Good afternoon. It is my distinct honor to once again represent the Delaware National Guard as we present our Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Request.

At a glance, The Delaware National Guard (DNG) is committed to:

- Maintain a balanced force structure authorization of 1,661 Army Guard Soldiers and 1,146 Air Guard Airmen and women;
- Enhance joint operation capabilities to achieve optimal mission effectiveness and efficiency of operations involving Army and Air personnel;
- Continue quality recruiting, promotion and retention programs;
- Enhance mission readiness, through effective military leadership development programs and challenging unit training; and
- Develop and participate in local, state and national programs and partnerships that provide a positive impact on the community.

As a predominantly federally-funded, state-controlled agency, the Delaware National Guard has the dual mission of supporting the federal government through the war fight overseas, along with protecting fellow Americans here in the homeland. We are a critical component of the Delaware Emergency Operations Plan and our capabilities for supporting Delawareans in the event of natural disasters and civil emergencies are unequalled. With sustained resourcing, the Delaware National Guard will continue to respond to the needs of the State and federal government with our full capabilities.

During the past year, Soldiers and Airmen of the Delaware National Guard have proven time and again that we are an able and ready force, prepared to serve not only the citizens of our great State, but also those who need us throughout the world.

Currently, a total of 423 National Guard members remain mobilized in various locations around the world, 261 Soldiers and 162 Airmen.
Throughout the year, the Delaware National Guard participates in the Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) program. The program establishes a plan through which the State of Delaware prepares for, responds to and recovers from a radiological emergency at the Salem-Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations or other commercial nuclear power plants that could adversely affect the State or its citizens. The Delaware National Guard has several responsibilities to the REP program. As a result of those responsibilities, there are training and exercises offered to maintain certifications with all concerned agencies. About 170 DNG members and three DNG facilities are part of the plan and are involved in this program. Training, exercises and evaluations occur monthly for various portions of the plan. For an actual emergency, the number of required personnel will double or triple for 24/7 operations.

The Delaware National Guard participated in a state-wide special focus exercise known as Operation HIGHBALL July 9th through 12th. The event took place at the Amtrak Maintenance Facilities in Bear and DNG's River Road Training Site in New Castle, Del. Operation HIGHBALL is an all-hazards event based on local and state resources. Its intent is to train on the coordination between civilian, state, regional and federal partners to encourage joint operability. More than 300 personnel from 24 different civilian, state and federal agencies and four states, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, along with Washington, D.C., participated in the exercise.

During the 2019 Hurricane season, the Delaware National Guard deployed five members to serve on the National Guard Bureau’s Crisis Action Team and deployed two members to Tyndall Air Force Base to help manage/support the response to Hurricane Dorian.

The DNG 31st Civil Support Team responded to six State of Delaware requests to include:

- Support to Delaware City Refinery Fire;
- Delaware State Police unknown substance sample identification;
- Standby support to Spring NASCAR, Dover;
- Support to Firefly Music Festival, Dover;
- Standby support to Fall NASCAR, Dover; and support to Delaware River and Bay Authority DE Memorial Bridge Law Enforcement run in support of Special Olympics Delaware.
DNG also provides support to pre and post-Election Security Activities such as:

- DE Safety and Homeland Security Monthly Election Security meetings held at DEMA;
- Elections cyber table top exercise;
- Dec 17, 2019 School District referendum; and
- April 28, 2020 primary elections.

These are just some of the examples of the work our Soldiers and Airmen do. To see more of your National Guard in action, please visit our various social networking websites.

It is imperative for the DNG to meet end strength to fulfill operational commitments, including support of overseas operations. Meeting personnel end strength, increases the amount of federal funding that the DNG receives. This directly infuses income into the First State and promotes job growth.

We appreciate the FY 2020 Unit Fund enhancement, reinvigoration of the State Partnership Program, and the additional FTE to support our army facilities. The Unit Fund continues to support the Morale, Welfare and Recreation of our service members and their families and the State Partnership Program continues to support mutual national security objectives.

With continued funding, the Youth Challenge Program has proven to be a success. As you’re aware, this program provides Delaware at-risk youth and high school dropouts, ages 16-18, with opportunities for personal growth, self-improvement and academic achievement. Now entering our 5th session partnered with the Capital Guardian Youth Challenge Academy, the DNG program has been able to successfully assist and graduate 61 Cadets from Delaware. Over the years the program has seen great success through the accomplishments of its Cadets. Our Cadets have moved on to pursue higher education, seek employment and some have joined the military.

We expect great things to come from our nine new graduates of Class 53. Class 54 began on 15 January and runs through June with 12 Cadets enrolled. These young adults WERE high school dropouts, BUT NOW, they truly make evident the second-chance successes the Youth Challenge program has to offer.
The DNG is also involved in cybersecurity, reducing drug abuse with support from our Counterdrug Task Force and the War on Hunger by donating over 17 tons of food. DNG also plans and executes the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program to support our deployed members and their families.

We are pleased that the Governor’s Recommended Operating Budget includes funding for increased maintenance and repair requirements in support of our 100% state funded Army Readiness Centers and 25% state funded ANG facilities located at New Castle County Airport. As our footprint in the State grows, increased funding is required to sustain normal operations in meeting both our state and federal missions without interruption.

Our FY21 operating budget request validates the increased funding needed to sustain the high level of operational readiness and effectiveness of the Delaware National Guard during the next fiscal year.

On behalf of all the men and women of our Delaware National Guard, I want to thank you very much for your continued support and assistance. The DNG is proud to serve the citizens of this great State and our nation when called.

My staff and I are prepared to answer questions you may have regarding our FY 2021 operating budget request.