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**Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee**  
**General Bonding Subcommittee**

**Connecticut Military Department**

**Major General Francis J. Evon, Jr.**  
**The Adjutant General**

**March 27, 2023**

Good afternoon Co-Chairpersons, Senator Fonfara and Representative Horn, and members of the General Bonding Subcommittee. I am Major General Francis J. Evon, Jr., the Adjutant General of the Connecticut Military Department. I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today to discuss the department's budget and need for bonding. However, I will first provide you with some brief information on the state of your military.

Your Connecticut National Guard recently closed the chapter on an unprecedented period of domestic support operations and overseas deployments. With COVID-19 response efforts and the safe return of thousands of Soldiers and Airmen behind us, it is time for the Military Department and National Guard to refocus on the challenges in front us. Those challenges include a return to prioritizing individual and unit training so that our members are fully prepared to respond effectively to emergencies in the state and the possibility of large-scale combat with near-peer nations. This training requires a concerted effort on the state and federal level to ensure the Connecticut National Guard has the facilities to safely and successfully accomplish our assigned mission. However, in order to train Soldiers and Airmen, we must first recruit and retain qualified individuals – our most immediate and pressing challenge.

Like many other employers, the Connecticut National Guard is struggling to meet its annual recruiting and retention goals. Connecticut's ability to fill its authorized force structure is related to our ability to provide our members modern facilities that meet their unit's current training, maintenance, and administrative requirements. By providing high quality training facilities that enable, rather than detract from, their ability to perform their assigned mission we improve the morale and quality of life of our Soldiers and Airmen. Those Soldiers and Airmen are then more likely to continue their service and help recruit others into "Connecticut's Home Team." The Military Department is appreciative of this committee's continued support so that the Connecticut National Guard can continue to live up to its motto, "Always Ready, Always There."

The Military Department operates from a significant number of facilities and sites across our state. Our portfolio includes 18 Readiness and Reserve Centers, 4 Maintenance Shops, 4 Specialty Sites, 3 Training Centers, 2 Militia Sites, 2 Army Aviation facilities, an Air Guard Base, and an Air Guard Station. We maintain a presence in 35 locations across the state. This includes 201 buildings totaling 2.3 million square feet of space. Our construction, renovation, acquisition and divestiture programs reflect our continuous goal of providing our Guardsmen with the best facilities from which to train, operate, and support our state in times of emergencies. Details of our construction program are provided to the legislature annually in our Armory Construction Purchase Program Report (enclosed).

I'm pleased to report the Connecticut National Guard administers one of the top facility programs in the nation. This fact not only benefits our Soldiers and Airmen, but the state as well, by contributing new physical infrastructure and hundreds of construction and skilled trades jobs throughout the state. From recent project completions to those programmed to break ground in the future, the Military Department will execute about \$45 million dollars in federal military construction over the next two fiscal years. Our ability to execute this level of federal funding is dependent upon the ability of the state to provide required matching funds. Through the continued support of this committee and the State Bond Commission, the Military Department has been able to effectively leverage its substantial federal military construction and sustainment funding to continuously improve the facilities our Soldiers and Airmen train in and stage to support emergency response across the state.

I'd like to highlight some recent accomplishments funded with federal sustainment dollars. We executed over \$3 million dollars of energy efficiency, sustainment and security projects statewide, including the design of a sustainable solar energy project at the Norwich Armory. We successfully leveraged state bond funds to secure additional federal funding for building envelope and energy projects, including the design and installation of electric vehicle charging stations in an effort to meet the goals of Governor's Executive Order 1. Lastly, we have initiated renovations to our transient barracks latrines and HVAC at Camp Nett in Niantic. These projects will total execution of over \$6 million dollars in federal funding when completed.

Nationally, the Connecticut Army National Guard secured a \$19.5 million dollar project in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act for a new Readiness Center in Putnam, CT. Construction on that project began this past fall and will likely be completed in 2024. Due to inflation and increased construction costs, utilization of existing state bond allocations became necessary to ensure both the timely award of the contract and the beginning of construction. Additionally, the Connecticut National Guard secured \$5.9 million dollars for the construction of an aircraft hangar for UH60M medical evacuation aircraft located at our Army Aviation Support Facility in Windsor Locks. These scenarios highlight the role of the state of Connecticut in ensuring the Military Department's flexibility to execute valuable federal military construction dollars through execution of required matching state funds, as well as funding for early design contracts and buildable real property.

Approximately \$2 million dollars of recent state bonding authorizations for the Military Department will enable the Connecticut National Guard to effectively compete for federal construction funds to continue to modernize our facilities statewide. Likewise, acquisition of buildable property by the state in close proximity to Litchfield County will promote our competitiveness for a new multi-million-dollar Readiness Center project in the region. Our Theater Aviation Maintenance Facility in Groton, CT (TASMG) has expanded its operations beyond its current physical capacity. The Connecticut Army National Guard submitted proposed projects to the National Guard Bureau that will require funding from the state to secure federally funded projects. We continue to work with the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management on these endeavors.

The Connecticut Air National Guard is executing their 2030 Installation Development Plan as approved by the National Guard Bureau. This plan will ensure our Bradley Air National Guard Base is one of the most modern Air National Guard installations in the nation. In the fall of 2022, a legacy F-100 aircraft alert facility positioned on our current C-130 aircraft parking apron was razed, eliminating the need for a longstanding airfield hazard waiver and creating additional aircraft parking space for the C-130 airframe. An Aerospace Support Equipment and Vehicle Maintenance Composite Facility originally programmed for construction in 2024 was funded in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act at \$18.7 million dollars thanks to efforts from our federal congressional delegation. We are also currently working with the Department of Administrative Services on the relocation of several aircraft static displays at the former main gate of Bradley Air National Guard base. The static displays will be moved to the new main gain, adjacent to the existing C-130 static display, in the summer of 2023. That effort will provide an electronic message board, sidewalks, and additional parking to improve base access and communication.

The Connecticut Air National Guard is in the planning and programming stages for 3 additional projects on the Installation Development Plan. The first is construction of a 7,755 square foot apparatus bay for the existing Fire Emergency Services building. That project is pending design federal funding from the National Guard Bureau and has an estimated construction cost of \$7.5 million dollars. The second is a major communications, logistics, and personnel support facility renovation to align the Bradley Air National Guard base with modern communication and computer systems. Lastly, the Connecticut Air National Guard and UConn School of Engineering collaborated on a plan to reconfigure one of the main roads on Bradley Air National Guard Base. This project will resolve several safety and security issues, is at the 15% design stage and has a current construction estimate of \$2.5 million dollars, with a goal for funding and execution in 2024.

As the Soldiers and Airmen of Connecticut's Home Team continue to provide security for our state and nation, opportunities for federal capital funding will also continue. Improving the facilities from which the Connecticut National Guard trains and operates is necessary for maintaining readiness. Readiness equates to greater mission success. Our commitment is to provide the best for our Connecticut National Guard so we can continue to effectively respond to any state or federal mission.

Francis J. Evon, Jr.  
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The Adjutant General