

TESTIMONY OF
BRIGADIER GENERAL ALAN DOHRMANN
BEFORE THE TRIBAL AND STATE RELATIONS COMMITTEE
28 SEPTEMBER 2015

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, Chairman Fox, Chairman Archambault, Chairman Pearson, Chairman McCloud and Chairman Renville. I am Brigadier General Al Dohrmann, The Deputy Adjutant General for the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG).

I am here today to continue a dialogue we started this past June to improve communication and collaboration with the Native American population in North Dakota. Like all organizations, we derive our strength from our diversity. When we look at the Native American population in the North Dakota National Guard, we are not meeting our goals. Currently, the native population within North Dakota stands at approximately 5.4%, while the NDNG is only at 2.8%. This has driven us to do two things – evaluate our recruiting process and look internally to make sure we are providing an inclusive culture that allows our Native American members to reach his or her potential.

With the assistance of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Scott Davis, we have begun a dialog with leaders from our Native American communities to look at our common interests and opportunities to support one-another. As a values based organization that provides a diverse range of opportunities to the youth of our communities, we believe we have something to offer.

Some programs the NDNG currently offer are Anti-Bullying, Low Ropes, Job Shadowing, Leadership Development, Suicide Prevention, physical education, and life skills development. In addition to these programs, we would like to begin a discussion with State and Tribal leaders about the possibility of initiating a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), and/or National Guard Youth Challenge program.

JROTC is a program that stresses character, student achievement, wellness, leadership, and diversity. The NG Youth Challenge program is designed to provide opportunities to adolescents who have dropped out of school but demonstrate a desire to increase their potential for successful and productive lives. The intent of the NG Youth Challenge is to improve life skills and employment potential by providing military-based training and supervised work experience; its core components are:

- Assisting participants to receive a high school diploma or its equivalent,
- Leadership development,

- Promoting fellowship and a strong sense of community,
- Developing life coping skills and job skills,
- Improving physical fitness and health.

In light of HCR 3006 and discussions we have had with Commissioner Davis and Tribal Veterans Services Officers, we see these programs as vehicles to develop leadership and positive life-skills within our young Native American population. Thus, reducing the chance that these youth come into contact with law enforcement and increasing the likelihood that they receive their high school diploma and continue on a path of life-time learning. In return, the NDNG will have the opportunity to expose Native American Youth to the armed forces, providing them with an opportunity to grow as leaders and serve their communities, State and Nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue the dialogue and enhance our relationship with our tribal communities. We look forward to meeting with each tribal leader in the near future to talk about common concerns and explore potential partnerships.

I will be happy to stand for any questions.