

## **Sexual Response Panel**

**Madam Chair and distinguished panel members. I want to thank all of you for committing your time and energy for dealing with the business at hand.**

**I retired from the Army in October of 2012 after serving nearly 38 years, 16 of those years as a Commander at every level in our Army. I have seen a lot and learned a great deal and I hope my thoughts merit your consideration as you finalize your recommendations.**

**I know my comments today will put me at odds with many of my friends and many folks whose opinion I respect and admire. But I'm here because I spent my life trying to do the right thing for the right reason, not the popular thing, the right thing. I have also spent a career in the Army with outstanding military leaders who also spent their lives trying to do the right thing for the right reason, leaders who lived the warriors ethos, lived the Soldier's Creed and leaders who believed that in this profession of selfless service.**

**It's very disturbing to read the headlines and the allegations about leaders in our profession who have not lived up to the standards and ethos of the profession. But what you don't read about...because it's not news worthy...**

**...is about the thousands of quiet professionals who live the warrior ethos everyday and make incredible sacrifices everyday -- because they believe in what they are doing and they believe in this institution.**

**I came into the Army right after the end of the Viet Nam war. Our country was war weary and our Congress was looking for**

**a peace dividend... so resources for military training were seriously lacking.**

**There were significant drug and alcohol problems, racial tensions were running high and misconduct was a serious problem. We still had draftees who hated being in the Army and we had under educated, non high school graduates who wouldn't qualify for service today. Looking back we now refer to that post Viet Nam Army as a broken or hollow Army.**

**It wasn't a fun time to start an Army career but ended up being an exciting and professionally rewarding experience. We transitioned to an all volunteer force when people said we couldn't, we transitioned women into the Regular Army when people said we shouldn't and we rebuilt our Army almost from the ashes through hard work and complete belief and trust in the Chain of Command. We didn't wring our hands, we rolled up our sleeves and got after it.**

**I grew up in an Army where the Chain of Command was a trusted Chain of Command. The Chain of Command was responsible for creating a positive command climate, providing good order and discipline for all men and women and their families, and rewarded good behavior and disciplined poor behavior.**

**And I believe - Only the Chain of Command - can fix this problem, only the Chain of Command can lead us out of this problem and restore the faith.**

**In the Army we expect Commanders to be accountable for doing what's right. I've seen the list of reasons why Commanders need to be taken out of the loop. They can't be fair, they can't see thru conflict of interest, they are not**

**technically competent in legal matters. These Commanders, men and women, are hand picked or board selected because they are stand out leaders. I don't know how one can expect and trust our Commanders to train our sons and daughter to fight and win our Nation's wars and yet not trust them to establish a command climate that provides each and every soldier a safe working environment, one where soldiers, men and women, work together as comrades.**

**During my almost 4 decades of service in the Army I have seen the military over come many adversities but it has never done it by divesting the leaders of their leadership responsibilities, it's done it by holding leadership accountable.**

**Let's hold Commanders responsible to lead us out of this crisis. The easier thing to do is to take them out of the food chain. What will that do? Cover up weaker leaders who can't make the tough choices? I don't believe taking Commander's out of the loop will do anything except create greater distrust between the leader and the led.**

**The great work done by Senators Gillibrand and Senator McCaskill, as evidenced by the over 30 additions to the recent NDAA legislation governing sexual assaults, is historic in and of itself. The checks and balances these additions bring will certainly eliminate a lot of the challenges we are facing today. I know the Army is fully supportive of most of these initiatives and quite frankly participated in the drafting of this legislation. I truly believe our leaders get it! And we I think we are already seeing the positive effects.**

**I fully support Senator McCaskill's position on the issue. We can either trust Commanders and leaders to do the right thing or not.**

**Like most societal issues ...Sexual assault is more than a military issue, it's an issue on campus as well as for business and industry.**

**I urge you to let the military Chain of Command lead us out of this crisis as they have every other crisis throughout history.**

**Thank you, I look forward to your questions.**

Ann E Dunwoody

GEN USA ®