
15 you're a veteran, you are eligible for these services; we
16 encourage you to sign up for them.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Right.

18 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: But we can't, we
19 can't obviously force anything.

20 So we're in the process now of trying to see how
21 we can reach out. I think that a driver's license database
22 would go a long ways. It's not going to cover everyone,
23 but it's going to be a lot more than we have now.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay. Thank you very
25 much.

1 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: Going to the VTF grants that
2 you asked about?

3 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Yes.

4 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: There were 9 counties for the
5 county director grants, and around 14 for the VSO
6 organizational grants.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Was that for they received
8 or they---

9 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: Received; yeah.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: They received. So not the
11 application, though, piece, right?

12 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: Right. I think there were
13 161 applications.

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: 116. 116.

15 DEPUTY MCPHERSON: Yep; 116.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: 116 applications? Okay.
17 Thank you very much.

18 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Now, Representative
19 Brown, I will let you know that York County, I think, was
20 the first county to do the veterans court. And as the
21 General said, it is hugely successful. It's amazing the
22 success, and the mentoring program as well since it was
23 instituted. So you're welcome to come and visit.

24 Actually, Judge Trebilcock of our Common Pleas
25 Court is a member of the Judge Advocate Corps and has

1 served overseas, I believe. He runs our court, and it's
2 quite amazing. So you're welcome to visit York County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Thank you.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: With that, we'll go to
5 Representative Heffley.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 And thank you, General, for being here, and thank
8 you for your service.

9 I do want to give a shout-out to my dad who is at
10 home right now. He's a Marine Corps veteran. He's
11 watching these hearings. He had knee surgery so he's kind
12 of laid up right now, so he probably -- he was yelling at
13 the TV earlier, but I think he's happy now. So I want to
14 thank him for his service.

15 And I also want to give a shout-out to the
16 Command Sergeant Major in the back. I know a couple years
17 ago we had done the 22 Pushup Challenge together here at
18 the Capitol, so.

19 My question, General, is, House Bill 157 was
20 signed into law in 2015. It was a bill that I introduced,
21 so it was Act 23, and it dealt with licensing for veterans,
22 basically saying that State agencies must accept the
23 training that veterans receive while in the military when
24 applying for State licenses.

25 And I know you had talked a little bit earlier

1 about some of the issues that veterans are still having. I
2 have talked to a couple of veterans that actually had
3 benefited from that legislation. It was neat to hear their
4 stories about how that helped them.

5 What can we do to further enhance that
6 legislation and what else needs to be done so we can really
7 get the State agencies, and is it something more specific
8 to the State agencies or that they are not complying, or
9 what can we do to help them to get the recognition for that
10 training so they can get quickly into the workforce? As we
11 know, that's one of the, you know, things that we want to
12 do, is get them working to help them with the PTSD and
13 everything else.

14 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir.

15 And, you know, that helped us get after some of
16 the -- you know, I want to say there were some easier ones
17 to do. Like, I understand a CDL, for instance---

18 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Yeah.

19 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: ---in Pennsylvania is
20 now one of the ones that's covered that didn't used to be
21 covered.

22 So there were some easy ones where it was easy to
23 look at someone's qualification, because the military
24 verbiage on the training document is fairly similar to what
25 we see in the civilian side, so there were people that were

1 able to accept that. But the problems we're running into
2 now is some of the more in-depth ones. You know, I'll
3 again use the nursing example.

4 You know, we have people, combat medics that are
5 in the service, that they have been a combat medic for 25,
6 30 years, but they don't hold a nursing certificate on the
7 outside. They don't have a degree from an institution
8 saying that they were accredited. I mean, this is a
9 lifetime of experience, a lifetime of military training,
10 but there is no document, you know.

11 And I can't, at this point I can't get the
12 Federal Government to give me something saying, this is the
13 equivalent of this, you know? Yes, you didn't go to a, you
14 didn't get an advanced degree from a university, but this
15 job experience, this Federal training, is the equivalent of
16 that. And then I would be here begging this panel to
17 accept that as credit for Pennsylvania, but I don't have
18 that yet. So I think our biggest drawback right now is
19 getting the military to produce that.

20 The biggest focus right now in the United States
21 military is rebuilding readiness and lethality, and there's
22 a lot of focus on that. Now, I'm not going to say that
23 they're not focusing on a problem that we have in the
24 military with suicides, with PTSD, with transition into
25 civilian service, but I don't think it's the absolute

1 priority. So we're working, our legislative liaisons are
2 working with our Federal DOL to try to put a push on this
3 to give us those answers.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Is there currently, is
5 there legislation pending in Congress, at the U.S House in
6 Congress to address this issue that you know of?

7 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: I don't believe so,
8 sir. No.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: All right.

10 All right. Well, I would be happy to contact my
11 Congressman and Senator to go over it.

12 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes.

13 So over the last few years, you know, and again,
14 with your help, we have been able to get after some of the
15 easier ones that are just within our control. But some of
16 these, like I said, I'll use the health care as a for
17 instance where there's going to be an accreditation issue,
18 there's going to be an insurance issue, and there's a lot
19 of people with liability concerns that are asking a lot of
20 questions saying, well, who signed that, saying that there.
21 Because if we accept this in one of our university
22 hospitals and something happens, who is going to answer to
23 that?

24 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Mm-hmm. All right.

25 Well, thank you. Thank you for your service.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Yes, sir. I
2 appreciate your support.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: In closing, General
4 Regan, I know you now have brought on Lieutenant Colonel
5 O'Shell full time, I believe.

6 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: Yes.

7 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Since he has been
8 years of lobbying me for the National Guard and everything
9 else, if you ever need somebody just to give him a shove
10 or something, just let me know, since he used to work for
11 me.

12 DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL REGAN: I'm taking note
13 of that. Absolutely.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: General Carrelli, I
15 want to guarantee you, there will be money in this budget
16 for your challenge. I have not made any guarantees on any
17 of the other funding, but I can guarantee you, there will
18 be money in there for that or whatever you need.

19 But I want to thank all of you today for your
20 service to our State and to our nation. As you can see, we
21 all really value the servicemen and women who serve us and
22 the families that sacrifice in their service as well. So
23 thank you again, and God bless.

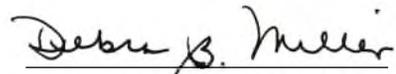
24 We will reconvene in 5 minutes for the Department
25 of Aging.

1 ADJUTANT GENERAL CARRELLI: Thank you,
2 Mr. Chairman.

3

4 (At 2:26 p.m., the budget hearing adjourned.)

1 I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings
2 are a true and accurate transcription produced from audio
3 on the said proceedings and that this is a correct
4 transcript of the same.

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6
7 

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